

Baptist Progress

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Phillips family visits BMA missionary in India; Desires to share experience with churches

By MICHAEL PHILLIPS

The Michael Phillips family from Enon, Gilmer, traveled to India in February to visit BMA missionaries Prashant and Golda Prakash. The family of five went to learn more about the BMA work in India. On Sunday, Feb. 8, the Phillipses flew to Hyderabad (HI-dur-bad), India where BMA Missionary Prashant Prakash met them outside the airport and drove them to his home in Gulbarga. Michael and Lisa Phillips, and their children Abby (15), Sarah (13), and Matthew (12) received a warm welcome from Susheela Guruputra (Bro. Prashant's mother), his wife Golda, and their children Joanna and Jason.

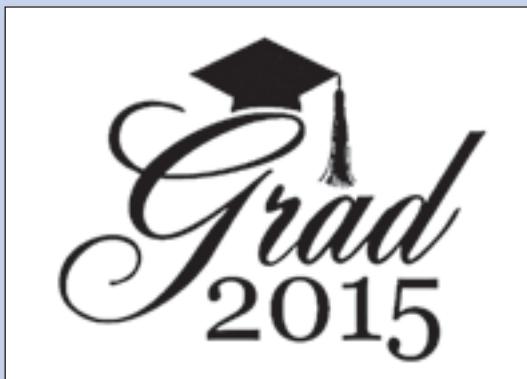
On the first day of their visit, Prashant and Golda took the Phillips family to Shakainah Baptist Academy. Shakainah is a school for pre-k through high school that is supported by Prashant's work fund. Golda, who holds a Master's Degree in Education, serves as principal of the school. Most of the classes are taught in English and Kannada (KAH-nuh-duh), the local language. Around 500 students attend Shakainah, most of who pay small fees to attend. The Phillips family entered the school during the morning assembly. Although Shakainah is a public school, its morning assembly involves scripture reading, singing praise songs, and prayer. Michael had the opportunity to speak to the children and lead them in an opening prayer. After the assembly, the Phillips family toured the school with Prashant and Golda. They met many of the teachers and students, all of whom were delighted to see the visitors from America.



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▲ Prashant Prakash, Golda Prakash, Lisa Phillips, Michael Phillips, Sarah Phillips, Abby Phillips, Matthew Phillips

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From the Editor

\$103 for 103 years of ministry



▲ Jerry Fulton

This year, *Baptist Progress* celebrates 103 years of ministry, made possible by BMA of Texas churches and individual subscribers. In order to meet our budget this year, we are asking churches, classes, groups and individuals to give \$103 for 103 years of ministry to *Baptist Progress*. Offerings may be mailed to *Baptist Progress*, P.O. Box 2085, Waxahachie, Texas 75168. Thank you!

Is it a good idea or God idea?

By LARRY BARKER

The title of this article was a challenge from my pastor, Todd West, that caused me to consider all the decisions I make. Are they directed by the Lord? He shared that USA Today reported that every individual can make up to 35,000 decisions a day. Wow, that's a lot but when you consider how many decisions we make as second nature it does add up. But what about the bigger decisions that we face? We are faced with choices every day where we must discern God's direction and leading in our lives correctly.

Nehemiah had a big decision as he was challenged to do something about his hometown Jerusalem. He was passionate about his desire to see the walls rebuilt and the city restored to its former glory. The book of Nehemiah is often used to teach excellent leadership principles and in this area of discerning between a "good" idea and a "God" idea it serves us well again. There is a huge difference between a whim, an impulse, or a desire, and knowing 100% that God is behind our thoughts and plans!

Todd then gave us six principles of how to discern between a "Good" idea and a "God" idea based on Neh. 2:17-18, "But now I said to them, "You know very well what trouble we are in. Jerusalem lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire. Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and end this disgrace!" Then I told them about how the gracious hand of God had been on me, and about my conversation with the king. They replied at once, "Yes, let's rebuild the wall!" So they began the good work." (NLT)

Principle #1: God Ideas Start with a Burden – Nehemiah saw the condition of Jerusalem and it greatly troubled him. The burden grew and he knew he had to do something. The burden increased and it remained on his heart calling him to action. He could not escape this "God" idea! The King noticed his sadness and even wondered why he was depressed.

Principle #2: God Ideas Contain Present Reality – His hometown was lying in ruins and the situation was very bad. There are some who always want to be optimistic, no matter what, but Nehemiah admitted that something was wrong and needed to be done. He took a step toward being a part of the solution realizing He needed God's help and the help of others.

Principle #3: God Ideas Can Be Clearly Stated – Nehemiah was able to articulate the vision of what needed to be done next. "Let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and end this disgrace!" If you cannot clearly state the next move God desires you to take then you should

wait until you can. If it is a little fuzzy to you it will be very foggy to those you are leading.

Principle #4: God Ideas Show Evidence of God's Approval - Nehemiah said this, "Then I told them about how the gracious hand of God had been on me." Have you prayed and sought His mind on the matter the same way Nehemiah did? Has God opened doors you could not have opened on your own and you clearly see him in this idea? You see His movement and His hand!

Principle #5: God Ideas are Affirmed by godly People - When Nehemiah shared the vision with them they said, "Let's start rebuilding" and they were encouraged to do this good work! There is wisdom in the multitude of counsel. If godly people you trust cannot see it you need to step back, reevaluate, and seek the face of the Lord. Seek wise godly counsel!

Principle #6: God Ideas are Always Met with Opposition – The walls began to be rebuilt but there were those who were against it from the beginning. Those people are still with us today! Nehemiah had to go to work with a trowel in one hand and a sword in the other. While he was building he also had to be prepared for battle. If you don't want any opposition then don't do anything! Oh, and then they will complain that you aren't doing anything!

Principle #7: God Ideas are very Unique to You! – (I added principle #7!) There are many good things you can be involved in but God has a calling on your life and a purpose for you. God has uniquely created you and gifted you to fulfill His purposes and bring glory to His name. Good ideas are plentiful but God's perfect will for your life is distinctive and requires asking His direction!

Everyone has a lot of what they think are "good" ideas but making sure it is a "God" idea takes seeking His face, being in His presence, and knowing it is what God has for you at this time and place. When it is a God idea you are passionate about it and it consumes your thoughts and motivates you every single day. Make sure your "good" ideas are "God" ideas!

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





Congratulations CLASS OF 2015!

ANTHONY DRIVE, ENNIS

*Jacob Allen
Ethan Flynt
Taylor Wickliffe*

BEACON HILL, WACO

*Stephen Barr
Ashley Tucker
Nicole Sonney
Madeline Parker
Ariana Williams
Joseph Williams*

BETHEL, GROESBECK

Haley Tinsley

BRISTOL, BRISTOL

*Hannah Futral
Chase Johnson
Tyler Juhase
Elizabeth Nichols
Harley Whatley*

CENTER HILL, OAKHURST

*Becca Baxter
Colton Wayne Clark
Nathan Dale Rosas*

CORINTH, GRAND SALINE

*Brooke Denton
Jonathan LaPrade*

CORNERSTONE, JACKSONVILLE

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Fernanda Garcia
Samantha Hammack
Carter McCown
Lucas Shidler
Adam Traylor
Abbigail Watson*

CRAFT, JACKSONVILLE

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Zachary Rush*

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Tanner Graham
Bridget Nabors
Billy Phillips
Hattie Schulz*

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*Hannah Dimiceli
Shelby LaFoy
Ty McAdams
Connor Richmond*

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*Hannah Cottongame
Linda Martinez
Samantha Mcdowra
Giovanni Pruitt
Madison Shinpaugh
Morgan Standifer*

FELLOWSHIP, PITTSBURG

*Rebeka Hall
Zackary Kizer
Ty McNutt*

FIFTH STREET, LEVELLAND

Brooke Lambert

FIRST, GLENN HEIGHTS

Jessica Hope Layfield

FRIENDSHIP, MESQUITE

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Nancy Lucero Marquez
Samantha Pacheco*

HARMONY, NACOGDOCHES

Taylor Schroeder

HERITAGE, WAXAHACHIE

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Colton Gilmore
Sedona Goad
Seth Miller
Kaleb Stewart
Charles Wofford, III*

HUBBARD CHAPEL, QUITMAN

Chandler Brett Poe

JACKSON, JOAQUIN

*Alex Barter
James Holt
Grace Owen*

JOURNEY, ALLEN

*Griffin Halladay
Cecil Linke, III
Jacob Sutherland*

LANDMARK, CUSHING

Kaitlyn Beavers

LATCH, GILMER

Keeley Chamberlain

LAWRENCE SPRINGS, GRAND SALINE

*Logan Craft
Kennedy Kvapil*

LONG CREEK, SUNNYVALE

*Makayla Holifield
Ruby Ruiz*

MAHL, NACOGDOCHES

Andrew Bobo

NEW HARMONY, TYLER

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Ryan Dudley
Jonathan Holmes
Ethan Johnson
Trey Oliver
Colton Parker
Cody Scott
Mullika Seekhieo
Daniel Wiggins*

NEW HOPE, STREETMAN

*Alondra Gallardo
Kaitlynn Roberson*

OLD BETHEL, CANTON

Shaelyn Baker

PRAIRIE VALLEY, WHITNEY

*Samantha Hilty
Quinton Sliva
Sean Sims*

ROSE HILL, MINEOLA

Jessica Ashton Holland

ROSEWOOD, GILMER

*Dylan Collier
Cailee Davidson
Haley Johnson
Ciara Harrell
Matt Jones, Jr.
McKinna Seahorn
Dylon Smith*

Zachary Smith

*Jayson Stanley
Brody Stuart (in memoriam)*

SAND SPRINGS, MINEOLA

*Jessica Crump
Saraí Cruz
Rebekah Drennon
Heidi Gaskill
Meagan Haskett
Cheyenne Hays
Harrison Howell
Sarah Leach
Joel Lyles
Hannah Meason
Sarah Mitchell
Abby Stanley
Rayna Torres*

SHADY GROVE, PURDON

Michael Driggers

SHEPPARD DRIVE, EULESS

Jacob Roosa

SIMMONS HILL, DIANA

*Briley Comer
Nella Kopp
Dakota Ray Veitch*

SODA, LIVINGSTON

*Emily Criswell
Steven Harbuck*

SOUTH PARK, FORT WORTH

*Natalie Canales
Nidya Gonzalez
Brett Mahan
Angie McMurry
Emily Turner
Kyle Turner*

STONE RIDGE, KILGORE

*Logan Goff
Shelly Lindsey
Nolan Martin*



JC Receives Lon Morris College science equipment

By **DR. MIKE SMITH**

When assets of Lon Morris College (LMC) were sold in an auction, most of the academic buildings, Memorial Chapel, and student residences were purchased by local office supply company 11x17 Inc. Jack Webb, founder and CEO of 11x17 Inc., invested in the LMC facilities for the benefit of the community. He had hoped that an institution of higher learning would be interested in using some of his acquired real estate. Although that plan never materialized, he continued to work on ways to profit from his investment.

Webb hired Michael Mathis to manage his LMC properties under the name of Texas Ruby Properties. According to Mathis, the facilities are leased for offices, training and educational rooms, a wedding chapel, special events and banquet rooms, and housing.

In addition to buildings, Webb also inherited equipment and furnishings. He knew he had items in his buildings that could be used by Jacksonville College, so he contacted Dr. Mike Smith, president of Jacksonville College, about any needs the College might have. As a result of their conversations, Webb recently made a significant donation of science equipment to Jacksonville College. The equipment included a Fisher Scientific Isotemp 655D gravity-convection incubator (lab oven), a Ritter M9 UltraClave Automatic Sterilizer (autoclave), four Swift M1000D stereo microscopes with adjustable light, a Corning stirrer/hot plate, human anatomical models for biology courses, molecular models for chemistry courses, and a number of other science related items.

JC Academic Dean Lynn Nabi says the equipment is a wonderful gift for the College. He explained, "The majority of our students with a declared major are pre-med or nursing students. We are therefore ecstatic and very thankful that Mr. Webb contacted President Smith and Dr. Darrell Kirchner, chair of our Science Department, about donating this equipment to our College." Dr. Kirchner added, "I am excited about putting these items to use. I know they will benefit Jacksonville College students for years to come."

Memorial Gift

During Homecoming 2014, Jacksonville College alumnus Mike Patrick learned of the plans of the College to renovate and furnish the newly acquired Joe Wright property for future use. He asked his church, Pilgrim's Rest #2 Baptist Church (PR2BC), to consider helping in some way. The church voted to give the funds necessary to refurbish and furnish a classroom on the Joe Wright campus in memory of former JC student Julie (Hughes) Vaughn, daughter of fellow church members Larry and Faye Hughes.

Julie was in the Jacksonville College Choir from 1992 to 1994. She married Joel Vaughn in 1994 and was a loving wife, mother, and daughter. She loved the Lord and was an active member of PR2BC, where she served as organist and Sunday School secretary. The members of PR2BC wanted to honor Julie's memory, and they began to raise the funds for Jacksonville College.

On May 8, 2015, Larry and Faye Hughes visited Jacksonville College with their pastor, Craig Kearby, and his wife Julie to give the College \$8,500 to remodel the Joe Wright classroom. When the classroom is completed, a commemorative plaque will be placed in the entryway of the room in honor of Pilgrim's Rest #2 Baptist Church, and in memory of Julie Vaughn.

Opportunities to Give

God has blessed Jacksonville College through individuals and churches

who are giving sacrificially—financially and physically—to further the JC mission to provide a quality education from a biblical worldview that challenges minds, transforms lives, and equips students for servant leadership and lifelong learning. Now is the ideal time to consider giving to the College to help with summer goals, including reroofing and painting the women's residence hall, and painting some of the student houses and the student center. Volunteers will also be working on these projects this summer, and if you or your church can help, please contact President Smith.



▲ Pictured from left to right with some of the equipment donated to Jacksonville College are Dr. Darrell Kirchner, chair of the JC Science Department; Dr. Mike Smith, president of Jacksonville College; Michael Mathis, manager of Texas Ruby Properties; and donor Jack Webb, CEO of 11x17 Inc.



▲ On May 15, Larry and Faye Hughes (on left) and Rev. Craig and Julie Kearby present JC President Dr. Mike Smith, with a check for \$8,500 to remodel a classroom in memory of Julie (Hughes) Vaughn.

Mission Life

What is your confidence level?

By **JERRY BURNAMAN**

State Missions Executive Director

Self-confidence is extremely important in almost every aspect of life, yet so many people struggle to find it. For many of us who have a leadership role in ministry, our confidence level is often like a roller coaster ride—up and down! We expect people to follow our leadership; however, if we are nervous, fumbling and apologetic, people are reluctant to back a proposed project.

How Confident do You Appear to Others?

Here are some marks of confident behavior:

- Doing what you believe to be right, even if others criticize you for it.
- Being willing to take risks and go the extra mile to achieve better things.
- Admitting your mistakes, and learning from them.
- Accepting compliments graciously. “Thanks, I’m pleased you recognize the efforts to accomplish the project.”

Here is behavior associated with low self-confidence:

- Governing your behavior based solely on what other people think.
- Staying in your comfort zone, fearing failure, and so avoid taking risks.
- Working hard to cover up mistakes and hoping that you can fix the problem before anyone notices.
- Dismissing compliments offhandedly. “Oh that was nothing really, anyone could have done it.”

Building Confidence is a Journey

The bad news is there is no quick fix, or five-minute solution. The good news is that becoming more confident is achievable, just as long as you have the focus and determination to follow through with your goals and projects.

Where do you see yourself? How can you build self-confidence and transfer it to other leaders in your church? Remember this is a journey and takes a life time to complete it. As believers we turn to the Bible for guidance. I checked *Young’s Analytical Concordance* and there are at least 46 verses in the Bible referring to confidence. And there are many, many more references to assurance, courage and dependence on God.

One verse that we know very well is from Paul’s pen while he was in Roman Prison: “*Being confident of this very thing, that he who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ*” (Philippians 1:6). Thus, our journey is not complete until the Lord returns or he calls us home.

As we make our spiritual journey through this world, our confidence is in the resources of God who will give abundant grace so that we will have “*all sufficiency for every good work*” (2 Corinthians 9:8).

Think About Your Achievements

It is good to keep an “Achievement Log” in a journal. This could include a training process for leaders of various

ministries in the church. It may also include evangelistic efforts, mentoring individuals and benevolent activities. The idea is to remember that you have made progress and then build on your achievements.

Consider Your Strengths

If you have difficulty focusing on your strengths, or if you do not know your strengths, it would be advantageous to take a personality and Spiritual Gifts tests. There are several available for a nominal fee. After you receive the results you may want to secure the services of a good coach or mentor to help you develop skills in the area of your strengths.

Manage Your Mind

Learn to identify and defeat the negative self-talk with can destroy your confidence. Create strong mental images of what you feel and experience as you achieve your major goals. Remember Romans 12:1-2: “*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*”

Commit Yourself for the Long Journey

The Christian life is more than a forty yard dash; it is a marathon. As we manage our minds and focus on God’s plan for us, we will keep our eyes on the goal. Sure there will be ups and downs, and some disappointments. But these words encourage us: “*Therefore, we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us*” (Hebrews 12:1).

Are you thinking about your confidence level? Can you identify some attitude or skill that you need to work on? Then begin right now to work on a plan to build your confidence, and then execute the plan. If you need help, call a fellow pastor or some leader to give advice, or perhaps help you develop a process for building your confidence.



Upcoming Events

Schedule for Summer and Fall 2015:

Summer I: June 2 to July 2

Summer II: July 8 to August 6

Fall: August 17 to November 24

Full course schedules are available at www.jacksonville-college.edu. Online application for admission is available for new students, and current students may register for classes online.

Stars on Stage

Theater camp for students who have completed grades 2 through 12

June 22-27, 2015

Contact Mary Lewis at (903) 589-7132
or mlewis@jacksonville-college.edu

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



Phillips family visits BMA missionary in India; Desires to share experience with churches cont.



▲ Phillips family singing at worship services with Shakainah Baptist Church. The man standing at the pulpit is Pastor Joseph Bassana.



▲ Morning assembly at Shakainah Baptist Academy. Michael Phillips on the steps addressing the morning assembly.



▲ Pastor and Bible college student training meeting. On back row l-r: Pastor Joseph Bassana, George Luther, Prashant Prakash, unknown, Pastor Pst Suraj, Pastor Pandit. All of those on the front row are unknown, local pastors and bible students.



▲ Morning assembly at Shakainah Baptist Academy. Bro. Mike Phillips addressing the assembly.



▲ Newly constructed church building that will house University Church and serve as the home for Pastor Pandit.

After leaving the school, Prashant drove the Phillips family to a developing community where one of the newest church plants in Gulbarga is located. Michael, Lisa, and the children were able to meet Pastor Pandit, the pastor of University Church. The church plant will hold worship services on the bottom floor of the 28' x 28' two room building, and the pastor and his family will live in the room on the top floor of the building.

On the second day, the Phillips family visited a second school overseen by the Prakash family. This school, known as Jeevan Prakash High School, was established in 1978 by BMA Missionaries Bro. Prakash and Susheela Guruputra, Prashant's parents. It was a major part of Bro. Prakash's original work and was begun in partnership with the BMAA as a ministry toward the people in Gulbarga. Upon the death of Bro. Prakash Guruputra in 2000, Bro. Prashant and Golda returned from America to Gulbarga to continue the ministry. Many of the children at Jeevan Prakash attend on scholarships funded by donors to Bro. Prakash's work or pay no fees at all to attend. Jeevan Prakash is a "Kannada medium school" where students and teachers speak mostly in the Kannada language. Michael, Lisa, Abby, Sarah, and Matthew arrived at the school during the morning assembly, during which Michael had an opportunity to speak to the students. They spent the rest of the morning visiting classrooms and talking to teachers and students with their hosts acting as interpreters.

Later that evening, after attending a local wedding, the Phillips family returned to the Shakainah Baptist Academy campus to meet several residents from the girls' home. Bro. Prakash has established an orphanage for girls, also known as the Hope Project, which provides underprivileged or orphaned girls a place to live. Eleven girls are currently supported by the project. They live in one room on the Shakainah campus with the school's counselor, Chuba and his wife Maola, a teacher at Shakainah, as their house parents. Bro. Prakash, with the help of Fellowship, Forney, is adding another floor to the school

to provide room for more girls. These girls will need monthly sponsors to help with their basic needs. The Phillips family had a wonderful time singing, talking, and eating with the girls, who were delighted to have visitors and sad to see them leave.

On Saturday, Feb. 14, the Phillips family visited Shakainah Baptist Academy again, where the tenth-graders were having a special ceremony for the graduating class. Michael was keynote speaker and challenged the graduates to use their education for God's glory. The students listened attentively to his message. At the closing of the ceremony, Lisa presented each student with a small gift from the Shakainah staff. The Phillips family was honored to take part in such a special occasion in the students' lives.

Later in the evening, Michael and Lisa Phillips accompanied Prashant and Golda Prakash, BMA Missionary George Luther, and Pastor Joseph Bassana (a product of Bro. Prakash's original boys' home) to the village of Sugor for a special worship service. As the work day ended and the sun set, villagers began to arrive at the home of a village elder where worship services regularly take place. Michael met with Pastor Pst Suraj, who oversees the Sugor church plant and three other church plants in neighboring villages. Michael and Lisa were welcomed warmly by the villagers and presented with flower garlands (a traditional greeting for guests). Under the light of a single lightbulb, Michael preached a sermon based on Mark 4:1-9, with George Luther interpreting the sermon into Kannada for the villagers.

On Sunday, Feb. 15, the Phillips Family worshipped at Shakainah Baptist Church, which is located on the campus of Jeevan Prakash School. Pastor Joseph Bassana oversees the congregation at SBC. Michael had the opportunity to preach the morning sermon with Bro. George Luther again interpreting. While Michael preached, Lisa, Abby, and Sarah helped with Children's Church in an upstairs room. They sang children's songs with the attending girls and boys, and Lisa taught them a short Bible lesson. The lesson, based on Psalm 34:8, was well-

received by all the children. They all memorized the Bible verse in English and were presented with a piece of peppermint candy to end the class.

On Monday, Feb. 16, the Phillips family returned to Shakainah Baptist Academy, where Lisa had an opportunity to speak to the eighth, ninth, and tenth graders. She gave her testimony to the students and spoke about the importance of education. Following the speech, and "Q&A" with the students, the students and teachers participated in a group pictures with the Phillips family (P5 for short). Mike then spoke to a group of pastors and Bible college students whom Prashant and George Luther mentor. Another facet of Prashant's work is planting local churches. Later that evening, Golda Prakash and Susheela Guruputra hosted a ladies' Bible study in their home. Lisa Phillips brought the devotional for the study, and Susheela Guruputra interpreted the scripture into Kannada for the ladies. Most of the attendees are wives of the local pastors who Prashant and George Luther are training.

After a full seven days of seeing the many aspects of the BMA work in India, Michael, Lisa, Abby, Sarah, and Matthew began their trip back home on evening of Tuesday, Feb. 17. Thirty-five hours, two flights, and two driving trips later, they arrived home.

The Phillips family was honored by the opportunity to go and see the work in India, as they know many people do not have that opportunity. They feel called to tell others about the Prakash family's work and help spread the word about what God is doing in India. Because many people don't know about the BMA work in India, the family has put together a presentation about their trip. They have visited some local churches and spoken about their trip, the work in India, and the needs of the work there. The family is more than willing to bring their presentation about the work to other churches. If you would like them to speak at your church, you can contact them at 903-725-5267 or by email at mwp22@hotmail.com.

Rufus and Mildred Crawford Endowed Scholarship established

By **DEANNA OTT**

Director of Public Relations

Central Baptist College announces the establishment of The Rufus and Mildred Crawford Endowed Scholarship. Mrs. Crawford initiated the creation of the scholarship after Bro. Crawford's passing on March 8, 2015. Bro. Crawford graduated from Jacksonville Baptist College, Stephen F. Austin University, and attended the BMA Theological Seminary. He served with the Baptist Missionary Association of America for 67 years as an Evangelist, Teacher, Radio Speaker, Pastor, and Missionary to Brazil and Portugal. He also had a long tenure in the field of education as a teacher at a Seminary in Brazil and as President of Columbia Christian School in Magnolia. All five of the Crawford children (Stanley, Diann, Kay, Dixie, and Telma) attended and graduated from CBC.

The Rufus and Mildred Crawford Endowed Scholarship will give priority to licensed ministerial students majoring in Bible or Missions whose goal is to serve on the foreign mission field. It is such a blessing that Mrs. Crawford chose to honor the memory of Bro. Crawford by creating a scholarship that will continue Bro. Rufus' legacy by helping students whose goal is to serve on the foreign mission field.

Central Baptist College has over sixty endowed scholarships representing over \$2 million in

contributions. Endowed scholarships serve as a lasting tribute, and as with all of the endowed scholarships at the institution, the initial donation will be placed in the permanent endowment. The principal will never be spent; only the interest will be awarded as scholarships. The scholarship will be awarded by vote of the CBC Scholarship Committee, taking into account the qualifications and eligibility of the applicants as detailed in the scholarship agreement.

Memorial gifts to the Rufus and Mildred Crawford Endowed Scholarship Fund can be sent to Central Baptist College, 1501 College Avenue, Conway, AR 72034. Checks should be made payable to Central Baptist College with "Crawford Endowed Scholarship" indicated on the memo line. If you have questions or need additional information please contact Sancy Faulk, Vice President for Advancement, at 501.205.8799 or sfaulk@cbc.edu.



▲ Bro. Crawford

GLORIOUS
SOAR 2015

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 STEPHEN CASTLEBERY - SPEAKER
 STEVEN CARROLL - SPEAKER
 BOBBY TUCKER - SPEAKER
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BMA of America News

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CHURCH RESOURCES

DiscipleGuide partners with BMA Seminary

DiscipleGuide partners every quarter with the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary for the purpose of ensuring theological accuracy in Bible study curriculum. Seminary faculty review every lesson of Compass, DiscipleGuide's adult Sunday school material, and Compass Teacher, the corresponding leader's guide.

"When it comes to teaching God's Word, accuracy is vital," explains DiscipleGuide Executive Director Scott Attebery. "That's why we are so thankful for the seminary's willingness to review our lessons. Scripture is the greatest treasure we have been given on earth, and we want to provide literature that is true to God's Word."

Seminary President Dr. Charley Holmes comments, "Even before I was a part of the seminary, it had an active role with DiscipleGuide Sunday school material. Seminary professors and graduates have written or edited numerous quarterlies and other helps. I am delighted to have one of our grads, Dr. Scott Attebery, as the editor of educational materials. We are blessed by having the privilege of assisting Dr. Attebery with reviewing the theological and biblical content of our BMA educational materials."

To learn more about, or to order Compass curriculum, go to discipleguide.org or call 800-333-1442.

New Launch Kit Bible Studies ignite conversation with students

DiscipleGuide is proud to offer a new line of student Bible studies called Launch Kits. Launch Kits are lesson plans for student pastors, small group leaders, volunteers, and parents that are easy to use.

Lessons are designed to ignite a conversation around Scripture as students discuss their faith in a life-changing way. Each Launch Kit is crafted for use with middle school through high school age youth. Since Launch Kits are conversation-based, the lessons do not have student handouts or worksheets. Instead, they contain a leader discussion guide that steers conversation toward living out genuine faith and a life centered on Scripture.

Launch Kits are sold per series, and the cost is based on the number of weeks in the series. Once churches or individuals buy a series, they own it and may reproduce as many copies as they wish.

Each series has been written and developed by Stephen Castleberry, a student pastor at Antioch Baptist Church in Conway, Arkansas, where the lessons have been used with great success.

Find the growing Launch Kit series and an introductory video at DiscipleGuide.org under "shop," then "students," then "Launch Kit."



Shackelford celebrates 15 years at ABS at Stephen F. Austin State University

By **JERRY FULTON**

Baptist Progress Editor

John Shackelford is celebrating 15 years as director of the Association of Baptist Students on the Stephen F. Austin State University campus in Nacogdoches. He was elected in April 2000. During his time leading the ministry, 19 young men have entered the Gospel Ministry, with 13 of them receiving a seminary education. Another former ABS student is helping with the BMA church plant in Celina.

According to Shackelford, seven SFA students have died within the last six semesters. Six of the deaths were alcohol related. The director said that the ministry field is limitless on the campus.

The ABS building needs several repairs and ministry efforts need to be expanded. Shackelford is seeking individuals and churches to partner with the ABS on a financial monthly basis. He is also available to speak to your church concerning the ministry. Contact him at 936-615-0145. Above all, John requests that you pray for the ABS ministry, as he, his family and students seek to reach SFA students with the gospel of Jesus Christ.



Asher receives degree posthumously during BMA Seminary 2015 commencement

By **DR. PHILIP ATTEBERY**

BMA Theological Seminary Dean

Louis F. Asher, of Jacksonville, received the Doctor of Divinity degree posthumously during commencement exercises held at the Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary in Jacksonville, Texas on May 16, 2015.

The Doctor of Divinity is an honorary degree awarded to individuals for scholarly achievement, attainments which demonstrate unusual creativity or distinguished service.

Asher served the United States Army in both the Second World War and Korean War. He received two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Star.

Asher's 40 years of ministry included the pastorates of several east Texas churches, including 20 years at the Glenfawn, Cushing. Since 1999, the Glenfawn church has helped the seminary promote and reward academic excellence by awarding the annual Louis F. and Jean Asher Scholarship to outstanding first-year students.

For 25 years, Asher served the BMA Seminary primarily as a professor church history and biblical languages. His academic accomplishments included earning a Bachelor of Divinity from the BMA Seminary and a Master of Arts degree from Stephen F. Austin State University. Prior to his death in 1996, Asher completed the coursework and most of the dissertation required for a Doctor of Philosophy degree at the University of Texas at Dallas. Many consider John Clarke (1609-1676): pioneer in American medicine, democratic ideals and champion of religious liberty, a book resulting from his research, to be "the definitive biography" on Clarke, a founding father of the Baptist movement in America and leading proponent of religious liberty for everyone.

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 certificate, associate, bachelor and master level programs of study.



▲ **Louis F. Asher**

Auxiliaries

Fiesta Sunbeams!

By SHARON COLE

Are you ready for a party? Great! It's almost time for the 2015 State Sunbeam House Party and you are invited! This year's theme is Fiesta Sunbeams! Join us for our "fiesta" July 17-18 at Jacksonville College. "Sam and Sam" (President Sam Clair and Vice President Samantha Dumas have an amazing adventure planned that includes games, crafts and good food! And best of all, we will be fed some of God's Word! We are going to have a wonderful time and we would like for all churches to know that you are invited to join us even if you do not have a Sunbeam group. Bring your kids and we can all fellowship and learn together.

This year's contests are as follows: 1. Sombrero decorating contest (1 per Sunbeam group) directed by Linda Graham. 2. Pinata making contest (Beams and Beacons) directed by LaDonna Aiken. 3. Maraca making contest (Flickers and Rays) directed by Camille Acres Baptist Church, Longview. 4. Coloring contest (all levels) directed by Shirley Hoffpauir. Other House Party jobs to be done include: Program Chairperson: Vera Koonce and Shera Clair; Registration: Shera Clair; Friday night snacks: Fellowship, Pittsburg; Games & Goodie Bags: Mt. Olive District; Friday night crafts: Camille Acres; Activity for Flickers/Rays during Saturday business meeting: GMAs/Sandra Kizer; Saturday morning snacks: Coffeerville, Ore City. Every church is asked to bring 2 bags of candy to be used in the pinatas. Our Sunbeam project is the Mexico Sunbeams (El Alba Baptist Church Sunbeams in Pachuca, Mexico). The goal is to raise \$2,000 for their Sunbeam program which is called, "Rejitos El Sol" which means "Little Rays of the Sun."

Project money needs to be sent to our Treasurer Shera Clair by June 15 so the project awards can be ordered. Shera's contact information is: Shera Clair, 1065 Abbie Lane, Glen Rose, Texas, 76043, Shera_koonce@hotmail.com, 254-396-5943. Shera is in charge of the registration as well. The cost is \$15 per person and is due upon arrival or before if possible. Email or call Shera with a number count by June 15 so Jacksonville College can prepare

accordingly for meals and sleeping quarters.

The 2014-2015 State Sunbeam Officers are as follows: President-Sam Clair, Harris District, Bauman Road, Houston; Adult President: Vera Koonce, Harris District, Bauman Road, Houston; 1st Vice President: Samantha Dumas, Liberty District, Camille Acres, Longview; Adult 1st Vice President-Melissa Henry, Liberty District, Camille Acres, Longview; 2nd Vice President: Landon Graham, Liberty District, Fellowship, Pittsburg; Adult 2nd Vice President-Linda Graham, Liberty District, Fellowship, Pittsburg; Secretary-Sharon Cole, Mt. Olive District, Antioch, Carthage; Asst. Secretary-Treasurer: Shawn Norris, Mt. Olive District, Antioch, Carthage. Treasurer-Shera Clair, Harris District, Bauman Road, Houston. Reporter/Historian-Matthew Thorne, Mt. Olive District, Antioch, Carthage; Asst. Reporter/Historian-Ty Saxton, Mt. Olive District, Antioch, Carthage Adult Reporter/Historian-LaVerle Spurgeon, Mt. Olive District, Antioch, Carthage; Song Leader-Caleb Kizer, Liberty District, Fellowship, Pittsburg; Adult Song Leader-Rebecca Binns, Liberty District, Fellowship, Pittsburg; Project Promoter-Ty Hoffpauir, Liberty District, Coffeerville, Ore City; Adult Project Promoter, Shirley Hoffpauir, Liberty District, Coffeerville, Ore City; Web Master-Alicia Johnson, Cherokee District, Sardis, Jewett. Advisory Council: Vera Koonce (2016), Shirley Hoffpauir (2016), LaDonna Aiken (2015), We look forward to seeing you in July!

NATIONAL SUNBEAMS WORKSHOP

A national Sunbeams workshop is planned for June 17-18, 2015 at Daniel Springs Encampment beginning Wednesday at 9:00-10:30 a.m. in the tabernacle. National Sunbeam Promoter will give updates and a Sunbeam material presentation. Then at 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., Assistant Sunbeam Promoter Sandra Kizer will discuss scripture memorization. Thursday, June 18 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p. m. Mississippi Sunbeam Promoter, Linda Dertinger will give information on missions.

The National Sunbeam project is funds for Shepherd's Bags. Ten dollars will supply funds for one bag. One in three bags leads to salvation of a soul. Are your grandchildren precious to you? Would you like to honor them and the Lord and help lead people to the Lord? This year you are given the opportunity to honor your grandchildren by giving to this project. All grandparent's names and grandchild's names will be published in your state BMA paper. No money amounts will be published. Any amount will be appreciated. Please send your donations along with your name and the names of your grandchildren to: Sherry Laminack, 1047 Maple Ridge Dr. Greenwood, Arkansas 72936. Contact by phone 479-252-6671 or 870543-9640, jaslaminack@cox.net. Make checks payable to: National Sunbeam Project.

DISTRICT NEWS

Houston-Anderson WMA met April 11, 2015 with Antioch, Palestine. First Vice President Georgia Neal presided at the meeting. Share time was a Bible lesson by Betty Lasiter. The guest speaker was John Shackelford, director of the Association of Baptist Students at Stephen F. Austin State University. He spoke about activities in ABS, the needs they have and future plans. The WMA ladies attending brought paper goods and food items for the ABS. Antioch WMA prepared a delicious lunch which was enjoyed by all.

The July 11 meeting will be hosted by Sheridan Terrace, Palestine. The guest speaker for that meeting will be Jerry Fulton, editor of the *Baptist Progress*.

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



Bibles, Books, Music & Gifts

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

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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.

EVENTS

JUNE 7, 2015

103rd Anniversary
@ Little Flock, Lufkin
Guest Speaker:
Gene Hazell, former pastor
Concert by:
Southern Plainsmen Quartet
Dinner on the grounds
and afternoon singing
10 a.m.

AUGUST 13, 2015

Liberty Association Lifeword Rally
@ Cross Roads, Pittsburg

AUGUST 29, 2015

Texas Ladies Retreat
Hosted by Texas WMA
Farley Street, Waxahachie

OCTOBER 11, 2015

Liberty Association Annual Meeting
@ First, Judson
Begins at 3 p.m.
First Session Speaker—
Charles Johnson
Dismiss for Supper at 5 p.m.
Begin second session at 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

MAHL, NACOGDOCHES will celebrate their 100th anniversary on March 6, 2016. History of the church and photographs are needed. Please mail history and photographs to the church at 12304 US Highway 259, Nacogdoches, Texas 75965-8226.

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PERSONNEL & POSITIONS

AVAILABLE MINISTERS

MATTHEW LOAFMAN is available for pulpit supply. He is a member of Heritage, Waxahachie. Contact him at 469-285-6060 or loafman.1113@yahoo.com.

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.

JIM CRUMP is available for pulpit supply or to serve as pastor. He is a member of Little Mound, Big Sandy, and has 35 years of ministry experience. Contact him at 903-918-3260. 6/3

MICHAEL PHILLIPS is available as bi-vocational pastor, pulpit supply, revivals, or as the Lord leads. He has 71/2 years of experience as a pastor. He is a member of Enon, Gilmer. Contact him at 903-238-7856 or 903-725-5267. 5/20

AVAILABLE SPEAKER

STACIE BOSTIC is available to speak at women's luncheons, youth retreats, adult conferences, seminars, Bible studies and other events. She has a powerful testimony that focuses on the art of surrender, walking by faith and rising above circumstances. Her message resonates with a wide range of listeners. She has the ability to tailor her message to fit a group's unique event theme. Stacie is a member of Liberty, Gun Barrel City. Contact her at claypotworks@outlook.com or 903-603-8597. Also, visit www.claypotworks.com or connect with Stacie on Facebook at <https://facebook.com/claypotworks>.

AVAILABLE POSITIONS

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.

PASTOR—Mt. Pleasant Missionary, Plumerville, Arkansas is prayerfully seeking a full-time pastor and accepting BMA applicants at this time. Send resume to 896 Hwy 92 Plumerville, Arkansas 72127 or email to mtpleasantpastorsearch@gmail.com. 5/20

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—Pine Acres, Gilmer is seeking a bivocational pastor. Email merrillgl@aol.com for more information. 7/1

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. TFN

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. TFN

OBITUARY

ROBERT STEWART

David Elton Stewart, PhD, 87, passed from this life April 28, 2015. He was born on April 2, 1928 in Social Hill, Arkansas. Elton, as he was known, became a Christian at the age of 10 in northwest Arkansas and surrendered to preach in 1947. He was a graduate of Fayetteville High School, Jacksonville College, Southwestern Seminary and National Christian University. He pastored churches in Texas, California and Arkansas. He is survived by his wife, Meredith, six children, three stepchildren, 26 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and three step-grandchildren. A memorial service will be held at Calvary, Heber Springs, Arkansas at 1 p.m. on June 6. Bro. Robert Stewart, former BMAA missionary in Oklahoma, will lead the service. Memorials may be made to the Texas Baptist Home for Children, 629 Farley Street, Waxahachie, Texas 75165.

CHURCHES IN REVIEW

MAY 17, 2015

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis		100	
Cedar Creek, Teague	13	16	
Farley Street, Waxahachie	441	509	2 By Profession, 1 By Letter
First, Omen	23	50	
First, Palmer	40	70	1 By Statement
Glade Creek, Gilmer	22	43	
Harvest, Lufkin	20	21	
Jackson, Joaquin	61	71	1 By Baptism
Little Flock, Lufkin	15	20	
Little Mound, Big Sandy	42	50	
Long Creek, Sunnyvale	72	97	
Merriman Hills, Sherman	20	21	
New Harmony, Tyler	266	371	2 By Baptism
Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden		54	
Rosewood, Gilmer	109	189	1 By Baptism
Temple, Mexia	33	47	

MAY 24, 2015

Church	SS	Worship	Additions
Anthony Drive, Ennis	49	78	
Cedar Creek, Teague	13	21	
Farley Street, Waxahachie	414	492	
First, Omen	47	56	
First, Palmer	34	65	
Glade Creek, Gilmer	19	43	
Jackson, Joaquin	69	128	1 By Letter
Little Mound, Big Sandy	42	52	
New Harmony, Tyler	302	383	2 By Letter, 1 By Baptism
Pine Brook, Tyler	27	70	
Security Calvary, Cleveland	32	47	
Woodland, Splendora	36	69	

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

Sunday School Lessons

The first church

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: June 7, 2015
TEXT: John 1:35-45

THOUGHT PRIMER

In our study of the church this quarter, my prayer is that we will have a fresh, new understanding as to her authority.

The church is not just another glorified civic organization just meant to do good for the community or the needy -- although she does; she is not a club designed to bring people together for fun and fellowship -- although she does; she is not an organization to lobby Washington for certain rights and benefits, although she must have an active role in the moral and spiritual climate of America:

The church is a spiritual, heavenly, eternal glorious entity -- she is the Body of Christ. She is manifested locally as an organized representative of Christ's presence and ministry on the earth today. She has been given responsibilities and ordinances not meant for any other entity in all the earth, and she is undergirded with Heavenly power not contained in any other force on earth. She is an eternal, living organism. (Ephesians 3:21) She is a "hospital for sinners, not a museum for saints." She is the sole body on earth which is commissioned of Christ to baptize, spread the gospel of Christ to all the world (Matthew 28:18-20) and engage in Christian education. She, and she alone, has the authority of Christ vested in her -- and she has the promise from Him that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her.

She is worthy of an in-depth study -- and she is worthy of our undying, vigilant support and devotion. We are not to forsake her assembly (Hebrews 10:25).

THE STUDY

1. The Church's beginning: People even in church ranks, have been known to differ as to the church's origin. Some believe the church was tangibly created by Christ personally during His ministry on earth, while others believe she didn't become a church until the Holy Spirit came on her in Jerusalem during the Feast of the Passover, some 50 days after Jesus ascended back to glory. Whatever the opinion, it shouldn't be a test of fellowship. I hold to the church already being in existence when the Spirit came simply because of Acts 2:41 -- "Then they that gladly received his (Peter's) word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." This may be an oversimplification, but I contend you can't add to something, which is not already in existence.

2. The process of assembling the church:

- John the Baptist pointed others to Jesus: John 1:36 "Behold the Lamb of God."
- Two disciples heard, and obeyed: John 1:37 "And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus."
- They had a receptive heart - they were drawn to Him. John 1:38-39.
- They sought and found others and brought them to Jesus: John 1:41-42
- They remembered the Old Testament prophecy of His coming: John 1:45

The beginning of the church involved someone pointing others to "the Lamb," resulting in others receiving and obeying Him, which, in turn, generated an excitement to know Him and follow Him.

Is it not interesting that 2000 years later, many church denominations have adopted all the trappings of corporate America, pop psychology, gimmicks and tricks, traditions of men and fabulous facilities as major methods and priorities in establishing a church?

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



3. The purpose of the church.

- To glorify Christ (Ephesians 3:21)
- To evangelize the world. (Acts 1:8) "But you shall receive power, after the Holy spirit has come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem (local missions), and in all Judea, (state missions) and in Samaria, (national missions) and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (world missions)
- To administer the ordinances I Corinthians 11:23-26
- To train servants of the Lord in His word. Matthew 28:18-20
- To be a gathering for Christian fellowship. II Corinthians 8:4

4. The promise to the church.

- Presence of the Lord Matthew 28 "Lo, I am with you always. . ."
- Proper foundation Matthew 16:18 -- "Upon this rock. . ." (Christ)
- Power against evil. Matthew 16:18 -- "gates of hell shall not prevail. . ."
- Precious future (I Corinthians 15:52)

APPLICATION

What does the church mean to you? How involved are you in church -- do you attend every time the doors are opened? Once a week? Once a month? Christmas and Easter? Church membership and church devotion does not save one, but if one has been genuinely saved, he or she will have a desire -- a longing to be involved in the fellowship of a Bible-teaching, Bible believing New Testament church.

What is your motive for attending? Because it is expected by your family? Because you're trusting church membership to take you to heaven? To be seen of others? Or do you have such a passion to serve Christ because you love Him, and you must glorify Him by "not forsaking the assembly"?

Have you lived under the misguided notion that you can be just as great of a Christian outside the church? Can you grow, sufficiently in the Word of God just as a free-lance believer who has no interaction or fellowship with other believers in the church?

While in the Navy, when my ship was at sea, I attended a Bible study group of a reputable para-church organization -- one that unabashedly believed the Word of God. I asked the leader of the local chapter of the organization what church he was affiliated with. His answer was, "Oh, I'm not a part of the church, I'm just a believer in Christ." His answer told me that he did not follow the word thoroughly, or else he would have been active in a Bible believing church. Be wary of anyone who professes to love Jesus but who refuses to identify with His Body -- the New Testament church.

CHALLENGE

If you are a wayward member of a scriptural New Testament church, but for some reason you have disassociated yourself from her, examine your experience of salvation, because I John 3:14 verifies that a person who is genuinely saved, loves the brethren.

If you love the Lord, and have been away from the fellowship of believers, make next Sunday the time you return, and recommitment yourself to serve the Lord faithfully through His glorious church. Ephesians 3:21 "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

The pastor's desire

By PAUL GAUNTT

DATE: June 14, 2015
TEXT: I Timothy 3:1-7 I Peter 5:1-4

THOUGHT PRIMER

What is the pastor's purpose? How do you perceive the pastor? Many have jokingly (and some not jokingly) referred to the pastorate as a job where a man stands behind the pulpit, speaks for a total of two hours each week, and plays golf the rest of the time. The office of pastor is perceived as a "grave" job.

Grave job? Think again! A good pastor, one who is "worthy of his hire" will spend a minimum of six hours studying and preparing for just one 30-minute sermon. Some have deemed the physical, mental and emotional stress of delivering one sermon equal to an 8 hour workday.

Along with a weekly minimum of 18 hours in sermon and teaching preparation, a pastor can spend at least 15 hours a week driving to and from hospitals visiting the sick and sitting with families during a loved one's surgery. He will spend at least 10-15 hours weekly, making contacts for the church or visiting prospects. And then include another six hours per week with members dropping by to dump their problems on him or criticize some aspect of the church ministry.

Add all that up, and you have a minimum of 55 hours per week in ministry -- and then he is supposed to minister to his family (one of the priorities in the job description of a pastor) Then, he is called upon to attend and deliver the invocation in civic functions, perform weddings, conduct funerals, attend associational meetings, and spend hours on his knees, carrying the burdens of his membership to the Lord, planning the church program and seeking a vision from the Lord. Hopefully, this lesson will help the average church member understand and have compassion for the man of God.

STUDY

1. A pastor feels the calling to the ministry through a strong desire. I Timothy 3:1

Pastors have various experiences in their "call" to the ministry. Many wrestle with God for months or years, afraid of where God will take them if they "surrender." Others, like myself, had the strong desire, but I waited a few months to make sure I wasn't falling under peer pressure. Others, like Dr. George W. Truett, had the church to recognize his desire and gift for the pastorate before he did, and they "drafted" him into being licensed and ordained. Regardless, a man who is called of God has that "fire in his belly" to preach the gospel.

2. A pastor is mandated to live a life above reproach. I Timothy 3:2-3

The apostle Paul said in I Corinthians 9:27, "But I keep my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." Paul knew the gospel message, preached by a man who refuses to bridle his own body, would lose credence among the saved as well as the lost.

3. A pastor's effectiveness hinges on his spiritual leadership in his own home. I Timothy 3:4-5.

Never begrudge the pastor taking ample time to be a faithful father to his children and a good husband to his wife. Many a pastor's ministry crashed and burned because he was too busy seeing to the things of the church at the expense of his own family. Consider Eli the priest (I Samuel 2:12) "Now the sons of Eli were the sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord." Obviously Eli was too busy attending to the things of the temple rather than raising his sons. By the time they were old enough to be priests in the temple, it was too late for Eli to correct them for their debauchery. God's swift judgement was pronounced not only on Hophni and Phinehas, but Eli's household, and his descendants. Church, always release your pastor to be the best spiritual leader he can be in the parsonage. When he is, he will be better able to ministered to you.

4. A pastor must not be given too much responsibility too early. I Timothy, 3:6

"Not a novice lest being lifted up with pride. . ." Many a young pastor went to a large ministry with too much responsibility and "washed out" because of the load -- or being destroyed by pride. On the other hand, something must be said for the small churches, which feel it is part of their task to give young preachers a "starting place." They have been given a special heart to nurture and love the young pastor, and patiently endure his inexperience. I will be eternally grateful for the Enon Baptist Church of Iowa who nurtured this young preacher and his wife.

5. A pastor must have a good reputation among his members, and from those who are unsaved. I Timothy 3:7

Blessed is the pastor who can generate respect from the lost. It is through reviling and reproach brought about by both the lost and the saved, when the "the devil will seek to impair the power of (the pastor's) ministry and frighten him from the exercise of it." -- Matthew Henry. A pastor is not to appease the lost by indulging in their lifestyle, but to model holiness among them in a way which can be used to influence them to Christ.

6. A pastor must be faithful to feed the flock: I Peter 5:2

He is to preach the whole counsel of God. Paul was faithful to do this (Acts 20:27) saying, "For I have not shunned (shrunk) all the counsel of God." A pastor "worth his salt" will not only preach simple salvation, he will instruct the church on what the word says about how to live, overcome sin, the end times, the Christian family, the doctrine of Christ, the Church, the need for obedience to Christ. Expository preaching is effective and will keep the preacher from just "cherry picking" his favorite subjects. In preaching through books of the Bible, he will find himself wading into issues he would not normally preach about.

7. A pastor must refrain from being a dictator or micromanager. I Peter 5:3

A pastor who can't trust the church to be the church without his making every call is a man who, himself, has trouble trusting God. An effective pastor will minister through Godly example and faithfulness to the Word. If a pastor is not careful, he can become co-dependent upon his own ministry, feeling that he must be the sole one to minister to a member in need perhaps to shore up his job security, or because of an unhealthy ego. An effective pastor gives ministry away to the flock and let's them shine.

8. A faithful pastor will receive a special crown from The Chief Shepherd. I Peter 5:4

-- a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

APPLICATION:

How do you regard the pastor? Is he just someone who is called upon when you are in trouble? What is it about him you admire? Is he humorous in the pulpit -- is he warm and engaging -- and fun? Is he always there for you? It's easy to love such a leader. But what if he loves in a way that he's willing to risk your rejection by telling you, "thus saith the Lord?" Perhaps his demeanor before you is such that he wants to divert you from a meaningless life to one of obedience to Christ.

CHALLENGE

My dear deacon friend, Monroe Rice, when once summoned by the deacons, to go along with them in firing their young preacher, asked them? "Okay, what did he do? Did he steal money? Did he run off with another woman? Has he told lies? Has he preached false doctrine? Did he start a brawl somewhere? Has he killed someone? When they hung their heads and answered no to each question, the meeting was over. Church, consider these questions before you develop a wrong opinion of your pastor. If you will pray for him earnestly, pay him handsomely, support him fervently, listen to him intently, and love him and his family implicitly and follow him as he follows Christ, he will work himself half to death to minister to your needs.

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