



Magnolia Messenger

Magnolia Messenger

P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

JULY - SEPT., 2009 -- VOLUME 31; NUMBER 3 -- Our 31st Year

"Let us consider one another to provoke unto **LOVE** and **GOOD WORKS**." (Hebrews 10:24)

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A Reader Asks:

QUESTION: *It seems to me there is a great deal of arrogance in our view that we are right and people in all the other Bible believing churches are wrong; so we should not associate with them. They are probably wrong about some things, but so probably are we. It is certainly arrogant to think we could not be. Maybe a good dose of humility is what we need. (J.C.R.)*

May Responds on Page 3



Did You Know?

That the Bible nowhere says "Accept Jesus as your personal Savior?"

That "The Rapture" is not once mentioned in the Bible?

That no one was ever told to "Ask Jesus into your heart" in answer to the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

(More on Page 15)

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Cash for Clunkers

(See Page 4)

Searching For Happiness

The Search Continues

(Benefit from page 23)

Casino Gambling

"America's Greatest Vice Is Growing in Mississippi"

(Tunica Preacher Writes on Page 6)

"But I Can't Tell Anybody"

Why churches are not growing!

(Study Page 5)

"Can a Christian Ever Be Lost?"

Facing Biblical Facts

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Aging With Grace and Beauty

Ladies: Read how it is done!

(Read Page 22)

Well, Well, Well!

Study "The Question Box"

(Challenge is on page 24)



A Report of Editor's Visit to GBN's Main Studio near Chattanooga, TN (See Page 15)

Magnolia Messenger Requests your Prayers

"Mississippi's GOOD NEWS Newspaper" -- Serving Mississippi, Louisiana and Adjoining States

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World's Tallest Man

- Correction -

In the previous issue of the MM (April-June, '09), we wrote about Robert Pershing Wadlow who was said to be the "World's tallest man." He measured 8 feet and 11.1 inches tall.

We stated **incorrectly** that our information came from "Ripley's Believe it or Not." We should have said that the information came from *Guinness World of Records*. Our apologies. Sorry for the mistake! (editor)

Old Fashioned Gospel Meetings

- Some Observations -
(Turn to page 8)



October 17, 2009

MBC Lectures

Kosciusko, Mississippi



Revive Us Again!

Guest Speakers

Willie Nettle

Dale Jenkins

Janie Craun

(Details on Page 11)

Is
YOUR NAME
listed on Page 21?

Next

LA/TX RV Rally

Grapeland, Texas

Oct. 28 - 31, 2009

(Wednesday - Saturday)

contact

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(Details on Page 19)

A Needed Reminder Read About

The Baptized Cat

(Reminder on page 20)



Prayer

Precious Privilege
"Lord, Teach us to Pray"
(Study on Page 4)

Still Not Too Late (?)

Trip to Israel

10 days - 11/3/09

Join our group of 22

Contact: Paul Franks

337-515-7314

Magnolia Messenger
South Huntington St
CHURCH OF CHRIST
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

CHANGE SERVICE
REQUESTED

"Put them in mind... to be ready unto every GOOD work." (Titus 3:1)

Readers' Response

(Comments & Suggestions Invited; Criticisms Considered)

Wisdom in Written Words

Dear Brother Franks, my name is Rick Shumpert and I live in Dallas, Georgia and worship with the Macland Rd. Church of Christ in Marietta, Georgia. I so LOVE the MM, being a native Mississippian (Columbus). Reading about people and congregations I know and remember "fills my bucket".

I pride myself in keeping ALL of my MMs EXCEPT this time, I have turned my house upside down looking for 2 issues. One issue had a column written by either Bro. Eddie Lewis or Bro. John Gardner (fairly certain it was one of them) titled "A little Good News", it mentioned a song by that title that was out in the 80,s in that column, I believe it was in 2007 or 2008, also, there was a Question sent in to Bro. May on "Evil" I think this was several years ago. I HOPE you can find these issues and mail them to me or email these article to me, I will send a contribution for your time and postage. I am on your mailing list. Thank you so much for what you do for the Brotherhood and "Preach the Word". Your Brother in Christ, (Rick Shumpert; Dallas, Georgia)

"Don't have time for the MM"

We currently receive the Magnolia Messenger and have for some time now. I'm not exactly sure when we started receiving it or how we got on the mailing list, but we have enjoyed reading it. However, we have recently started receiving the Baptist Record...

and feel that we don't have enough time to read both papers. We don't want you to waste your money, time and efforts, so, please delete our name from your mailing list. May God continue to bless your work! Thanks so much! (Name withheld by editor; **Brandon, MS**)

Wants own copy of the MM

Brother Franks,

Please add me to the mailing list for Magnolia Messenger. One of our members... shares his copy with others in the congregation, but I sure would like to receive each issue... I am a member and elder at the Christian Home Church of Christ, Newton (Wicksburg), Alabama. (**James Sims**)

Remembering

Coleman Allmond

"...I appreciate the honor and privilege to participate in this question box challenge... I am a member of the church of Christ at Camp-C in Angola, LA State Pen. We have both recently had a brother go home to be with the Lord -- brother **Coleman K. Allmond**. He was and is a very special person in our hearts and minds in Angola. Brother Coleman spoke at the seminar on March 17, 2008. Right after he spoke I was added to the Lord's church... I would like to be added to the mail order list to receive the Magnolia Messenger. Please keep up the Lord's good work...." (**Rodney Bell**, Angola, LA)

Magnolia Messenger

Church of Christ - Kosciusko

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Contributions from churches and individuals make possible the circulation of more than 25,000 copies of each issue of the "Magnolia Messenger". Your help is **requested, needed and appreciated!**

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Editor's Note: The mention of a person or church in the Messenger does NOT necessarily mean that we either endorse or approve all the person or church may believe, teach or do. We do not (can not) have full knowledge of every person or church mentioned in the 'MM'; furthermore, we do not believe that our role before God is to be that of a judge. We pray, however, that we will never lend encouragement to anyone or anything in conflict with, or not in harmony with that which is plainly taught In Scripture. Your comments invited and encouraged. (A. L. Franks, Editor)

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A Sobering Thought or Two About Life & Death

"For what is your life? It is even as a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." (James 4:16)

DECEASED

Elvis Presley
Richard Nixon
Michael Jackson
Sam Walton

Marshall Keeble
Batsell Barrett Baxter
Gus Nichols
Guy N. Woods

Jesse Robert Franks
Mae (Browning) Belvin
Lucille (Belvin) Franks
Lovis Alfred Franks

Recently, a relative sent to us a copy of a little book she had prepared in honor of her mother. It was primarily a book of pictures. One man pictured in the little book was my great grandfather (on my mother's side of the family). He was born in 1857. "When he was just a boy his father went off to fight for the South in the Civil War and they never heard from him again."

Evidently, my great-grandfather was a good man. This was clearly demonstrated when he was about 65 and a widower. One of his daughters died suddenly and left behind four small children, including my mother, the youngest, who was only about eight years old. Great-grandpa Browning willingly accepted the challenge of caring for the four young needy grandchildren -- being assisted by one of his unmarried daughters, Amanda Jay. The children grew up in a loving atmosphere where God was revered and the Bible was respected. They were blessed to learn the value of hard work and patience in trials.

Several other family members were pictured in the book prepared for a first cousin of mine -- Mae Perry. Almost all of those pictured are now deceased; but, that's the way earthly life is. It begins; it ends. One comes along; so soon he goes away. No set time to stay.

How long one stays on this earth may vary greatly. When all is said and done, how **long** one stays on earth really doesn't matter all that much. What really counts is **how** one lives -- what he does in life and how he prepares for death.

"It is appointed unto man once to die." So saith the scriptures (Heb. 9:27). So teaches life. *One*



Editor's Great-Grandpa BROWNING

There he stands. Beard, suspenders, loosely fitting shirt and pants. Looks distinguished. But, I never knew him; he died about the time I was born.

generation goeth; another generation cometh (Eccl. 1:4.) Not much time or distance between generations. So quickly life passes. It is difficult to believe that the writer of these lines, who still thinks of himself as "young" and "vibrant", has already passed the biblical "three score of ten" years of earthly life (Psalms 90:10).

The Bible is filled with names and stories of people... people who were once very much alive, active and influential. But, concerning each of them, the Bible says -- over and over -- "*And he died...*" (See Gen. 5) A written "motto" hung on the wall of our old house where I grew up in SW Louisiana, simply stated:

*"Only one life,
It will soon pass;
Only what's done,
For Christ will last."*

Not a scripture, but scriptural. Something to think about.

Am I ready to depart? The



A. L. Franks
EDITOR

apostle Paul could say, "I am ready to die" (Acts 21:13). He even went so far as to say, "I have a desire to depart" (Phil. 1:23). Why did he have such a desire? **His answer:** "To be with Christ", and when compared to life on this earth with its problems and persecutions, Paul could say his departure would be "far better". But only a Christian can say as did Paul. Are you a Christian? Are you ready?

When I think of the great entertainer named **Elvis Presley**, who was born in Tupelo, Mississippi -- only about half of a mile down the road from where my June was living when I first met her (1955), I recall that his fame and his money could not keep him alive. He's gone, but where? Was he ready? God will take care of the matter. The important question for you/me is not, "Was Presley ready?" but, "Are you ready or am I ready?"

When I think of **Sam Walton**, the founder and father of Walmart, who once piloted his own multi-engine plane over the country visiting his stores (including the one in Kosciusko), I can't help but realize that his diligent work and his great success could not keep him alive. He, too, is gone -- but where? Was he prepared to die? We'll let God answer. But, the important questions are, "Am I ready? Are you ready?"

Are you a Christian? Do you truly believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that He is your one and only Saviour? Have you shown your faith in Jesus by truly repenting of your sins, confessing Him as your Lord and submitting to His command that you be baptized (immersed) for the remission of sins? Are you following the example of Jesus as a "Christ-like" person? Do others see Jesus in you?

Having now lived more than seven decades, and having come to realize that death is a personal appointment that all living must meet (unless Jesus returns in our lifetime), it is sobering to ponder my own approaching departure. I want to be ready. And, thank God, through Jesus Christ, readiness is possible. He is my saviour and my Lord. Is He yours? I plead with you: Obey the gospel. Become a Christian. Live for Him. Die in Him and live with Him forever!

Thank You

for reading the

Magnolia Messenger

Comments Invited

franksmm@aol.com

Bible Questions Answered

QUESTION: It seems to me there is a great deal of arrogance in our view that we are right and people in all the other Bible believing churches are wrong; so we should not associate with them. They are probably wrong about some things, but so probably are we. It is certainly arrogant to think we could not be. Maybe a good dose of humility is what we need. (J.C.R.)

RESPONSE: Humility is a good thing, a cardinal virtue, and I certainly do not wish to discourage it. For sure, no one is perfect, and we can learn important things even from people who are wrong about some things we feel certain we are right about.

Does Certainty Equal Arrogance?

The accusation is sometimes heard: "You think you're right and everyone that disagrees with you is wrong." That, of course, is true. I do, but so do you, and so does everyone else.

If we did not think we were right in what we think, we would think instead what we do think is right. Even those who believe that no one is really right, that all beliefs are equally valid, believe they are right about that and anyone who differs with them is wrong.

The important questions are, "How do we treat those who we think are wrong? With what attitudes do we approach any discussion of our differences?"

Over and over in Scripture we are told to respond to people, correcting them when necessary, with gentleness and humility.

"Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). Awareness that we too can be tempted keeps us humble.

"And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness" (2 Timothy 2:24-25).

"In your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you;

yet do it with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15-16).

Avoid going in with attitudes that proclaim: "I have the superior knowledge here; you can't teach me anything." "Anyone who doesn't know the truth about how to become a Christian surely can't teach me anything important." "I know the truth on this; I can't be wrong about any aspect of it." Surely none of us would say such things so plainly, but attitudes can show in ways other than in words.

Even if we are discussing something we confidently believe to be true, to manifest an "I can't be wrong" attitude shuts off profitable discussion. Better to say something like, "Either one of us may be wrong, but the Bible is right. Let's study together and maybe both of us can learn something about this."

The Age of "Tolerance"

In today's society the idea is pervasive that every belief must be accepted as valid. An exception is made whenever anyone thinks any belief cannot be accepted as valid. That cannot be tolerated.

According to this thinking, there is no such thing as sexual sin, either heterosexual or homosexual. Living together and having children without benefit of the commitment of marriage is presented as desirable and acceptable. It is completely unacceptable to be "judgmental" about it.

Citing the Bible to show homosexual conduct to be sin is close to being declared "hate speech."

Adultery is sin only if it is enhanced by hypocrisy by being committed by someone who has preached "family values" and condemned other people's sexual activities.

This rejection of biblical mo-

Response by Cecil May, Jr.



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rality has pushed division in several national denominations into the public spotlight. The clear biblical moral absolutes about sexual sin, murder, lying and stealing are no longer persuasive to those, even in prominent leadership positions in churches, who no longer believe the Bible to be God's revelation of himself and his will.

Some students who have been taught that there are no moral absolutes have even had trouble saying that the holocaust, the slaughter of six million human beings because of their race and religion, was absolutely wrong!

All Bible Believers Attacked

In such an intellectual atmosphere, is it any wonder that those, like us, who hold to doctrinal viewpoints thought to be important, find themselves under attack or at least are looked at askance?

All evangelical Bible believers are at odds with this world view and frequently find themselves (ourselves) under attack. Jesus' unequivocal proclamation, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6), is completely unacceptable today. All who believe it and preach it are accused of intolerance and fostering hate, however gently and tactfully it may be presented.

It is a wonderful thing that there are many who believe the

Bible is the word of God, that Jesus is the unique Son of God, and who stand for biblical morality in the midst of an immoral world. I appreciate them, read and profit from their books and articles and certainly prefer association with them rather than with the scoffer and the immoral.

This presents problems to good hearted people like our questioner. "We believe the Bible and they believe the Bible; they are wrong about some things and we are probably wrong about some things. Why do we isolate ourselves? Why can't we all be one?"

For one thing, we should not retreat into isolation. We should never give approval to what is not true, but we can never effect change in anyone with whom we do not have some association.

Some differences that we have, however, with "the other Bible believing churches" the questioner mentions are quite significant. They range from what response must we make to the gospel in order to be a Christian, through what is the church Jesus promised to build, and what kind of worship are we to offer to God.

One of the most important of them is the place of baptism in a biblical response to the gospel.

Baptism

The New Testament knows no unbaptized Christian.

Saul the persecutor was told, "Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16).

Jesus said, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16). How substantially different that is from the teaching that says, "Whoever believes will be saved and then should be baptized"!

The Bible says baptism is immersion, a burial (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12). Those two passages affirm that God, with the

same power used to raise Christ from the dead, raises us in our baptism to forgiveness and a new life in Christ.

Better to say something like, "Either one of us may be wrong, but the Bible is right. Let's study together and maybe both of us can learn something about this."

Every passage of Scripture that says anything about both baptism and salvation or

forgiveness has baptism first, salvation following. We have noted Mark 16:16, Acts 22:16, Romans 6:3-4, and Colossians 2:12. Consider also Acts 2:38, "be baptized . . . for the forgiveness of your sins"; Galatians 3:27, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ"; 1 Peter 3:21, "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

That all sounds certainly convincing! Even so we should not have an arrogant or know-it-all attitude in presenting it. We are not coercers or enforcers. God himself does not force us or others to obey him. He has given us free moral will to obey or to disobey.

When we choose, however, we also choose the consequences that go with that choice.

We are also not the judges and we should not presume to pronounce judgment. God has reserved judgment to himself. "There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?" (James 4:12). Jesus said, "The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day" (John 12:48).

Let us be open to receive whatever correction we need to receive from any source, but let us also be bold and caring enough to speak the truth in love to those who have shown love and respect for the Lord but have stopped just short of entrance into the kingdom of God.

Reader's Response

Just wanted to send you a note that we received the latest edition of the Magnolia Messenger (April-June 2009) and my wife, Karen, and I appreciated the articles, especially the ones that update and feature some of the great congregations in Mississippi!

I immensely enjoyed reading your article "Signs Say Something" and Brother May's answer to the question on church discipline. We here in Rockford wish you and the staff at the MM all our best. With Brotherly Love to all, (Jeffery Higdon, Rockford, IL; Formerly of Batesville, MS)

Mississippi
Madison Minister
Hits the
Nail on the Head

***“Intimacy of
Fellowship
in the
Church”***



Jim Howard, preacher for the church in Madison, Mississippi responded to Cecil May's article on "Discipline" published in our previous issue. Brother Howard wrote: *Thanks so much for publishing Cecil May's excellent article on church discipline, one of the very best on that subject that I have seen. I would not change one word of that article but would include this addendum:*

Our reason for existing as churches of Christ, our uniqueness, is our goal of restoring the New Testament Church. I am convinced that one facet of New Testament Christianity that we have failed to restore is the intimacy that characterized the church's fellowship. I am also convinced that the discipline applied to the man who had been living with his father's wife (I Cor. 5) was successful (see II Cor. 2:5-11) because of the powerful intimacy of the Corinthian church, the loss of which drove the sinful man to repent. Apparently the loss of that intimacy served as a shock treatment which led to the man's repentance and restoration to the fellowship. There is little reason to think that we will be successful in church disciplinary actions in our time until we restore the necessary environment for success, namely a powerful intimacy the loss of which would so emotionally impact the sinner that he or she would make the decision to repent and be restored to such a special fellowship.

Jim Howard; P. O. Box 1845; Madison, MS 39130

Quitman, Mississippi
Gospel Meeting and Ladies' Day

A Note From Charity

Hello, I don't know if it is too late to get this information in, but I wanted to let everyone know about our gospel meeting and ladies' day. Quitman Church of Christ. Our gospel meeting will be held September 13th - 16th with Bro. W.T. Allison from Hamilton, Alabama. The nightly services will start at 7:00 PM. Sunday services will start at 9:30 with Bible study and 10:30 for the morning

**Gospel Meeting
Sept. 13 - 16
Evangelist
W. T. Allison**

**Ladies' Day
Sept. 19
Speaker
Antionette Green**

worship. Lunch will be provided at 11:45 with singing at 1:00 and the afternoon services starting at 1:30. Our ladies' day will be held September 19th with registration from 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.. Lunch will be held at 11:30. Our guest speaker is Antionette Green from

Memphis, Tennessee. Everyone is invited to attend. Thank you, and I hope I'm not too late putting this in. Thanks for all you do!!! Thanks, Charity Tucker

Cash for Clunkers

- Greg Pollock -

Perhaps you have heard of the "cash for clunkers" program. Specifically, it is the "Car Allowance Rebate System" or "CARS." In an attempt to boost auto sales and attempt to retire some inefficient cars and trucks, the government allows folks to trade in certain cars and trucks for up to \$4,500.

I am reminded of how similar this is to what God does for us when we are obedient to him. We are allowed to trade in our "clunker" lives, not for cash, but for redemption ... for salvation ... for eternal life!

You see, by ourselves, our lives are "inefficient" and "wasteful." Our lives are "clunker" in every sense of the word. But when we are obedient to God, we trade in our old lives for new ones.

"Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17) .. "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him" (Colossians 3:9,10).

God has a better program than the government can even imagine having. God's program is not about cars, it is about lives. We can trade in our lives for something better, something greater, something lasting! Let's not walk around in our "clunker" lives, let's trade them for something much, much better! (by Greg Pollock, preacher for Booneville church. Taken from their church bulletin.)

NATCHEZ, 61 South Preacher Dies

Coleman Allmond, minister of the 61 South Church of Christ passed away on May 15, 2009, after having hip replacement surgery on the 11th and suffering a massive stroke on May 12th. We extend our deepest sympathy to brother Coleman's wife, **Elsie** and to the rest of his immediate family. The 61 South congregation has suffered a great loss.

I am not a member of your church but I enjoy reading your magazine...(Eloise S. Purvis, Florence, MS)

“Lord, Teach Us To Pray” **Our Greatest Privilege**

- Al Behel -

The disciples of Jesus had listened to his sermons, but never asked, "Teach us to preach." They had observed his powerful miracles, but never said, "Lord, teach us to do miracles." The **one** thing they asked for Him to teach them was **how to pray** (Luke 11:1). Knowing how to pray effectively is far more desirable than knowing how to preach a powerful sermon. Moving heaven is much greater than moving men on earth.

Of course, there are many desirable gifts or privileges, but none surpasses the privilege of prayer.

We can train men to preach moving sermons, but powerful praying; can only come out of hearts that have been touched by the Master. More is accomplished through prayer than through sermons for without prayer sermons are empty and ineffective.

Obviously the disciples had witnessed Jesus on His knees. They had seen the hand of God moved through His prayers. No one had prayed like Him. No one had talked with the Father the way Jesus did. They stood in awe as they listened to Him pray and they wanted to pray like Jesus prayed. Only Jesus could teach them to pray like that.

I've heard many moving prayers. Some were very short but powerful. A little boy in New York prayed, "God, I thank you for making me a human being and not a dog!" Some of the old saints knew how to pray. The key? They knew they were really talking to God and that God was listening.

Prayer is every believer's privilege. Not everyone is called to become preachers, or elders, or teachers; but everyone is called to pray. Later, Jesus would say, "Men ought always to pray and not to lose heart" (Luke 18:1). Praying opens the doors of heaven and moves the hand of God.

(Al Behel is the long time preacher for the Great Smoky Mountains Church of Christ; P. O. Box 173; Pigeon Forge, TN 37868)



Braylee Lambert

A Note From Alvin Jennings

6/6/09

Dear A. L.

When I read your good article about signs, it was the same -- but different -- as my study on "The Best Surprise..." I enclose a copy for you. You always do such a good job with MM!

Cecils response to the discipline question was also so good. He is a good man. If you have a chance, please commend him for me. God bless you always." (Alvin Jennings; Hurst, TX)

Editor's Note: For many years brother Jennings served the Lord's Cause as a writer and publisher of gospel literature. He owned and operated Star Bible Publications in Fort Worth, Texas, up until about 3 years ago when he sold the business. Brother Jennings is now "retired." He sent along his "Business/Retirement Card" which is copied below.

(Copied by permission.)

Alvin Jennings, (Ret.)

817 282 4918 817 456 3601 (cell) alvinjennings@sbcglobal.net
632 Hillview Dr, Hurst, TX 76054

<<<<<<>>>>>>
HAVE TOOLS – Will Build and/or Repair
HAVE TRANSPORTATION – Will Travel
HAVE LEATHER – Will Re-bind Bibles & Books
HAVE BIBLE – Will Read, Teach & Pray Anytime
HAVE HOUSE – Welcome Each Thursday, 7:30 pm
HAVE COMPUTER – Will Type & Email
HAVE TIME & HEALTH – Will Help When You Call

“But I Can’t Tell Anybody!”

EDITOR’S OPINION: Why are those who are known as “churches of Christ” in the United States not growing? According to recent statistical studies the number of congregations and the number of individual members have declined over the past several years. Why? Why are we not growing?

Based upon our own personal observations; regretfully, we are forced to agree that growth among churches of Christ in Mississippi and adjoining states is, at the best, “slow”. We are not growing as we ought. Why? Why not?

In my opinion, several reasons may be given. These would include:

(a) the powerful influence of the world with its associated lusts; (b) diminishing interest in the Word of God -- fewer true students of the Bible; (c) increasing influence of certain TV evangelists and their “mega-churches”; (d) hypocrisy among church members; (e) lack of genuine love and concern for the family of God; (f) increasing acceptance of “pluralism” -- “every religion is okay”; (g) loss of respect for the authority of the Holy Scriptures; (h) failure to teach the “truth in love” and (i) increased wealth; thus, less dependence upon God.

The following article by Larry West, widely known for his evangelistic zeal and “WeCare Campaigns”, effectively calls attention to what may be the **Number One** reason we are not growing. Please read with care and prayer. (alf)

- Larry West -

“The church in America is shrinking.

“The number of men, women and children in the pews has dipped to the lowest level since a comprehensive effort to count members began in 1980, according to the 2009 edition of *Churches of Christ in the United States*.

“In the newly released directory, 21st Century Christian identifies 12,629 a cappella Churches of Christ with 1,578,281 adherents nationwide. Those figures represent 526 fewer churches and 78,436 fewer people in the pews than just six years ago.”

So says, Bobby Ross, Jr. of “The Christian Chronicle”, (February issue, 2009)

And what is the source of the problem? We are plagued with the disease, “**But I can’t tell anybody!**” “Not personally.” “Not me!” “Not in my home town!” “Not to my friends!” “If it’s at home, I have something to lose!”

It’s:

1. “Not to my family! Why, oh, that’s my family!”

2. “Not to my friends! Why, oh, they’re my friends!”

3. “Not to my acquaintances! Why, I hardly know them!”

4. And, “Not to strangers! I don’t know them at all!”

And we must ask, “Who’s left?”

Now, surely, the Lord must be looking down, saying to the American Christian, “Okay, allow me to please understand. I have cleansed all your sins away in the blood of my Son. I have, thus, added your name ... your very name ... to the Lamb’s Book of Life (Revelation 21 :27). I have chosen you in Him before the foundation of the world, that you should be holy and without blame before Him in love. I have adopted you, yes you, as my child

by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of My will. I have redeemed you through Jesus’ blood. I have given you forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of My grace which I have made to abound toward you (Ephesians 1 :4-7) ...

... *But you can’t tell anybody?*

“I have made known to you the mystery of the Gospel (Ephesians 1:9) that those before you never knew. Yet, living in darkness, in ignorance of the Gospel’s coming events, they through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth. And yet, all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise (Hebrews 11:33-39). That is, they lived in darkness. They never knew the mystery of the Gospel of Jesus.

“But you! Why, to YOU I have made it known! You know Jesus is My Son. He is God in the flesh! And as a human He died to take away your own human sin problem (Ephesians 1:7). He raised up bodily from that buried grave to remove your own grave problem (I Corinthians 15). That mystery I made known to you!

... *But you can’t tell anybody?*

“Because I see you from eternity’s side, I already see you yourself raised up and sitting together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:6)! Already there! With Me! In Glory!

... *But you can’t tell anybody?*

“And when your day comes, your day controlled by time and not eternity, why, in that great ‘getting up mornin’, I will raise your body up in incorruption, in glory, in power, a spiritual body (I Corinthians 15:42-44), glorified beyond your wildest imagination!

... *But you can’t tell anybody?*

“You are going to allow the church in America to shrink? You are going to allow it to go the way of the Ephesian church when I removed its lamp stand from its place (Revelation 2:5). And why? Why are you going to do it?

... *Because you can’t tell anybody.*

“I gave my life for you! And I’ve given you all these Spiritual blessings. And more!

But you can’t go ...

1. “Not to your family! Why? Because oh, that’s your family?”

2. “Not to your friends! Why? Because, oh, they’re your friends?”

3. “Not to your acquaintances! Why? Because, you ‘hardly know them!’”

4. Not to strangers! Why? Because you ‘don’t know them at all!’”

“I pray, my child, please excuse me. I’m so

Turn to Anybody on Page 16

Visiting the Church in Forest, MS

To Encourage and to be Encouraged



Workers in Forest Preparing for V.B.S.

(From left) Macey Hudson, Gloria Nielson and Linda Crotwell

Long time readers of the MM may recall several reports about the church in Forest, Mississippi, which was first organized in the mid-eighties. As has been the case with many churches, the Forest congregation has -- over the years -- experienced its “ups and downs.”

Back about eight or ten years ago, the Forest church reached a high in attendance when it was not unusual to have 40 to 50 present each Lord’s day. Over the past several months, however, some members have moved away and others, regretfully, have ceased regular attendance, resulting in decreased numbers.

In a recent Sunday visit, my June and I found a determined; yet, smaller group of disciples who are still seeking to carry on the work of the Lord in Scott County’s largest community of approximately 5,000 souls.

Steve Perry, a very capable preacher, faithfully comes over from Brandon (about 35 miles away) to preach and teach each Sunday and Wednesday. Brother Steve, who has a full-time job as a Nurse, also makes an effort to be in Forest on other occasions dur-

ing the week to help in whatever ways he can.

In our recent visit, my June and I enjoyed worshipping with and spending time with our brothers and sisters who are keeping the work going. I was also grateful for brother Steve’s invitation to me to preach; an invitation which was accepted.

Later, in the early afternoon, we passed by the church building and, noticing a couple of cars, we stopped by to see what was going on. We were pleased to find the ladies pictured above. They were busy making preparation for their upcoming planned Vacation Bible School. These three ladies, I believe, represent the determined spirit of the Forest church to continue their service to the community; thus ensuring that the doors of the church building stay open to serve the Lord’s Cause. May God richly bless.

Finally, to each one reading these lines, would you pause for just a few moments and earnestly ask God to bless the efforts of the small church in Forest, Mississippi. They don’t need more money -- *right now*, but they do need your prayers for God’s help. (alf, editor)

Readers’ Response

We at the Church in Franklin, Louisiana would like for you to print this picture and the obituary on the back in your paper. It was one of Mrs. Marjorie’s favorite papers. She looked forward to it every month. She has friends that we feel would love to see this... (Franklin Church of Christ, Franklin, LA)

Thank you for sending us the Magnolia Messenger. We enjoy it very much. (Wanda Petersen, Show Low AZ)

Homecoming
Pine Bluff
Church of Christ
Toccopola, Mississippi
Sunday,
September 29, 2009

Scheduled Speaker

A. L. Franks,

Evangelist & Editor of MM

Casino Gambling

“America’s Greatest Vice is Growing in Mississippi”

-Dennis Doughty-
Tunica Mississippi

An elder in the Lord’s church in our area became aware that his long time office manager was stealing from his business. He had taught and baptized this person, and put great trust in her. He was heartbroken, and angered to learn she was stealing to feed a growing gambling habit. Conservative estimates are that over \$50,000 of his company’s money ended up going into the slot machines in Tunica. The employee was fired, but her habit continued, and she eventually lost everything, including her home. She is in danger of losing her soul as well.

I could tell stories like the above all day long. I hear them every week. The growth of Riverboat and Indian casinos in this nation is staggering. There is no doubt that gambling has become one of the greatest vices in the United States.

Tunica Mississippi is the third largest gambling center in America with nine casinos. Every year 12-14 million people come here to gamble, that’s 40,000 a day! Mississippi now boasts an additional 17 casinos along the Mississippi river and the coast. In 1993, the first year of gambling in the state, the total gross revenue was \$790 million. Last year it had grown to \$2.7 billion! (Delta Business Journal, June 2009)

We are not alone in this trend. Louisiana now has 18 casinos, Florida 7, Missouri 11, Illinois 9 and Oklahoma tops them all with a staggering 93 casinos! Then, of course, there is Las Vegas and Atlantic City, and the casinos on board the hundreds of cruise ships that depart our coastal cities each week. But gambling does not start and stop at the casino door. There are the millions wagered on NFL and college football games and the office pool during basketball’s March Madness. As if this is not enough there are the on-line casinos that allow you to gamble from your home computer. Then throw in the backroom craps games and illegal poker rooms and you get a sense of our nation’s addiction to gambling.

Preachers, elders, and teachers need to address this growing activity in our state and nation. First, let’s approach this topic in a scriptural way. The Bible does not address gambling directly, at least not in the way it addresses murder,

lying and immorality (Revelation 20:8). I would be careful not to proclaim from the pulpit, “The Bible says that gambling is a sin!” Someone may



Dennis Doughty

ask you for that verse. I do not know of any situation in the scriptures that we could compare to our modern casino gambling. The casting of lots around the cross (John 19:24) and in the upper room (Acts 1:26) was for the purpose of randomly deciding who would get Christ’s garment, and who would take Judas’ place. It is like us drawing straws to see who gets the last cookie in the jar. “Casting lots” is not in the same ball park as casino gambling.

My every day definition of gambling is: The risking of an amount of money on an outcome whose odds are strongly stacked against you, in the hopes of winning a much larger sum of money. A game or activity that tempts you with the potential to become instantly wealthy, but which the odds show is more than likely to leave you dead broke. As someone said of gambling, “It is a tax on people who have poor math skills!”

Gambling is the fruit of a materialistic nation. For generations we have elected the wealthy man to office and given him more power. For decades

I tell our little congregation that I would love to see every addicted gambler, every blackjack dealer, and every cocktail waitress in our services on Sunday.

the American dream of fancy cars and bigger houses. Month in and month out we idolize the rich Hollywood playboy and wealthy heiress. Every day we use our credit cards to spend money we don’t have to live a life style we see others living. Every hour commercials urge us to buy the latest gadget. Everyone wants their fifteen minutes of fame! And if there is the slightest hope of getting it on a pull of a slot machine at the nearest casino, or with a lottery ticket from the corner market, we will desperately try it. We will try it until every last penny is gone! Gambling is fueled by our love of money. Our love if money is fueled by the nation we live in. There are many activities, including gambling, that is based on the love of money.

The Bible does have a few things to say about pursuing riches. Paul said, “But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness...” (1 Timothy 6:10-12). Notice the words; those “who want to get rich”, and “longing for it,” these people fall into a snare and their lives are thrust into many griefs! This describes pretty

Turn to CASINO on Page 16

Seen
in
MS

We
Must
Obey
Our
LORD



Jesus once asked,
“Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46)

Canton, MS

A Good Supper and a Great Study

It was Wednesday, July 29, 2009. My June and I made the decision to visit with our brethren who worship in Canton, Mississippi as the *North Liberty Street Church of Christ*. Arriving in Canton shortly after five o’clock, we decided that we would find a place to eat “supper.” Wendy’s was selected. And, it turned out to be an excellent choice -- not just because of the *food*, but mainly because of the *fellowship*.

After ordering, while I waited for the “meal” to be prepared, June selected a small table next to a large window where we could sit, eat and watch as people came into the restaurant. Not long before we were finished eating we noticed a small Honda pull into the parking lot. As a man and woman got out of the car, I said to June, “We know those folks -- the **Parkmans**.”

Shortly after the Parkman’s (**Corkie and Brenda**) had gotten their food, we were blessed to join them at their table for a pleasant time of fellowship. Then, unexpected to us, other members of the North Liberty Street congregation started coming in. There was **Floyd Pearson** and his daughter, **Amy**, along with her husband, **Chris**. Just a few minutes later, the preacher for the church and his wife came in -- **Roger and Karen Hines**. (*It seems that they, along with some others had sorta developed a habit of eating at Wendy’s before Wednesday night services.*)

My June and I were blessed. We love to eat with our brothers and sisters in Christ. The North Liberty church, which normally brings together 40 to 60 worshippers on Sunday mornings, usually has a much smaller number in attendance on Wednesday evenings. Those of us gathered at Wendy’s made up about half of the number present at the church building for the evening services. Our Wendy’s gathering was sorta like a “Prelude to the mid-week Bible Study Hour.” *Good food. Good fellowship.*

As the scheduled hour for church services drew nearer and nearer, it was soon time to leave

the place where physical food was served and go to the building where spiritual food was to be served. Upon arrival, my June and I were pleased to meet several other faithful Christians who had ventured out for mid-week services on a very stormy night. Almost all of them we have known for several years and have come to think of them as “family.”

Time came for public worship. **Corkie Parkman**, as usual, did a good job leading us in spiritual songs. An opening prayer was led by the writer of these words. Singing and praying together, as brothers and sisters in Christ, certainly helped us to become even more receptive to the blessing of feasting upon the Word of God.

The class teacher was **Roger Hines**, Canton’s very capable preacher. Brother Hines taught a meaningful class using, as his text, the last two chapters of the book of Zachariah. Roger emphasized that the prophecies of the Old Testament book found their true and ultimate fulfillment in the advent of Christ’s *spiritual* kingdom on earth which is the church. He also, I believe, correctly warned us about those who would interpret prophecies of the OT Scriptures to mean that Jesus would someday return to earth and set up an earthly kingdom.

Soon the “hour” of study was completed, leaving us with a feeling of joyful satisfaction, knowing that we had been sitting at the feet of a very talented teacher who has developed his natural abilities -- not only as an instructor at MBC, but also as a capable teacher of the Word for the Canton congregation.

Putting together the time we spent at Wendy’s and the time we spent at the church building (*supper & study*), we can say that Wednesday evening, July 29, was both a pleasant and profitable experience.

We continue to thank God for the Canton church and for their generous fellowship with us in our work of presenting good news through the paper (*Magnolia Messenger*) and through our persons (*Al & June Franks*).

Confess to and Pray for One Another

- Eddie Lewis -

James 5:16: In our text for this study James says, "Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." There are two responsibilities in our *one another* relationship that are commanded in this verse—confession of sins and prayer for one another.

All of us sin; therefore we need to confess our sins. John tells us that we can get forgiveness, when we confess our sins, but in this verse we are confessing our sins to God (1 John 1:8-10). Some ask, "Why confess to other people since God is the one that forgives us? Why not confess to God alone?"

Well, there are a number of reasons. Paul tells us to, "Bear one another's burdens and thus fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). We are commanded to deal with sin in the lives of others. Doing this is a very difficult task, therefore many churches ignore this responsibility, others treat it lightly, and others just talk about sin in a general way and never deal with the person involved in sin.

Paul came to the point when he said, "Brothers, if a man is trapped in some sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself; you also may be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). We have no choice in the matter, if we wish to be in God's will. We are to help each other with sin, by confessing sin to each other.

What kind of confession is James talking about? This could mean confession of some weakness with the intent of getting help to deal with it from some other Christian. It could mean confessing some sin with the intent of asking that person for forgiveness. Jesus tells us to forgive a person when they come asking for forgiveness (Luke 17:3-4). He said even if they ask seven times in a day we must forgive. Forgiveness is something we can offer another. We must not hold a grudge.

Also, this confession could mean making a public confession of some sin that reflects on the whole church. We are asking for the prayers of the church that we might be forgiven by God and our brethren and receive strength.

Paul gives some guidelines in this verse to help us with this task. First, the spiritual Christian is to



Eddie Lewis

restore him. Generally speaking there are two classes of people in the world—saved and unsaved. In scripture the saved fall into two classes—spiritual and carnal.

The spiritual Christian is one who has submitted his life to Christ. He lives by the Spirit and keeps in step with the Spirit (Galatians 5:25). The fruit of the Spirit is seen in his life as he relates to others (v. 22-23).

The carnal Christian is one who lives according to the ways of the world (1 Corinthians 3:1-3). In this verse

Paul calls them **c a r n a l C h r i s t i a n s** because of their jealousy and quarreling. Their division showed they were following the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life (1 John 2:16-17).

Paul said the *spiritual* Christian is to do the restoring. Don't send a baby to do the restoring. Some will say, "Does that mean only preachers, elders and deacons should do this task of restoring a sinful brother. The answer is "no," because not all preachers, elders and deacons are spiritual. Anyone that is walking in God's will, dealing with it in his life, and growing in the Spirit is a spiritual Christian.

Jesus said, "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into the pit?" (Luke 6:39). The

spiritual person realizes his own sin and can humbly help the person in sin deal with his sin. Of course, this doesn't give us a reason to remain carnal. All are commanded to grow spiritually (1 Peter 2:1-2). We want to reach the point in our spiritual growth that we can help others with their burdens.

The second guideline is that the task is for more than one person. Paul did use a plural personal pronoun. This guideline fits what Jesus teaches us about dealing with problems between Christians (Matthew 18:15-17). He tells us to work out the problem one-on-one. Don't talk to others or spread rumors. Second, He says if they will not agree then take another person with you, a spiritual person to help talk it out.

The third guideline is that the task is to be done with genuine humility. The spiritual person that approaches the Christian in sin must do so with a great sense of his own sin and his own unworthiness to receive the grace of God. Paul even told Titus that this is the same spirit we should have as we approach the unsaved (Titus 3:2-3).

In other words, Paul is exhorting Titus to remind the Christians in Crete to have a true sense of understanding and humility as they talk to others. We must remember that it is only by God's grace that we are saved.

When we understand the grace of God in our own life it makes it impossible to approach another person with a spirit of **a r r o g a n c e**, pride, or a sense of superiority.

Paul in Galatians is concerned about the man "trapped in some sin." He knows that the only approach that will help that man is one where true humility and gentleness are used.

The fourth guideline is that we who help must be cautious. We must watch ourselves because we will be tempted. The lusts of the flesh are very deceptive and very attractive. Some Christians, while trying to help others, have found themselves practicing the same sin. How many preachers and counselors trying to help a woman with a marital problem have ended up as a part of the problem? They allowed themselves to be open to temptation and failed.

The fifth guideline is to pray for one another. James said, "Pray so you may be healed." We can be healed by God answering the prayers of a spiritual person. It is a sin not to pray for each other. The prayer of the spiritual person is powerful and effective. What a wonderful promise. We are to pray all kinds of prayers for all kinds of people (Philippians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:3-6).

Turn to Confess on pg 16



Jay Alexander (preacher in DeRidder) goes over mission plans before next morning departure for San Benito, Texas

Louisiana Mission Team (Bilbo & Boxwood) Goes to Sunny Glen Children's Home

- Report by Julie Fariss -

A group of people, in Southwest Louisiana, discovered a need down in San Benito, Texas, home to Sunny Glen Children's Home. This group was made up of members from the Boxwood Church of Christ, in Bivens, and the Church of Christ at DeRidder. After months of preparation, thirty-seven people caravanned to south Texas on July 13th. That evening, everyone at the children's home joined this mission team in a few icebreakers, singing and prayer.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday were full of teaching, crafts, games, singing, prayer, puppet shows and lots more. The Bible lessons came from the book of John. Puppet shows were used to teach seven miracles that Jesus did to establish His authority.

The kids broke up into classes several times a day to further learn that Jesus is their friend and that they can depend on Him. They saw their teachers "turn water into wine" and "feed five-thousand people". Lots of time and love went into preparing for these classes.

The puppet shows turned out to be a hit. A group of teenagers from DeRidder, LA practiced for weeks to be able to convey seven Bible stories. Through these skits, the viewers learned that Jesus is God's Son, and has the authority to forgive sins. His power allowed Him to turn water to wine, feed over 5,000 people with just a boy's lunch, heal a nobleman's son, a lame man and a blind man, walk on water and raise Lazarus from the dead. The children were mesmerized by the puppets. Especially when they began to rap.

After lunch, on two days, the kids got to participate in craft time. The members from the Boxwood congregation did a fantastic job

preparing and providing things for the children at Sunny Glen to make. They each made a frame for a group picture, and they received a T-shirt that everyone was allowed to sign. The front of the shirt had Louisiana and Texas reaching out to each other.

Some of the younger kids got to decorate visors while the older ones made necklaces with colored beads. Each bead represented the seven miracles that were taught that week.

Each evening the mission team held a devotional with lots of singing. The children at Sunny Glen really enjoyed the songs because the visiting group enjoyed what they were doing. They sang from the heart and genuinely praised God. That kind of love is contagious. Hopefully, the children will want to learn more about God and His love.

On Wednesday, the children and staff at Sunny Glen were treated to supper at CiCi's Pizza. The group of about seventy made it in and out of the restaurant in record time. Everyone was full and happy at the end of the day.

The group from Louisiana is grateful for the hospitality shown them by the SGCH's staff. Most of the group stayed in the five homes on campus. The house parents provided breakfast and two suppers for the mission team. Everyone ate like kings and queens and was treated like royalty.

Those from Louisiana gained a tremendous amount of respect for the house parents at San Benito. These special people exhibit patience, love and compassion for the children in their care. Their goal is to teach the kids as much as they can about Jesus while staying at Sunny Glen. What an awesome responsibility.

Turn to MISSION on Page 15

Praise God

Heart or Mechanical Instruments?

- Tim Childs -

A mechanical instrument is an inanimate object. Since it is non-living, it is therefore unable to comprehend any message from its maker. It does not entertain any rational thoughts to communicate to its maker. A mechanical instrument never expresses appreciation to its maker for making it in the first place, or to its owner for taking good care of it. It has no spirit with which to convey

gratitude for its owner cleaning it, or protecting it from bad weather, or from abuse by a pet or small child.

The members of our body are to be used faithfully as instruments of righteousness (Romans 6:13). While God wonderfully created man [not only physically, but also spiritually (in his own image)], including his heart and his

lips whereby he may praise God, every mechanical instrument is inferior simply from the standpoint it is man made. God is able to use the instruments he has made and sanctified for his service, i.e. our composite being (including our hearts and tongues). "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Hebrews 13:15).

In worship man communicates messages from his spirit to God who is the infinite Spirit. These messages must convey our deep humility and submission to his Divine authority. God is God. I am not God. God is not a man, and so his thoughts and ways transcend our own. God has communicated through command and approved example what he expects of his people who follow Christ. Christians are not at liberty to tinker and play with what he has called for. With respect to music, according to Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, the only instrument to be employed in Christian worship is a grateful heart in tune and in step with him.

In the exclusive employment of vocal music, we are in the blessed company of Jesus who sang with

his disciples, the Apostles who sang with the first Christians, and the church (being guided by the Holy Spirit/given all things pertaining to life and godliness) that Jesus established throughout the Roman empire.

One might listen to an organ, or a full orchestra all day and he would never hear the first intelligible thought. He would never learn anything about God, Jesus, his Son,

the Holy Spirit, salvation, the church, or about faithful Christian living and service. One would never be edified in the biblical sense, nor encouraged to patient steadfastness in the Lord. He would never be reminded of the home for which we long, and how

beautiful heaven must be. While those who do not know God refuse to sing, we yet will be content to "sing with the spirit," and "the understanding also" (1 Corinthians 14:15). Address Tim Childs C/o:

Hillcrest Church of Christ
956 S Fourth St
Baldwyn, MS 38824-9201

With respect to music, according to Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, the only instrument to be employed in Christian worship is a grateful heart in tune and in step with him.



Tim Childs

Good to Hear From Harvey Starling

Harvey Starling, who became well known to many Mississippians back many years ago through the use of huge tents in evangelistic gospel meetings, recently (6/17/09) wrote a note to us saying "Hi, Al. Just staying in touch."

Brother Harvey sent us a copy of his newsletter detailing his recent mission efforts in the country of Romania where he serves as an evangelist on behalf of the Midway Church in Madison, Alabama. He commented, "The doors are open and so much more can be done but we are hindered often by lack of physical strength and this year a lack of sufficient funds to do what has been planned...." He closed his report by stating, "The Lord permitting, I will continue to work for years to come in the exciting and fruitful field of Romania, under the oversight of the Midway elders."

Address: Harvey & Pat Starling; P. O. Box 915; Madison, AL 35758.
Email: hmsstar@bellsouth.net
Office Phone: 256-430-9914

as published in "The Sweetwater Salt"

One little boy was having difficulty lifting a heavy stone. His father came along just then. He asked, "Are you using all your strength?" "Yes!" "No, you're not," the father replied. "I'm right here and you haven't asked me to help you."

As we face our difficulties, are we using all our strength (Matthew 7:7-11)? (via bulletin; Sweetwater Church of Christ; Sweetwater, TN; Daniel Howell, evangelist)



Lennis Nowell, evangelist from Corinth, Mississippi, shown preaching an "old fashioned" gospel message at the Nile church in Attala County. (8-3-09)

"Gospel Meetings"; sometimes, called "Revivals" are not as common as they used to be. They have been replaced by what many consider to be "more effective" means.

It seems to me, however, that an old fashioned "gospel meeting" where the Word is faithfully and loving proclaimed several nights in a row can still be of great value and, when properly conducted, can accomplish much.

We are grateful that many churches of Christ continue to con-

duct at least one extended series of plain, fundamental Bible teaching meetings each year. I fear, that if we are not exceedingly careful, we will find ourselves following the example of those who have little faith in the power of God's word; also, little respect for the effectiveness of gospel preaching. May God give us leaders who will lead and not eagerly follow after the ways of the world. The preaching/teaching of the gospel is still God's power to save. (Rom.1:16). Editor

Yes, Some Churches of Christ Continue to Conduct "Gospel Meetings"

Now, You Take it from There!

by

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The Bible Has A Message For All Occasions

After Moses recorded the Ten Commandments and the subsequent ordinances as directed by Jehovah: "Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, 'all that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient' " (Exodus 24:7).

After settling in Palestine Joshua assembled all the tribes of Israel, reviewed their history under the providence of God, and gave solemn charge to faithful worship of Jehovah (Josh. 24:1-23). Then the people said to Joshua: "We will serve the Lord our God and we will obey His voice" (Josh. 24:24).

When the book of the law was discovered in the ruins of the temple, Josiah assembled all the people of Judah - "from the greatest to the least; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant" (II Chron. 34:30).

In Paul's letter to Colossae instruction is given: "When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans" (Col. 4:16). When writing to Thessalonica he instructs: "have this letter read to all the brethren" (I Thess. 5:27).

Then there is private reading for devotional study, worship, spiritual strength and consecration. An Ethiopian nobleman, unnamed but described as a court official and treasurer of the queen, was reading aloud from Isaiah's prophecy of Jesus. This resulted in a one-on-one Bible study with an evangelist, and the conversion of an honest seeker of truth. (Acts 8:29-40).

A young evangelist (Timothy) is instructed by his teacher (Paul): "Be diligent to present yourself to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15).

When Paul and Silas taught in the synagogue of Berea, the Jews "received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11).

Someone has written: "Carrying a Bible will never take the place of reading it". And the apostle John wrote: "Blessed is he that reads and those that hear the words of this prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it" (Rev. 1:3).

NOW, YOU TAKE IT FROM THERE!

OLIVE BRANCH Rebuilding After Tornado

The building occupied by the Olive Branch Church of Christ recently took a major hit by a tornado.

As reported in the church bulletin, dated July 26, 2009, the church is possibly looking at about three months before the rebuilding will be completed. They are presently meeting in their fellowship hall.

Mike Hixson, preacher for the Olive Branch congregation wrote in their bulletin, "As we slowly rebuild, be praying and looking for opportunities to share the gospel and raise the visibility of the church in Olive Branch." To borrow the words of Paul, "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving; meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains" (Col. 4:2-3)

Spiritual Leadership

John Poore

In organizations large and small, great leaders always place *service/the good of the organization* above personal goals, and view *success/faithfulness* in the accomplishments of others. Great leaders possess the **vision** to see where the organization needs to go, and to articulate that direction to others. This type of leader has the **conviction** to say, "Yes, we need to go in that direction!" **Communication skills** allow this leader to frame the issues at hand in an understandable fashion as it relates to, and respects the body/congregation. Gifted leaders have a very **high emotional intelligence** for appreciating the ideas, concerns and talents of others.

The "*biblical model*" for spiritual leadership is Acts 6:1-7. This passage is foundational to the principle of (*lead by serving*) whether it be elder, deacon, other members, etc.... The word deacon is closely connected to the words "servant and minister". Elders are "deacons" first, and then elders, pastors, shepherds, overseers, bishops, etc.

Any man that is too important to be a deacon is too self-serving to be a shepherd!! Serving God is the key to church growth!

Perhaps the best way to communicate the "spiritual servant leadership" principle is to look at the biblical emphasis that is given to the "work of the shepherd". In the history of God's people, the "*shepherd motif*" is cited more than five hundred times in the Bible. The responsibility was not a "part-time/fair weather" endeavor. Shepherds

Godly shepherds must imitate Christ, the "chief shepherd", as they attract and lead flocks through loving service and authentic relationships.

protected, talked, and caressed their lambs. They lead those tender creatures to fresh pools of water and ample pastures with the sound of their voices. Likewise, spiritual flocks must be nourished, guided, protected, and affirmed by a loving touch and a gentle word.

God is our Shepherd. (Psalms 23:1) "He gathers the people like lambs in His arms, and carries them close to Him." (Isaiah 40:11; Psalm 95:7) David, as a servant of God, led

the flock with an innocent heart and skillful hands. (Psalm 78:70-72) Jesus is portrayed as the "Good Shepherd". (John 10:11, 14) Godly shepherds must imitate Christ, the "chief shepherd", as they attract and lead flocks through loving service and authentic relationships.

Elders/bishops/overseers are shepherds made by the "Holy Spirit of God" for the purpose of feeding and caring! (Acts 20:28) Peter said, "take care of God's flock", watch over it, and do not be a "ruler", but rather an "example" to the flock that you serve. (1 Peter 5:1-4)

"Can a local congregation be 'biblical' without elders/shepherds?" The "**ideal**" is for every gathering of disciples in a given location to have godly men that are capable, willing, and able

An elder/presbyter is a mature Christian man who, because of his relationship with God, is respected as an encourager, teacher, leader, admonisher and a model. (Hebrews 13:7,17)

to guide and counsel the sheep. (1 Peter 5:4) The "**reality**", however, is much different!

Paul left Titus in Crete to appoint "elders/shepherds" in each city "IF" men were identified to have the qualities that follow. (Titus 1:5-9) On the first mission trip of Paul and Barnabas, eight churches were established, but only "three" (Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia) are mentioned as having "appointed/identified elders". The other five were likely young fellowships where leadership qualities had not been developed.

The Bible nowhere specifies that these churches were "unscriptural!" Elders are not mentioned in the New Testament until 44 A.D., fifteen or so years after the church

was established in Jerusalem. (Acts 11:30) Many were converted during this time and, evidently, saved without the benefit of elders.

An elder/presbyter is a mature Christian man who, because of his relationship with God, is respected as an encourager, teacher, leader, admonisher and a model. (Hebrews 13:7,17) Jesus has "all authority" in heaven and earth. (Matthew 28:18) The "human authority" of elders is "derived authority". It has more to do with who is willing to serve. (Matthew 20:25-28) These men have a moral authority from God, and "discretionary power" to act in matters of opinion if their congregation so delegates.

The Bible seldom charges elders with financial/business responsibilities. The word "authority" is not used in the New Testament in connection with elders; although elders are to be "overseers" and do have the responsibility to "rule well" (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 5:17; cf. Hebrews 13:7,17). Jesus' object lesson concerning the "washing of feet" (John 13) was not just about humility, but rather "servant leadership". Paul's leadership style, even as an apostle, was not power based, but rather a "co-worker" concept. (2 Corinthians 1:24; 4:1,2,5; 2 Timothy 2:24,25).

First Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 should be carefully studied in light of the servant's heart, moral character, management skills, conversion, temperament, hospitality, self control, and trustworthiness with the word of God in the life of His Body.

John Poore

26437 Whirlaway Ter
Wesley Chapel, FL 33544

NEW ALBANY

James E. Rogers, the oldest living graduate of Freed-Hardeman University, passed away on June 26, 2009. Brother Rogers had served for many years as a deacon and then as an elder for the New Albany Church of Christ before moving to Henderson, TN in 1997. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, **Altha**, to the entire Roger's family and to his church family.

PONTOTOC

The Pontotoc Church of Christ has a Gospel Meeting planned for October 18-21, 2009. **Chad Ramsey** from the Gloster Street congregation in Tupelo is sched-

uled to do the preaching. The Pontotoc congregation also has scheduled the Fishers of Men training seminar on Thursdays from August 27 through November 12. Jay Street is the local minister for the Pontotoc congregation.

JACKSON

The Siwell Road Church of Christ took 27 young people to Holly Springs, Mississippi for their In-State Mission trip this year. **Scott Jefcoat**, youth minister for the Siwell Road congregation reported it was a great success. **Mark Ray** is the local minister.

News Reports Welcomed

"Yet I Will Rejoice"

- John Gardner -

The last chapter of Habakkuk is a remarkable division of the Scriptures, especially the last verses. That final section differs from the first two chapters of the prophet's message in both tone and form. However, to really appreciate the chapter and the power of the closing verses, we must begin earlier in the book.

In the opening verses of his work, Habakkuk cries out to God for an explanation of why God has not heard his cry for relief from gross injustice in Judah (1:2-4). When God answers that he is raising up the fierce Chaldeans to punish his covenant people (1:5-11), then the prophet is perplexed over how the Lord could use such wicked and vicious Chaldeans to punish wayward Judah (1:12-2:1).

The Lord answers him that when Judah is punished, He will deal powerfully and decisively with the Chaldeans (2:2-20). In this last passage, the Lord clearly affirms that in the midst of all of the destruction, the righteous shall live by faith (V. 4) — a verse used in the New Testament to support the truth that people are justified by faith in Christ (Romans 1:17) and that faith is the key to perseverance in living the Christian life (Hebrews 10:37,38). The second chapter of Habakkuk concludes with a proclamation of God's sovereignty and that he does all things well (2:20).

The book of the prophet Habakkuk ends with a prayer and possibly a hymn (Chapter 3). The prayer of Habakkuk is about the Lord's mighty works and it shows the prophet's confidence that God could take charge of all political and natural forces to accomplish his purpose.

The last three verses are considered by some to be a hymn of faith embedded at the end of the prophet's prayer. Whether or not the verses form a hymn, they certainly are about a faith that matures in the midst of extremely hard times.

"Though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines; though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food; though the flock may be cut from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls—yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer's feet, and He will make me walk on my high hills" (Habakkuk 3:17-19 NKJV).

What faith in God the prophet had! The late Homer Hailey called these verses "one of the greatest expressions of faith to be found



John Gardner
MBC - Academic Dean

anywhere" (Commentary on the Minor Prophets, p. 295). In spite of coming destruction by war and economic disaster, the prophet was not deterred from full confidence in the God of his salvation. He freely rejoiced in his God in spite of the coming punishment of God's people which would impact his life dramatically as well. He practiced what Paul put into words centuries later—"Rejoice in the Lord always" (Philippians 4:4). Rejoicing "always" includes rejoicing in God under every circumstance, no matter how troubling.

How rich and full is our joy in the Lord in these very difficult economic times? When words like "recession," "downturn," and even "meltdown" are used to describe our economy, are we automatically cast into a spirit of gloom like those who do not know the God of salvation, who do not have him as their strength, and hope? Can one truly rejoice in God in the midst of record job losses, foreclosures, and dried up investments? The prophet's words may be instructive for us.

The prophet knew the Lord as "the God of my salvation" (Habakkuk 3:18). That suggests a strong personal trust in the Lord. Faith to be of value must be our own and be authentic. There is no joy in a borrowed faith. In the New Testament, Paul used the words "my God" to underscore his personal confidence in God and blessings He was sure to provide (Philippians 4:19). Only such genuine trust embedded in the heart can usher in the "joy and peace in believing" (Romans 15:13) the apostle prayed would fill the saints at Rome. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart" (Proverbs 3:5) is still essential if we would rejoice in our salvation during tough times that are upon us.

Where does one find the strength to go on in the face of harsh economic realities? Habakkuk called the Lord God his strength (Habakkuk 3:19). The prophet counted on Him to provide what was needed.

Turn to REJOICE on page 16

Can a Christian Ever Be Lost?

According to the New Hampshire Confession of Faith of 1833, "Only real believers endure unto the end, that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from mere profession; that a special providence



Mark Ray

watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." This creed, commonly known as the Doctrine of Once Saved Always Saved, is generally taught by a large number of Denominations in our land, yet it is not found in Scripture.

One of the plainest instances of this fact in the Bible is the incident of Simon the Sorcerer found in Acts chapter eight. In this passage, Philip the evangelist traveled to Samaria to preach the gospel. Those who heard him believed and were baptized. Among these was Simon (Acts 8:13). When the Apostles later came down from Jerusalem to lay hands on the believers in order to enable them to do miraculous gifts, Simon saw this power and was tempted. When he offered money to Peter, he was rebuked when Peter said, "You have no part or portion in this matter..." (Acts 8:21) Seeing his lost condition, Simon asked Peter to pray for him so that he might be restored.

Here we have an example in the Scriptures of one who received salvation, was captivated to sin and then was restored again. Yet those who teach the doctrine of once saved always saved say this cannot be true.

Some say that those who fall away were never truly saved in the first place. That is, he had a deceiving spirit that never truly allowed them to believe and obey from the heart. But Scripture says that Simon believed and was baptized. Notice that either the inspired Scripture is mistaken that Simon believed or the doctrine of once saved always saved is mistaken on this point!

Others say that while a Christian may do wrong and not live up to what he should, once he is saved he can never sin enough to lose his place in the Kingdom. Yet Peter (inspired by the Spirit) told the sinning Simon, "You have neither part nor portion in this matter." Either Peter was mistaken concerning the consequences of Simon's sin or the doctrine of once saved always saved is wrong.

Other proponents of once saved always saved say that without their doctrine life is not worth living. They claim that those who teach that the Christian must always remain faithful are overly judgmental and always doubting even their own

salvation. But notice that Peter was not out trying to get somebody, he was pointing out the consequences of Simon's sin so that he could repent. In the same way, those who understand God's command to remain faithful lead ourselves and others to be sure that we do not fall from grace, Galatians 5:4.

Mark Ray preaches for the
 Siwell Road Church of Christ
 4075 S Siwell Rd
 Jackson, MS 39212-4372
 marksiwell@gmail.com

STARKVILLE "A baptism a week"

Andy Miller, preacher for the Starkville Church of Christ, reported in a church bulletin dated July 26 2009, "Since the beginning of June we have averaged a baptism a week. This includes two adults, two college-age and four of our youth. We currently have fifteen Bible studies going on that we are aware of and several individuals who are close to studying the Bible." **Wesley Thompson** is the Youth Minister for the Starkville congregation.

Good Suggestion
Answer "The Question Box"
Send in your answers
 (See page 21,24)

Madison Church Plans Move

The Madison Church of Christ which has been meeting in the old Madison Station Elementary School since its inception in February, 2006, is in the process of vacating that facility and moving to a new building located at the corner of Industrial Drive North and First Choice Drive in Gluckstadt.

The first meeting at the new location is planned for Sunday August 9 with Bible Study at 9:30 and worship at 10:30. The church will also have Sunday evening worship at 5:00 and mid-week Bible Study Wednesdays at 7:00.

This new location is for approximately 12 months while the church completes its permanent facility on Reunion Parkway adjacent to the new Madison Station Elementary School.

The Gluckstadt location may be accessed by taking the Gluckstadt exit off I-55, going east to the 2nd Light (at Bank Plus), turning left and coming to the 3rd building on the left.

All are welcome, but especially those who have moved to the Gluckstadt or Madison areas or those who have not yet found a church home. For more information call **601-898-9133**. (Report sent to MM by **Jim Howard**, preacher for the Madison church.)

DeKALB

The very first issue of the MM, published in October of 1978, featured an appeal for a church to be planted in Kemper County, MS. As I recall, the article was written by **David Wade**. (Kemper County was one of a number of counties in Mississippi without a church of Christ.) We rejoiced that the East Main church in Tupelo decided to back the efforts of **E. C. Kinningham** to establish a church of Christ in DeKalb. We are so thankful that a congregation was started and continues to serve to this day. In a recent conversation with **Prince Lewis**, librarian at MBC, we learned that he and **Dwayne Williams** are each preaching twice a month in DeKalb. He said that the work of the congregation, which brings together about 20 to 30 each Lord's day, is going very well.

NILE

A recent (Aug., 09) meeting was conducted at the Nile church, located a few miles south of Kosciusko with visiting evangelist **Lennis Nowell**. Back thirty years ago, brother Lennis preached for the church in Carthage -- a few miles south of Nile. Here he labored for many years. During the past 18 years, Lennis has served as preacher for the Northside congregation in Corinth, MS. **Jim Mordecai** is presently preaching for the Nile church. As he welcomed everyone brother Jim commented, "Tonight must be 'preachers' night." This he said, because, counting himself and the visiting evangelist, there were at least seven preachers in the audience. We are thankful to report that on the night of our visit, a good attendance was noted and a good lesson was presented.

TUPELO

The Gloster Street Church of Christ has set Sunday, August 30, 2009 as their Goal Sunday. Their goal is to have 221 persons in Bible Study. The church bulletin states, "In order to do this, we all need to do three things: 1) Plan to be present. 2) Invite someone to join us. 3) Pray. Will you do your share?"



Somewhere in Louisiana



Somewhere in Mississippi

More Readers' Response ... More

Please put me on your mailing list. I recently attended church services in Natchez and picked up one of your Magnolia Messengers and enjoyed reading it. Thanks, (Wynell Ardis, Tusculumbia, AL)

To Whom it may concern:

I really enjoy working out the questions in your column. This one was really good about Samuel and Saul. I look forward for the next questions. God Bless! (Mrs. Evelyn Doss, member of the North Montgomery Church of Christ)

I would like to receive your "Magnolia Messenger" issue, if I could? I

will appreciate this very much!

*P.S. We have **Grannie Blankenship** back home, worshipping with us at Central Church of Christ. We are indeed happy for her sweet faithful presence with us. She's so wonderful and we love her very much!! You all do a great work for Him. My mother, whom is deceased now, used to receive your bulletin of Magnolia Messenger, and she truly enjoyed the good news. She worshipped in Ellisville church. Thank you, (Hazel Harrison, Saraland, AL)*

Thanks for the wonderful "Messenger." (Arthur F. Lovell, Jr., Hoover, AL)

Clinton Church Hires New Preacher

News Report by
Mark Bridges

There are two new faces at the Clinton Church of Christ. John Allan and his wife Erin moved to Clinton at the end of July and John has begun work with us as our new full-time minister.

Erin and John both have deep roots in the Church. John's grandfather is an

elder in Florida and his father has preached the gospel in West Virginia for more than 30 years. John began preaching as a teenager and has also preached at several lectureships. Erin is originally from New Port Richey, Florida. Her father has served as minister with the River Road Church of Christ for nearly 30 years.

In 2005 John graduated from Marshall University with a degree in Journalism. It was during his time in college that he made the decision to pursue work in the ministry. He enrolled in East Tennessee School of Preaching



John and Erin Allan -- New at Clinton

and Missions in 2008 and graduated in 2009. The school's two year program is intensive,

including more credit hours than many four year degree programs offered at universities. John's hard work and study habits are reflected in his preaching. He strives for Bible-based sermons that are organized, lively and easy to implement into daily living. We are happy to have John and Erin as part of our church family and look forward to their efforts with us here.

(Mark Bridges is one of three elders in Clinton church.)

1-800-748-8655
www.magnolia.edu

MBC News

P. O. Box 1109
Kosciusko, MS 39090

Magnolia Bible College

Memorials & Living Tributes

The following donars recently made contributions to Magnolia Bible College in memory of, or in honor of, loved ones and/or friends. The names in **bold type** are memorialized or honored. The names following in lighter type are the donors.

In Memory Of

Cliff Roden
Mr. and Mrs. Rusty Roden

David W. Johnson
Robert and Carol Case
F.W. Woody Loden, III
Desmond Sanders
Mr. and Mrs. Marlin Ivey

V. P. Black
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Dorothy McKinley
Rebekah Blunt
Mary Sue Tippet
Carla Clemons
Arlice Bridges

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Coleman Allmond
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Dee D. Hughey
Mrs. Darrell Patsy Morrison

Ozella Hughey
Mrs. Darrell Patsy Morrison

Notice:
MBC and MM memorials are handled separately. (See also page 13). Thanks for helping MBC and/or MM

Tim Corbett
Kim Grymes

Emmitt Mauney
Mr. and Mrs. Barrett Chapman
Mr. and Mrs. Barry Chapman
Blair Chapman
Romia Palmer
Janice Zackerson
Mr. and Mrs. Jason Grisham
Mr. and Mrs. Starrett Chapman
Lorene Willis

Please Send
MBC Memorials
And/or Tributes To:
Magnolia Bible College
P.O. Box 1109
Kosciusko, MS 39090



John Gardner, Dean Accepts Challenge to also serve as Acting President of MBC

Mark Castleberry, chairman of MBC's Board of Trustees, has asked John Gardner (long time Academic Dean of MBC) if he would also serve temporarily as Acting President of the College.

In a gracious gesture, expressing brother John's love for the Cause of Christ and for MBC, he accepted the awesome challenge.

We appreciate Mark's excellent selection and also believe that John deserves commendation for accepting such added responsibilities, especially in light of the fact that he is approaching (or has approached) what many consider to be "retirement age."

More Encouragement READERS' RESPONSE From California

*I heard about the Magnolia Messenger, and received an older copy, from my good friend and brother in Christ, **Wayne Jackson** from Stockton, California. I was very impressed with your paper, and would like to be placed on your mailing list.*

*I was born and raised in those red clay hills around **Sherman, MS**. I came out to California in 1954, and have lived here since that time. I married a girl from here, we have three children and seven grandchildren. So, as you can see, I'm stuck in this desert whether I like it or not.*

I have been preaching the gospel for the past forty-six years. In fact, while on vacation, I preached one Sunday for the Antioch church.

Brother Franks, I'm looking forward to receiving the Magnolia Messenger. I will pray to our heavenly Father for your continued success with the paper and the church in Kosciusko. Brotherly in Christ, (Ed Gaines, Clovis, CA)

**The Franks Say Thanks
For Your Prayers**

Magnolia Bible College Semore

Resigns as President

John Gardner

Becomes Acting President



MBC President Garvis Semore recently wrote to supporters of MBC. Brother Garvis stated,

When I arrived in Kosciusko just over four years ago I believed wholeheartedly in the mission of Magnolia Bible College. Today I continue to believe in that great mission and strongly believe that MBC continues to make a tremendous difference in our world. That being said, a few weeks back I submitted my resignation as president of MBC. I will be moving to Henderson, Tennessee to teach at Freed-Hardeman University. My move should not be interpreted as a negative on MBC. I simply felt that it was time for someone new to attempt to do the things necessary to move MBC forward. I will continue to support and encourage the efforts that take place in Kosciusko.

The Board of Trustees of MBC has been tremendously supportive of me during these four years. They have now asked our longtime academic dean, John Gardner, to serve as acting president while they diligently look toward the future. I have every confidence in Brother Gardner. He will do a tremendous job in this role.

MBC Lectures

(Saturday) October 17, 2009

8:30 a.m. -- Registration (Displays Open in J. B. Hayes Building)

9:15 a.m. -- Devotional in Church Auditorium

9:30 a.m. -- Classes

Willie Nettle -- *Renew Your Worship*

Janie Craun (Ladies) -- *Tell Me the Story of Jesus*

10:30 a.m.-- **Dale Jenkins**

The Most Cost Effective Way to Grow a Church in Any Economy

11:30 a.m. -- Lunch (Available in the J. B. Hayes Building)

1:00 p.m. -- Classes

Willie Nettle -- *"The Battle Belongs to the Lord"*

Janie Craun (Ladies) -- *Sing to Me of Heaven"*

2:00 p.m. -- **Dale Jenkins**

Creating a Culture for Church Growth

Sign Says: "A Little Bit of Heaven on Earth"



**In the Church
There is
To be:**

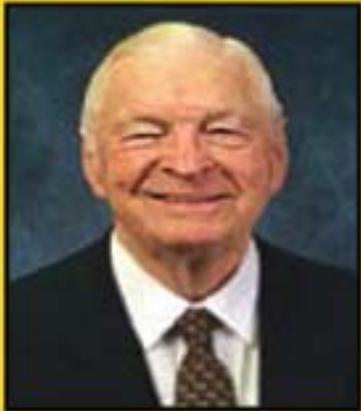
Love
Peace
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Truth
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Forgiveness
Godliness
Kindness



Inviting all Christians Age 55 & Over . . .

Mid-South Golden Years Rally September 26, 2009

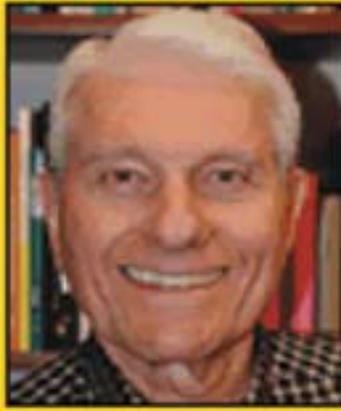


KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Clifton L. Ganus, Jr.

Chancellor, Harding University, Searcy, AR.

An educator and preacher for more than sixty years Dr. Ganus served as professor of History and later as Vice-President of Harding University prior to becoming its third president in 1965. He retired from that position in 1987. Today, at age 87, he serves as Chancellor for the university and travels extensively throughout the world on behalf of the university and doing mission work. He also serves as an Elder for the College Church of Christ in Searcy. As a lifelong athlete Dr. Ganus continues to enjoy his daily two mile walk.



SONG LEADER

Leon Sanderson

Minister, White Station Church of Christ.

Born in Springfield, MO, Leon is the son of L.O. Sanderson, well known gospel preacher and song writer. Leon moved to Memphis in 1955 after completing his college work at Harding College in Searcy, AR, where he received a B.A. in Speech. Since then, he has completed a B.S. in Music at Memphis State University and received the M.A., M.R.E., M.Div., and D.Min. degrees from Harding University Graduate School of Religion. Leon has served the Highland, Holmes Road and White Station congregations in various areas of ministry.

Goodman Oaks Church of Christ

1700 Goodman Road
Southaven, MS 38671 (662) 349-3600

Schedule:

Registration 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. (Coffee and Donuts)
Singing - 9:30 - 10:00 (led by Leon Sanderson)
Keynote # 1 - 10:00 - 10:30 (Dr. Clifton L. Ganus, Jr.)
Break
Classes - 10:45 - 11:30 (Taught by Goodman Oaks Staff)
Keynote # 2 - 11:30 - Noon (Dr. Clifton L. Ganus, Jr.)
Noon - Soup and Salad Luncheon

Redeeming Time In 2009

Sign Posted in a
Mississippi Church Building

Ephesians 5:16

"See that ye walk circumspectly,
not as fools, but as wise, RE-
DEEMING THE TIME, because
the days are evil."

Editor's Note

to a

Critical Note Writer

(who chose not to sign his/her name)

"Criticisms Considered"

As editor and publisher of the MM, we say to our readers, "Criticisms Considered." This we do because we are aware that our knowledge of Scripture is imperfect and our information *about people* mentioned in the "Messenger" is incomplete. And, we really want to know what you, as a reader, think and your overall reaction to the "Messenger." We want to do better. Our fervent desire is to be in harmony with the will of the Father and to show love for all of His people.

Suggestion: When you see something in the MM that you feel is in error, please let us know. It would be helpful when you do so, to identify yourself or provide a way we could respond directly to you. Usually, when we receive anonymous notes from critics who fail or refuse to identify themselves, we feel no obligation to respond. An exception is being made to comments made by a recent critic who did not identify him/her self.

An "unknown reader" criticized us because we mentioned a certain preacher in one of our recent reports. The critic made some accusations against the preacher and commented, "He has not changed."

We have talked with the preacher being questioned and with others who are close to him and have concluded that the preacher is a faithful brother in Christ and is "sound in the faith." We are convinced, at this point, that if the accusations made against him were ever valid, they no longer are. His life and his work certainly indicate that the charges are not accurate.

A personal plea to our critic. Are you *absolutely sure* of the accusations you have anonymously brought against the man? Have you talked with him? Have you earnestly prayed for him? Have you talked to anyone, within the past few years, who has personal knowledge of his teachings and/or work as a preacher of the gospel?

On page two of every issue of the "Magnolia Messenger" the following statement is printed.

Editor's Note: *The mention of a person or church in the Messenger does NOT necessarily mean that we either endorse or approve all the person or church may believe, teach or do. We do not (can not) have full knowledge of every person or church mentioned in the 'MM'; furthermore, we do not believe that our role before God is to be that of a judge. We pray, however, that we will never lend encouragement to anyone or anything in conflict with, or not in harmony with that which is plainly taught In Scripture. Your comments invited and encouraged.*

Final observations: Our continuing goal is to follow the guidelines of this statement, which we believe, is in harmony with God's Word. We ask you, our readers, to also keep this in mind. And remember, always, your comments -- even criticisms -- are welcomed. Please, however, let us know how to respond directly to you. Thanks. (Alf, editor)

Thank You For reading the "Magnolia Messenger"

Subject of Salvation

Words in **RED** spoken by Jesus Christ

BELIEVE: "... **for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.**" (John 8:24b) **REPENT:** "...**except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.**" (Luke 13:3,5) **BE BAPTIZED:** "**He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned.**" (Mark 16:16)

MUST DO GOD'S WILL: "**Not everyone that saith unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.**" (Matt. 7:21)

KEEP COMMANDMENTS: "**If you love me, keep my commandments.**" (John 14:15)



Magnolia Messenger

Memorials & Tributes

The person whose name is in **CAPS** is memorialized or honored by the person(s) whose name is in lower case letters. Thank you. God bless! Please note that memorials and/or tributes given to Magnolia Bible College are handled separately. See page 9. (ALF, editor)

In Memory Of

JACK FRANKS
Reid & Frieda Thompson
(DeRidder, LA)

MYRTLE DANIEL
DOROTHY PETERSEN
Pete & Wanda Petersen
(Show Low, AZ)

CLAY FOSTER, SR.
DON FRANKLIN
Jay Street
(Pontotoc, MS)

V. P. BLACK
George & Nell Barber
(Mantachie, MS)

MARY KOLB
Frances Stewart
(Water Valley, MS)

ROGER DESMOND SANDERS
Jerry & Shirley Sanders
(Ackerman, MS)

ELGENE COLEMAN
Robert & Mary Ellen Callens
(Greenwood, MS)

GEORGE MAYBERRY
Huntsville Church of Christ
(French Camp, MS)

COLEMAN ALLMOND
Barbara & Clyde Cavin
Bobby & Alice Humphries
(Natchez, MS)

FRANCES ASKEW
JIMMY BRADSHAW
JAMES "PETE" SMITH
JOHN L. HUMPHRIES, JR.
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(An appropriate acknowledgment will be sent by MM to designated relative of person memorialized.)

Look for a Report on the Booneville Church in a Future Issue



Steens Church Hosts Special Sunday For Pine Vale Children's Home



Pine Vale Children and Staff Visiting Steens Church of Christ in May of 2009

Frank McDaniel, an elder of the Steens congregation (near Columbus, MS), sent a picture of the Pine Vale children and staff who visited their services recently. Brother McDaniel wrote, "Lunch was served after morning worship and immediately following lunch afternoon service was

conducted with the Pine Vale young men helping to participate." He added, "Steens church of Christ helps sponsor Pinevale monthly and with special food drives. We were so happy to have all the children, house parents and sister Bonnie with us that day. We appreciated the good work

they are doing. Steens tries to make this a yearly get-together." The elder concluded, "Thought you might like to run the picture in 'Magnolia Messenger'. We enjoy it so much. Keep up the good work. In Christ." (Frank McDaniel; Columbus, MS)

News Reports Invited

Watching Cable TV on Sunday Morning in Tupelo, MS (7:30 - 8:30 a.m.)

Gospel Telecasts sponsored by churches of Christ

Some areas of the state have much more to offer in gospel programs!



Mack Lyon
"In Search"



Kevin Beard
"Bible Talk"



James Segars
"DaySpring"

Excitement Builds as Church Building Nears Completion in Crystal Springs

In the mid-eighties a new congregation was established in Crystal Springs. (My June and I were blessed to have a part in beginning the new church.) For more than 24 years they have been assembling in what was once a building designed to sell and service farm equipment. Finally, however, they are about to move into a "real church building" -- perhaps as early as October.

On the evening of our recent visit with the church, some of the ladies were busy making final selections of patterns and colors to be used in their new facilities. They were excited. So were the men. The excitement seemed to rub off on us also.

Keith Wilson and his Amanda continue to serve the Crystal Springs church as the very capable preacher and his wife. May God bless. May their excitement continue. (ALF, editor of MM)



Ladies are selecting colors/patterns for the new building

(From left) Mary Ellen Allbritton, Helen McAlpin, June Franks, little Brantley and his mother, Andra Hopper

Request from the Franklin, LA Church

"We at the church in Franklin, Louisiana would like for you to print this picture and obituary on the back in your paper. It was one of Mrs. Marjorie's favorite papers. She looked forward to it every month... Continue the good work...."



Marjorie Hebert Newsom
- 91-

Marjorie Hebert Newsom, 91, a native of Turkey Creek and a resident of Franklin, Louisiana went to be with the Lord Thursday, June 18, 2009, at 10:40 PM. at her son's residence.

She is survived by four sons, Alton Ray Newsom and his wife, Dorothy, of Gentry, Arkansas; Charles Lynn Newsom and his wife, Jane, of Centerville; Glenn Douglas Newsom and Diane of Bayou Jack and Bobby Wayne Newsom and his wife, Peggy, of Charenton; by one daughter, Sharon Renae Hatfield and her husband, Mark, of Athens, Alabama; three sisters, Annie belle Cooper of Kinder, Pearl Thibodeaux of Bentonville, Arkansas, and Winifred Franks of Searcy, Arkansas; 12 grandchildren; and 20 great grandchildren.

Mrs. Newsom was preceded in death by her husband, Elmer D. Newsom; her parents, Joseph Hebert and Blanche Clark Hebert; two broth-

Mrs. Newsom's last words to her family were.

"I hate to leave ya'll, just cling to the Lord. Tell all my children and grandchildren to cling to the Lord."

ers, Wayne and Philemon Hebert; two sisters, Jessie Litton and Josie Kennedy; and one great grandson, Chase Roberts.

Funeral services were held Monday, June 22 at 10:00 a.m. at the building of the church of Christ with Kenneth Wright officiating the service.

Pallbearers were Damon Newsom, Danton Newsom, Darren Maples, Joel Newsom, Canaan Newsom, and Mason Hatfield.

Mrs. Newsom's last words to her family were. "I hate to leave ya'll, just cling to the Lord. Tell all my children and grandchildren to cling to the Lord."

(Report sent to the MM by the Franklin Church of Christ; 604 Sycamore St.; Franklin, LA 70538)

"We Pinch Their Heads Off"

- Tom L. Childers -

A few years ago I preached for the Oak Ridge church of Christ near Booneville, Mississippi. One of my first impressions was how good the singing was. Being a part of the singing in chapel at Freed-Hardeman University or the Henderson church with more than 1,000 is a great experience, but the singing of this church of less than 100 was truly remarkable. After I finished my sermon, I stood in the back of the building at Oak Ridge and I will never forget the sight and sound of the singing as we all raised our voices to God in the closing song. It was truly amazing and I can't wait until I can visit again.

After the service, I asked one of the women why they had such good singing. Her reply was, "When our babies are born, if they cry off-key, we pinch their heads off." Her response was a humorous way of saying, "We not only teach our children how to sing, but we also teach them to love singing."

Let me suggest that as you gather with your family and friends this Thanksgiving or Christmas holiday that you make arrangements to have plenty of hymn books and sing for thirty minutes or an hour. Urge your young sons or grandsons to lead a few songs. It could be the best family gathering yet.

The Bible says, "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises" (James 5:13). The family that sings together at home, their voices will be heard in the church.

If the time you spend with your family this Christmas is only about eating, presents, and football, you might as well "pinch their heads off" because your children probably are not going to enjoy singing in church. Let's teach our children and grandchildren the joy of singing.

(Tom L. Childers, gospel preacher, lives at 923 John Brown Rd; Henderson, TN 38340-1257. Email: tlchilders@gmail.com)

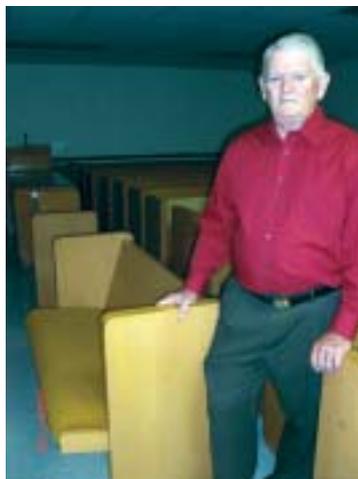


Meeting Place for the Lord's Church in Lucedale, Mississippi

My June and I were privileged to visit the Lucedale church where I preached on Sunday, July 26th. We found a congregation of friendly, loving people who seem very sincere in their efforts to serve the Lord. **William Culp** is, for the second time, serving as their dedicated preacher -- this time for eight years. This church has recently remodeled their building and have their old pews up for sale.

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Remembering Our Daddy

Johnny Edwards

(Long time member and deacon of the Pine Bluff Church of Christ)



1943-2008

Just like Jesus, you were handpicked to do special works and to lead others to Him. Just months after taking on Christ in baptism, you were crippled at the early age of twenty-seven. While many may have stopped and cursed God, you never once let your circumstances stop you from doing God's work. If anything, it made you more determined than ever to reach out in love to others.

You worked with those of your church, served in your community and worked very diligently to raise a Christian family. You visited the sick, were a friend to the friendless and served the elderly. And, although you were very tired most of the time, you attended our school events, graduations, ballgames, recitals, plays, pageants and concerts. You walked the aisles and were there for our weddings, you were there at the delivery of your grandchildren, you baptized your grandsons and you loved and took care of our mom. You were never one to make excuses. You found your strength in the Lord and doing for others -- in their times of need.

In a crippled body, you often farmed more than 60 hours a week, but you always made worshipping the Lord and attending to the needs of others a priority. You were good with your hands and your heart, often repairing appliances, lawn mowers, water wells, and other odd jobs -- never accepting money from those you helped. You even helped deliver lost dogs to their owners, sometimes having to make many trips and phone calls to do so; always commenting that *you were only doing what you would want someone to do for you.*

You loved your life and you never felt cheated by your circumstances. You set an example for everyone to follow.

Many people find happiness in the money that they make and the worldly things they serve. You loved life in general; you loved the time spent hunting and fishing with family and friends; you loved your farming friends; you loved listening to music and the voices of children singing and you loved the gardening and preserving that you and mom would do -- vegetables and flowers. You found

happiness and love in doing God's work, enjoying the simple pleasures and in loving your family.

You deeply loved our mom for more than 46 years; and she loved you. You both faced many obstacles but neither of you ever considered

giving up. We truly believe that your love and concern for her, along with the love for your parents, children, and grandchildren, made it so hard for you to let go in the end. Please know that you didn't give up, dear Dad. You just let go and let God take you with Him.

Your "never-give-up" attitude will always live on within our hearts, and our memories of you. With love from your children.

(Patricia, Shelia, Daron and Stefanie. Article sent to MM by a daughter, **Shelia Goolsby**, who said that her dad read the Messenger "diligently". Thanks. Editor)

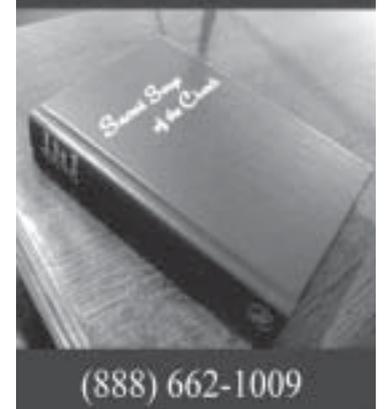
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Gospel Broadcasting Network and the Challenge of the Commission

Editor's Note: On Monday, June 1, 2009, my June and I were privileged to be in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where we decided to drop in for a visit with representatives of the "Gospel Broadcasting Network."

With the aid of our G.P.S. we easily found our way to the main offices of GBN which are housed in a 30,000 square foot building, located in the edge of Georgia -- within sight of the famous GA/TN "Lookout Mountain".

The following report was put together during the afternoon following our pleasant visit. A very special thanks to **Tommy Leslie** who works full-time in public relations for the expanding brotherhood effort to reach the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Brother Tommy gave us a tour of the facilities and introduced us to several who work regularly with GBN. — — —

And he [Jesus] said unto them, *"Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."* (Mark 16:15)

GBN is the abbreviation for "Gospel Broadcasting Network" - a cooperative effort to bring together media teaching programs among churches of Christ and spread the "Good News" through a network involving television and the internet. It is a work under the oversight of the elders of the Highland Church of Christ in Dalton, Georgia.

GBN, which is less than four years old, had its debut on Thanksgiving weekend in 2005. **Barry Gilreath, Sr.**, one of the Highland church elders, serves as the Executive Director. Working with him are **Gary McDade** (assistant Executive Director), **Jim Dearman** (Host/Producer of *Good News Today*), **Chad Dollahite** (Program Director), **Leroy Dedmon** (Operations Manager) and others.

According to information obtained in our recent visit, GBN is on the worldwide web at www.gbntv.org, streaming 24 hours a day, seven days a week! It is carried by "Ku-band" direct home-systems into homes, church buildings, nursing homes and prisons in several states. "Good News for Today" airs nationwide 7 days a week on Direct TV (8:00 a.m., ET) and Dish Network (noon, ET). Programs are also on a growing number of cable systems in several states.

Gary McDade, assistant executive director stated, "GB is avail-



Home Offices of Gospel Broadcasting Network (GBN)

able to approximately 300,000 homes 24/7 via cable outlets...." Brother Wade also said that **60,000,000 (sixty million!)** people have opportunity to view GBN programming for a full hour each day via Dish Network and Direct TV, "the largest satellite television providers in the United States." Brother **McDade** stated that their "proposed 2.1 million dollar annual budget is very modest by comparative analysis." (*Good News from the Gospel Broadcasting Network*; Dec., 2008)

For more information about this effective evangelistic effort, please

contact Gospel Broadcasting Network; P. O. Box 23604; Chattanooga, TN 37422. You may call toll-free: 866-525-4677 or go on-line: www.gbntv.org.

Please join with us in praying for the diligent efforts being made



June Franks looks on as Tommy Leslie demonstrates use of one of many cameras.

by many of our brethren to reach out to the world with the Gospel Broadcasting Network. **Together**, let us all seek to meet the "Challenge of the Commission." (alf)

Did You Know? (Cont.)

That every verse in the New Testament in which baptism and salvation appear together lists baptism prior to salvation?

That nowhere in the New Testament is there a command or example for a baby to be baptized?

That "faith only" is mentioned just once in the Bible, and then it says "not by faith only" (James 2:24)?

That Peter was not a pope and that he had a wife (Matthew 8:14)?

That it is against God to call any man "Father" while using it as a religious title (Matthew 23:9)?

That there is no example or command in the Bible for preachers to wear special robes, clothes etc.?
(Look to column 5, this page)

MISSION

(Cont. from page 7)

The mission team counted their trip a success even before they left Louisiana, because of the time they spent with each other in preparation. After returning home, this group cherishes the new Christian friends they have made in South Texas. And, they feel blessed to have experienced the tender hearts and precious souls of children who so desperately need to know Jesus.

If anyone is interested in helping this work, please, contact Sunny Glen Children's Home at (956) 399-5356. Applications are currently being taken for house parents and Director of Social Services. Monetary donations are always helpful. Please, pray for the mission work that is being done in San Benito. (Thanks LA folks for submitting this article!)

“Do Not Forget”

- Travis Brown -

I wonder how many times during the course of a day the words "Do not forget" are uttered. I'll admit that my memory is not what it used to be. Thankfully I have a wonderful wife who helps me to keep track of where I am supposed to be and what I am supposed to be doing.

Some things we can afford to forget; other things can be detrimental. Gentlemen, it is perfectly fine to forget a golf date with the guys, but you had better not forget that special lady's birthday.

Sometimes we find ourselves forgetting things that we had planned to always remember. Think of this principle for just a moment in regards to our relationships with God.

Of all of the many ways that we disappoint God regularly, I believe close to the top of the list must be the way that we forget about what God has done and is doing for us. Yes, it is fresh on our minds when God helps us during times of trouble. But what happens when things are going well again? Long ago I heard someone say that we too often treat God like a spare tire. We only look for Him during emergencies and then hope He is close by and ready to perform when called upon.

Truth be known, far too often we are like Israel of old. They found themselves struggling with many of the same things we struggle with today. One of them was forgetting.

In Deuteronomy 8:11-20, God warned Israel about forgetfulness after they entered the promised land. Verse 11 begins by saying, "Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God." He told them that they would eat and be full. They would dwell in beautiful houses and their herds would multiply. They would have silver and gold. Everything that they had would be multiplied. Then their hearts would be lifted up and they would forget the LORD their God who brought them out of bondage. They would forget about how God protected them from danger, how He miraculously brought them water from a rock and fed them manna from heaven. God then went on to tell them of the consequences of forgetting about Him and what He had done. He said, "I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish."

In times of trouble we find ourselves crying out to God



Travis Brown

asking for blessings and then making promises. It may be when on an airplane and facing mechanical problems or extreme turbulence. It may be on the way to the hospital during an emergency. It may be during family

problems or financial problems. Too many times the pattern is the same. We are in a time of trouble and cry out to God. We may even make promises of what we will do if God will only get us through this one. Then God keeps His part of the bargain and sure enough, finally the storm is over and the sun comes out again. Then what about those promises, vows, and commitments that were made? Do we forget?

Our God is so good to us. He blesses us so far beyond what we deserve. How have we repaid Him? Perhaps one of the best ways is to remember every day of our lives the good that God has brought into our lives. Remember how He has helped us through the storms that raged upon us. Remember the many answered prayers. Remember that He gave His Son for us and that He has a place waiting for us when time is no more.

Yes, we can afford to forget some things. But other things must never be forgotten. Slow down today and thank God for the blessings He has showered down upon you and your family.

"Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God!"

Travis Brown

Director of Admissions
Magnolia Bible College
tbrown@magnolia.edu

Did You Know? (Cont.)

That everyone that has put Christ on in baptism is a "saint" (Ephesians 3:8; 4:12; 5:3; 6:16; Philippians 1:1; 4:2)?

That there is nothing in the Bible mentioning or even suggesting that you can be brought out of or prayed out of purgatory?

That denominational churches did not exist in the first century?

That you can be saved without ever "joining" a denominational church?

That this article was taken from the bulletin of the Dalraida Church of Christ in Montgomery, AL where **Doug Smith** is the pulpit minister?

Anybody

(Cont. from page 5)

hurt, so disappointed, I'm afraid I'm losing my lunch. Pardon me while I go vomit up the contents of my stomach (Revelation 3:16).

"I see you a rich church. You, My child, have become such a wealthy America, and have need of nothing, and you do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked (Revelation 3:17).

"I just wish you could see the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints (Ephesians 1:18). It is an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you (I Peter 1:4).

"Did you hear Me? It's for YOU! I've already told you about it. You know of it. But what do I hear? I hear...

...But I can't tell anybody."

And, then, it is Jesus, that sacrificial Lamb, who must turn and promise, "All I can say, my child, is that it is only to him who overcomes will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Revelation 3:21-22).

Larry West is director/evangelist of "We Care Ministries". His address is 3201 North 7th Street; West Monroe, LA 71291; E-mail: wecare@wfr.org

WE MUST NEVER FORGET Jesus' command, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature...." (Mark 16:15)

CASINO (Ca-SIN-o)

(Continued from page 6)

well those who regularly visit the casino floor.

Second, we must have sympathy for, and offer the love of Christ to those caught up in this tragic activity. Let us not treat gamblers like lepers. Let us show them that the hope and happiness they seek on the casino floor can only be found in the house of God. Let us teach them that "godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Timothy 6:6). I tell our little congregation that I would love to see every addicted gambler, every blackjack dealer, and every cocktail waitress in our services on Sunday. They accused Jesus, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them" (Luke 15:2). Let us make sure we are guilty of the same.

As a preacher in Tunica

REJOICE

(Cont. from page 6)

Whatever it took to not only survive, but spiritually thrive, in the dark days ahead, Habakkuk knew the Lord would be there for him. As the sure-footed deer with remarkable strength swiftly escapes danger and finds refuge on the "high hills," so the prophet was confident he would survive the devastations of famine and the destruction of war. Our strength, like the prophet's, must come from God (Ephesians 6:10). That is how Paul faced times of poverty, hunger, and other deprivations with a sense of contentment and calm (Philippians 4: 13; 2 Corinthians 11:27).

The global recession of our day is putting all us to the test. For some, the test involves the prospects of the worst kind of poverty. For others, it is more about getting along with a lot less than we once had, although on the world's scale we still have a lot. Regardless of our particular test of faith, if we put God front-and-center in our lives, seeking first His rule and His cause, we know He will provide what we really need (Matthew 6: 33). We know that because we believe in a God who will never forsake us or abandon us (Hebrew 13: 5, 6). We can boldly face a gloomy economic forecast with assurance. Living by faith, like the prophet each can say, "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (Habakkuk 3: 18).

John Gardner's address: P. O. Box 1109; Kosciusko, MS 39090 E-mail: jgardner@magnolia.edu

Mississippi I am trying to let my light shine upon the casino environment as I have opportunity. Sitting on a bench in one of our casinos I have prayed for those around me, and for our nation. It is my hope and prayer that some day some one will come to Tunica to gamble and be won to the Lord. It sounds impossible, but I believe in prayer, and I know God can do the impossible! I encourage all Christians that live in casino cities to figure out some way of letting the light of Christ shine into the darkness that is casino gambling.

Dennis Doughty preaches for the Lord's church in Tunica. His address: Tunica Church of Christ; P. O. Box 155; Tunica, MS 38676-0155; email: dennis1848@bellsouth.net

Confess

(Cont. from page 7)

I encourage you to evaluate your own life. Are you among the spiritual that Paul is talking about? Do you walk in the Spirit? Are you able to humble yourself before others to help them with sin? It is a great challenge, but one that God wants us to meet—helping others with sin.

Jan Paderewski was a master at the piano. His performance in one of the great symphony halls was sold out for weeks before he arrived in America. The night of his performance, a child from the audience left his mother, mounted the stage, and took his place at the Steinway. He began to play "Chopsticks."

The great crowd of people showed its indignation with such remarks as: "Who would bring such a boy to a place like this?" "Where is his mother?" "Stop him!"

The elder and beloved Paderewski sensed what was going on and grabbed his formal coat, straightened his tie and slipped on the stage behind the young boy without being seen by him. Reaching around the child, and with great skill, he began to improvise on "Chopsticks" making it literally come alive. As he did so, he whispered in the young boy's ears, "Don't stop; don't quit; keep on playing!"

Often the storms of life make as little sense to us as "Chopsticks" played by a child on a grand piano in a great concert hall. But above the storms, not only God, but also our brothers can help us by coming to us and whispering in our ears, "Don't stop; don't quit; keep on going!" That love and support can help us carry those burdens that beset us.

Eddie Lewis is an associate minister at the Germantown church of Christ, Germantown, Tennessee. Eddie Lewis; 9423 Laurel Hills S.; Olive Branch, MS 38654; E-mail: eddielewis@gtownchurchofchrist.org.



Another "Good Work" in MS

Georgian Reader Writes About Almost "Being a Mississippian"

I don't know about "qualifications of being a Mississippian" but I probably come very close... I am an 80 year old "substitute school teacher" who was once a teacher of Bible School in Whitehaven Church of Christ before the congregation moved to Southaven, Mississippi and is now Goodman Oaks. My wife and I have heard Ken Joines speak many times and we have visited his next door neighbor, Sister "Jan" Williams often. I am also acquainted with Cecil May from an elders' meeting we both attended several years ago in Montgomery, Alabama. I am a former teacher of the auditorium class, a former deacon and elder of the Macland Road Church of Christ in Marietta, Georgia.

Our reader added, "But all of the preceding is just to see if you would like to include the following excerpt in one of your issues sometime:

Religion in School

How can school and the Bible be related?

Numbers - Poetry - History - Language

All schools teach about "numbers" in Math books. The Bible is called the "book of books." In fact, the fourth book of the Bible is named **Numbers!** I studied for some long agonizing hours memorizing "poetry" in high school. Surely poetry isn't mentioned in the Bible? Oh, I have heard of lyric poetry, so let's see what the dictionary indicates on the matter. The word "lyric" is defined as "of poetry, expressing the poet's personal or inner feelings." The longest book of the Bible is called "**Psalms.**" The word "psalm" in my dictionary is defined as "a sacred song or lyric."

Well, let's look a little further in this matter! Schools teach History. So back to our dictionary to see what it says. History is: (a) That branch of knowledge concerned with past events, especially those involving human affairs. (b) A record or account, usually written and in chronological order, of past events, especially those concerning a particular nation, people, field of knowledge or activity, etc. It seems to me that the preceding paragraph is very descriptive of the things one might learn from reading **history** in the Bible?

Maybe it is best not to go into language, as taught in schools, and language, as mentioned in the Bible. The Bible, in the book of Genesis, tells about some men who were building a tower. The Bible says that they were of "one language." Their action did not please God. Verses 7 and 8 of chapter 11, read: "Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language that they may not understand one another's speech." The name of that tower was called "Babel" since the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there, the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of the earth." The dictionary says "babble" is to "utter inarticulate or meaningless sounds or to talk unwisely or foolishly."

Our MM reader from Georgia concluded, "Well if this gets me "fired" from substitute school teaching perhaps I can still teach about the Bible in church??? By the way my wife, Sammye, and I will be married 55 years on July 2nd... We have enjoyed the Magnolia Messenger for many years. (Burt Baggott; Marietta, GA; burtonbaggott@bellsouth.net)

Gulf Coast Bible Camp in Mississippi

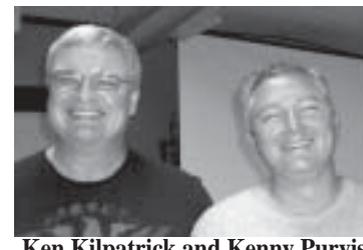
Started more than 40 years ago, Gulf Coast Bible Camp has helped to shape the lives of hundreds of young people every year. The Camp is located near Lucedale, Mississippi and functions under the oversight of a board of directors. Bryon Smith serves as Camp Director.

During the summer of 2009, the camp planned seven sessions for up to 125 campers each session.

On Monday, July 27, my June and I visited the camp and found many excited young people in what was considered a "Private Session". They were from inner city congregations located in Montgomery and Mobile, AL and Pensacola, FL.

We were blessed to visit with sev-

eral of the campers and to get acquainted with Ken Kilpatrick and Kenny Purvis who are leaders in the "Compassion 21" program. Our visit reminded us again of the fact that many good works are going on even here in Mississippi.



Ken Kilpatrick and Kenny Purvis
Directors: "Compassion 21"

Franks Family

Three Aging Brothers (75, 79, 90) Are Still Preaching

For the first time in many years, my June and I were privileged to attend the annual "J. R. Franks Family Reunion" held each year in SW Louisiana on/near July 4.

We were richly blessed to be present on Saturday, July 4, 2009. Five of the ten children born to Jesse and Lydia are still living; four of them were in attendance at the reunion. It was so good to be with them.

One of the boys, J.D., was unable to attend because of illness. (We were blessed, however, to spend some time with him the next day in his home near DeQuincy.) J. D. has preached and did serve for many years as an elder of the church in DeQuincy.

The only remaining daughter in the family, **Otha Lee Hewitt**, from Lake Charles, was present for the get-together. "Aunt Doc" has been a leading lady in the Lake Charles church where her deceased husband (Roy) served as a long time elder.

One of the greatest blessings of the re-union was to be reminded of the preachers who came from the home of J. R. and Lydia Franks. Of the eleven children born into the family, ten grew to adulthood. All became Christians. The girls formed families that evidenced their love for the Lord. The six boys all became leaders in the Lord's church. Of the four aging Franks' sons who are still living, three continue to preach regularly -- every Sunday.

The oldest, M. B. Franks (age 90), regularly fills the pulpit of the

Lone Pine Church of Christ (Merryville, LA). He and his devoted wife, Rena, have served faithfully the Cause of Christ in SW Louisiana for more than sixty years.

The second oldest brother (R. C. Franks) preaches regularly for the church in Merryville, LA. He has worked with this congregation since 1985. Although R. C. has never depended upon church support for his livelihood, he has devoted his time and efforts, over many years, to assisting several churches of Christ including the Trout Creek Church (East Texas) Boxwood church and the Longville church (SWLA).

The youngest of the three surviving Franks' brothers is Hubert. Hubert has served, for the past several decades, as preacher for the church in Newton Texas. And, like his two older brothers, he has chosen to not depend upon the church for his primary support, but to provide for his family through secular employment. Hubert and R. C. are both

widowers, live alone and find great satisfaction in continuing to "preach the word".

I am very grateful for the influence of my Franks grandparents who instilled within their children an undying love for the Lord and His church. This continues to be demonstrated by the lives of all five surviving siblings, including the aging Franks brothers who are still preaching. May God continue to bless. (Written by editor)



M. B. Franks (90)



R. C. Franks (79)



Hubert Franks (75)



One of the two Summer Sessions for 2009

Christian Youth Camps in Lithuania Continue to Bear Fruit

- Report by Paul Franks -

This is the eleventh summer that young people have come from all over Lithuania and even Belarus to attend a youth camp operated by members of the church of Christ in Lithuania, Belarus and the United States.

There were two sessions with 110 people in each session. People from the United States who came to the camp were from Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, Florida and Connecticut.

Ilia Amosov, one of the ministers in Vilinius, Lithuania served as the director for the first session. **Danny Dodd**, who assisted Ilia said about this session, "Without a doubt this session of the little kids camp was one of the sweetest and best camp sessions I have attended." Danny also said, "the most impressive aspect of the session was the leadership of the Lithuanian Christians. Like no other session before, this camp was directed and energized by Christians from Lithuania."

The second session was directed by **Jeremy Geurin** of the Champions Church of Christ in Houston, Texas. Jeremy brought several of the young people from his youth group to work with the teenager's week.

Camp Red Oak Springs In Newton, TX Serves SE Texas and SW Louisiana

report by

- Paul Franks -

Hundreds of young people from southeast Texas and southwest Louisiana attended Red Oak Springs Camp over a period of five weeks this summer. Hubert Franks serves as secretary to the board. Hubert is also the minister of the Newton Church of Christ and lives near the camp. Hubert comes ever day to bring the mail and check on everyone at the camp. He especially keeps an eye on his great nephew, me, while I am helping to direct the third session with Jacob Hance, the youth minister of the Enterprise Blvd. congregation in Lake Charles.

Doug Berry who is on the right of the sign and Hubert on the left serves as the dietitian of the

Ilia said this about Jeremy and his group, "the counselors from America encouraged the Lithuanian's...Jeremy did a good job in directing the camp."

I assisted Jeremy in this session and also had the responsibility to make sure we had the funds to pay all of the bills for the camps. We appreciate the support of so many who make this camp possible.

I continue to believe in the value of what is being done in this country concerning these camps and the impact for good it is having on so many young people. Scores of young people have obeyed the gospel. Ilia closed his report with these words, "some of these young people have started attending the church services and some are bringing their parents to church."

Thank you again for your support and keep this great mission work in your prayers.



Hubert Franks & Doug Berry

camp and does a great job preparing all of the meals during the camp sessions.

Tribute to John Davis

John Davis has served as the chairman of the board of the camp for many years and also as preacher for the Ridgewood Church of Christ in Beaumont, Texas where recently that congregation celebrated his 50th year as their minister.

On Saturday night, August 1, 2009, over 400 people paid tribute to John on reaching this impressive milestone. I had the opportunity to be at this event during the following week to hold a gospel meeting for the Ridgewood congregation.

50 Years Preacher -- Same Church!



John Davis

You Can Receive and Read Every Issue of the "Magnolia Messenger"

Mailed Directly to Your Home or Business

No Charge to You

Address: MM; P. O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090
E-mail: franksmm@aol.com

Churches Seeking Preachers

Notice: We are pleased to run ads for congregations seeking to find preachers to work with them. Please call or mail your request to: 662-289-3559 or 601-668-3344; "Magnolia Messenger"; P.O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090. You may e-mail us by addressing: franksmm@aol.com. We will plan to run each ad **not more than two times** unless a specific request for extension is received from the congregation looking for a preacher. **There is no charge for this service. Thank you for asking!**

Editor's Note

Inclusion of a church and/or preacher on this page or any other page in the MM is not to be considered an endorsement.

Note Also

There is no charge to churches for this service. Thanks for asking!

"Preach the Word"

"Reprove, rebuke, exhort"
(2 Tim. 4:2)

Vanceleave, MS Seeks Evangelist

3-09

Buck Hall, evangelist of the Vanceleave church of Christ lost his battle with cancer on Feb 14, 2009. The Vanceleave elders desire to make our need known for a full-time evangelist for the pulpit and the community. We would prefer a married man with school-age children. This is a great opportunity to serve through those who believe in the power of prayer, and the Lord continues to bless us richly.

We have helped our last two preachers develop considerable ministry in their own home. If you like to be a part of this work in a small-town community, please contact us.

Our typical Sunday attendance is just under 100. Our facilities are at a convenient location on MS Hwy 57. We have three elders, three deacons, and many well-qualified teachers.

The Vanceleave church believes in the power of the gospel rather than the wisdom of man, has a loving and unselfish spirit, willing workers, a good rapport with the community, and heavy involvement in evangelistic outreach at home and abroad.

We are known for our benevolent efforts and our love for one another. We

Kenney, elder of the Vanceleave church of Christ, can be reached at kenney@CableOne.net or 228-826-4642. Cell: 228-219-4642. Address: 1501 Summerlin Bayou Rd, Vanceleave, MS 39565

Preacher Found
Congratulations
Roger Shepard



Vanceleave Church Building

Bible Teachers Needed!

Fall 2009 & Spring 2010

Teach the Bible to English speakers for two or three weeks in **beautiful Sopot, Poland**.

Couples or Individuals. No experience necessary. Training on site.

Let us help you fulfill Jesus' Great Commission to go teach all nations!

E-mail: mike.dawidow@mac.com for more information.

Arcadia, FL

Small congregation of the Lord's church is in need of a full time minister. Must be sound in doctrine and willing to work hard at reaching out to our community with the gospel. We believe there is great potential here. Salary negotiable. Please send resume and taped sermon to:

Hickory St. Church of Christ,
P.O. box 1206,
Arcadia, Florida 34265.

Phone: **Sam Stidham** at 863-491-0113 or **Duane Severns** at 863-444-0303 or **Keith Shine** at 863-993-2259,
e-mail stidhams@strato.net

We Will Publish Your Need For a Preacher -- No Charge to You!

Lafayette, LA Youth/Worship Minister

Riverside church of Christ in Lafayette, Louisiana is seeking a full-time Youth/Worship Minister. He should have a minimum of 3 years experience and should possess a degree of God's Word. He should be able to relate to youth in various situations in a predominantly public community is a must.

The primary responsibility is to work with an ongoing youth ministry to encourage spiritual growth and faith formation. The Youth/Worship minister will help develop a program

LAFAYETTE

Will Collins has accepted the position of Youth/Worship Minister for the Riverside Church of Christ in Lafayette, Louisiana. Will and his wife **Brittany** will soon be moving to Lafayette. **Lance Bennett** and **Danny Herbert** serve the congregation as the local ministers.

Phone: 337-984-2033
Fax: 337-984-3383
E-mail & Website:
kmitchell@riversidechurchofchrist.org
www.riversidechurchofchrist.org

"Preach the word; be urgent in season and out of season." 2 Timothy 4:2

Natchez, MS Preacher Needed

Highway 61, South

Following the rather sudden death of **Coleman Allmond**, long time (16 years) preacher for the 61 South Church in Natchez, the congregation has begun their search for a suitable preacher and family to work with them.

The church, only a few miles south of Natchez, brings together about 30 worshippers each Lord's day. A nice preacher's house (3 BR; 2 B) is available and is located next to the church building. Salary and other benefits are provided. For more information and/or to submit a resume, please write:

61 South Church of Christ
c/o Mr. John Seyfarth, Jr.
139 Upper Kingston Rd
Natchez, MS 39120-9523
or call

John Seyfarth at 601-442-6503
or **Jim Hill** at 601-0442-9128
or 318-758-0812 (cell)

Jackson Chapel LEESVILLE, LA

SEEKS SPECIAL SERVANT

5/09

Our congregation is in need of a "family minister"; ... someone who could work principally with erring church members and/or members who are irregular in their faithfulness. Our elders are particularly interested in concentrating efforts in this most needful area.

For more information, please contact **Irby Perkins**:
E-mail: mperkins@cebridge.net
Address:

148 Deerhunter Ln
Leesville, LA 71446-5666
Jackson Chapel
Church of Christ
Leesville, Louisiana

Waynesboro, MS

(7-21-09)

The Waynesboro church of Christ located in southeastern Mississippi is seeking to fill the pulpit with a sound New Testament minister starting in August, 2009. Our congregation was established by only a few faithful Christians in 1952. The Sunday morning assembly averages about 55-60 each week with a budget of \$1,700. The population of Waynesboro is approximately 6,500. The church building is located on Hwy 145 north. Presently, the Waynesboro church has no elders or deacons.

Salary: Commensurate with experience
Health Insurance: \$300 per month
Home Provided: 3 bedroom house in nice location

Those applying for this position should be well-rounded in all areas, a leader, and exhibit a desire to help the congregation to grow. The responsibilities of the minister should be considered traditional -- preaching and teaching the whole truth, greeting and following up on newcomers, working to restore the unfaithful and visiting the sick and shut-ins.

Contact:

Terry Heathcock after 6:00 pm 601-735-2288; cbheathcock@yahoo.com
Jim Bowen: 601-671-0987
www.sufinta@bellsouth.net
Jamie Heathcock
601-735-3014 or 601-410-0894;
snookiejam@hotmail.com

Mail Your Resume to:

Waynesboro Church of Christ
Preacher Search
P. O. Box 94
Waynesboro, MS 39367

A Challenge to Parents

Encourage Your Talented Son to Dedicate His Life to Preaching the Word

Home of the Hall Drive Church in Ripley, MS



Preacher Needed

Montgomery, LA



We have received a request to advertise the need of a full-time preacher for the church of Christ in Montgomery, Louisiana. This church, located on Highway 71, is about 40 miles NW of Alexandria and brings together "50 to 100" each Lord's day. A four bedroom house for the preacher's family is provided by the church which presently has no elders. *For more information, please contact:*

Montgomery Church of Christ
650 Woodland Street
P. O. Box 526
Montgomery, LA 71454
or call
Kenneth Simmons
318-646-2864 or 2885
(Request received on 6/5/09)

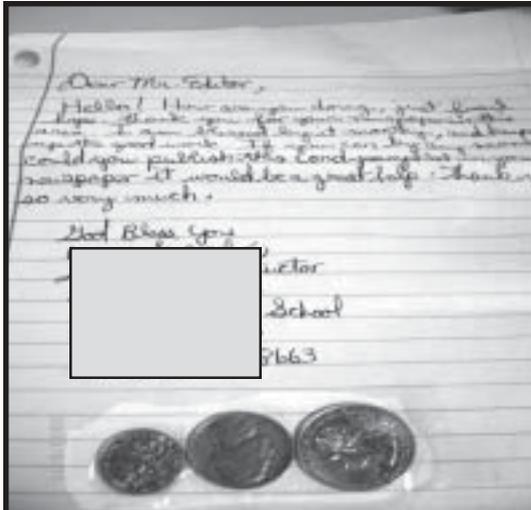
"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things." (Rom. 10:15)

Ripley, MS

(6/15/09)

The Ripley Church of Christ in Ripley, MS is seeking a new pulpit preacher. (Glen Fann is retiring after 21 years with the church.) Ripley is a congregation of approximately 300 members with an 86 year history. The congregation has three Elders and ten Deacons. Ripley, MS is a town of 6,000 people located in north Mississippi 80 miles southeast of Memphis and 45 miles north of Tupelo. The congregation owns a 3,000+ square foot brick preacher's home next door to the church building. The home is set for complete renovation during the summer/fall of 2009. A competitive salary is negotiable based on education and experience with a benefits package. The applicant must demonstrate Biblical soundness and competence as Preacher of the Gospel; some experience is preferred. Interested preachers should send a resume, a sermon tape/CD, and color picture with five contact references to:

The Elders
Ripley Church of Christ
1300 Hall Drive
Ripley, MS 38663



Readers' Requests
are
prayerfully
considered
but
not
always
granted.

We who are associated with the "Magnolia Messenger" truly enjoy hearing from our readers. Suggestions are always welcomed. Please be assured that readers' requests are prayerfully considered. Regretfully, however, we are not always able to comply with the requests. Such is the case with the above.

A dear reader asks that we publish an ad for a Bible study course published by people that we do not know. After checking into available information (via the internet), we reluctantly were compelled to decline fulfilling the reader's request.

We believe it is our responsibility before God to publish materials that are true to the Word of God. This is a responsibility we take seriously; and, when in doubt about the material being considered, we try to do what we believe is right and in accord with the plain teachings of God's word. (It was thoughtful of the reader to include 40 cents to help pay for the advertizement; however, if the amount sent to us had been \$400.00, the decision would need to be the same. (alf, editor)

Foster & Franklin

As Remembered by Jay Street

The MM recently received a very nice letter from Jay Street, preacher for the Church Street congregation in Pontotoc, Mississippi. Brother Jay included a check to the Messenger in memory of **Clay Foster, Sr.** and **Don Franklin**. He wrote:

"Clay Foster, Sr., from Antioch or Jugfork Community, passed away last month. His son, Clay Foster, Jr., is a tireless servant as well as holding a high office with The Daily Journal. He's an outstanding Bible class teacher and preaches on occasion when brother Joe Connell is in Africa or unavailable."

His letter continued, *"Brother Franklin passed away about a year ago in early June. He was an amazing Christian and has an amazing influence on the people of south central Kentucky... In side his casket were written simply, 'God First'. His motto and plea to his children and grandchildren, 'Be humble and kind.' He lived that way... The entire city of Columbia practically shut down on the day of his funeral. I was honored to be asked to speak at his funeral...."* (**Jay Street**; Pontotoc, MS)

more

Readers' Response

We enjoy the paper so much and appreciate the effort on your part... (Tom & Ann Welch, Many, LA)

We so much appreciate your reference to "Cracker Barrel". Billie has been a cashier there (Joplin, MO) for over ten years. They were pleasantly surprised! We love the Magnolia Messenger and all the good news we read of there. Thank you so much. (Robert Powers; Carthage, MO.)

We enjoy keeping up with churches and their work and articles that are very uplifting through the Magnolia Messenger... God bless you in this great work. (Charlene Williams, Brookhaven, MS)

May God be glorified through all that the Magnolia Messenger does. In Him, (Maggie Craddock, Springdale, AR)

I appreciate what you are doing and enjoy reading your paper every time. (Vernice Hill, Senatobia, MS)

I enjoy the Messenger very much. You all do such great work and I appreciate you both so much. When are you all coming to visit down here at Jackson Chapel again? .. Again thanks for all the Lord's work you do. (Billie Boyd, Leesville, LA)



Somewhere in Mississippi
Where God's People Assemble for Worship

Attention... Especially
Mississippi, Louisiana
(and adjoining states)
Churches of Christ

This space is available for you to advertise your upcoming events, reports about good works and other encouraging things you wish to share with those who read more than 25,000 copies of each Magnolia Messenger. Please feel free to submit your news and reports. Thank you. (editor)

Thanks, Charlie!

The following was sent by way of the internet to the MM by Charlie Buckley, preacher for the Bay St. Louis church on the Mississippi coast. The author is unknown; however, brother Charlie and I agree that the message is powerful. We are pleased to share it with readers of the "Messenger." So, again, *Thanks Charlie.* (editor)

AIN'T

He was just a little boy,
On a week's first day,
Wandering home from Bible school,
And dawdling on the way.

He scuffed his shoes into the grass;
He even found a caterpillar.
He found a fluffy milkweed pod,
And blew out all the 'filler.'

A bird's nest in a tree overhead,
So wisely placed up so high.
Was just another wonder,
That caught his eager eye.



A neighbor watched his zig zag course,
And hailed him from the lawn;
Asked him where he'd been that day
And what was going on.

'I've been to Bible School,'
He said and turned a piece of sod.
He picked up a wiggly worm replying,
'I've learned a lot about God.'

'M'm very fine way,' the neighbor said,
'for a boy to spend his time.'
'If you'll tell me where God is,
I'll give you a brand new dime.'

Quick as a flash the answer came!
Nor were his accents faint.
'I'll give you a dollar, Mister,
If you can tell me where God ain't.'

Next LA/TX RV Rally

Grapeland, Texas (Salmon Lake Park)

Theme:

CHANGES WE CANNOT BELIEVE IN

October 28 - 31, 2009

Wednesday night:

Dan Manuel (Many, LA)

"In God We Trust"

Thursday morning:

Men's Class: **Dan Manuel** (Palestine, TX)

"Seven Principals that Made America Great"

Women's Class: **Audrey Manuel** (Palestine, TX)

"Deborah"

Thursday night:

Ray Franks (DeQuincy, LA)

"We should seek God"

Friday night:

Fish Fry - **Tom Welch** - (Toledo Bead, LA)

Patriotic Program - **Ray Franks**

Dan Manuel (Palestine, TX)

"Eight Myths that Could Destroy America"

Saturday morning:

Gospel singing

NOTE: God willing, the Rally will kick off Wednesday, October 28, with a pot luck at 5:00 PM. The speakers will be focused on **"Country and God"**. Entertainment will also be provided. The rally will be back at Salmon Lake Park. **RV sites are reserved.** You must call the park (936-687-2594) **for a cabin.** Rally directed by Ray Franks. To contact **Ray**, please call, e-mail or address:

337-786-3095 (home); 337-515-0866 (cell)

rdfranks@centurytel.net

P. O. Drawer 218

DeQuincy, LA 70633

Samuel and Saul

(Answers: Last Issue)

Match the Person and the Phrase (I Samuel 8-12)

Match the person in column one with the most appropriate phrase in column two.

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| (6) Jephthah | 1. Abihah's older brother (8:2) |
| (5) Sisera | 2. A seer or a prophet (9:9) |
| (2) Samuel | 3. "Mighty man of power" (9:1) |
| (3) Kish | 4. King of Ammon (12:12) |
| (1) Joel | 5. Captain of the host of Hazor (12:9) |
| (4) Nahash | 6. Deliverer sent by God to Israel (12:11) |

About Whom Was it Said? (I Samuel 8-12)

1. "...turned aside after lucre, and took bribes and perverted judgement." (**Joel & Abiah**)

2. "Behold, thou art old and thy sons walk not in thy ways...." (**Samuel**)

Who Said...? (I Samuel 8-12)

Write in the name of the one who made the statement in First Samuel and supply the chapter and verse where the quote is found. **The answers are: Saul, People, Samuel and God.**

(God) 1. "...They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me." (8:7)

(People) 2. "...Nay, but we will have a king over us; that we may also be like all the nations." (8:19,20)

(Samuel) 3. "...but stand thou still for a while, that I may shew thee the word of the Lord." (9:27)

(Saul) 4. "... There shall not a man be put to death this day..." (11:13)

(Samuel) 5. "...and I am old and grayheaded." (12:2)

(People) 6. "... for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king." (12:19)

(Samuel) 7. "...but I will teach you the good and the right way." (12:23)

Samuel: "A man of prayer".

Find 3 references in I Samuel chapters 8-12 where prayer is closely associated with Samuel.

(1) "...And Samuel prayed unto the Lord." (I Sam. 8:6)

(2) [To Samuel] "...Pray for thy servants unto the Lord thy God, that we die not..." (I Sam. 12:19)

(3) "...God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you..." (I Sam. 12:23)

Saul: "Got off to a good start".

Find 3 references in I Samuel chapters 8-12 which indicate that Saul, as the new king, got off to a good start with the following qualities.

(1) He was tall and handsome [goodly] (I Samuel 9:2)

(2) He was humble. (I Sam. 9:21)

(3) He was merciful (I Sam. 11:12,13)

Please Remember to Pray for the *Magnolia Messenger*

Preaching

-Avis Corley Porter-

9803 Highway 336; Thaxton, MS 38871

(Written June, 2009)

In God's wisdom, He has decreed for men to preach, Jesus life, death and resurrection -- they are to teach.

Faith is produced by receiving the precious word, We should be obedient to that which has been heard.

Preaching the cross of Christ is the power of God, And we should live faithfully while on earth we trod.

Preachers should preach doctrine that is sound, And in their lessons no fables should be found.

Preach the gospel of peace and tidings that are glad, Obey Christ and He will be the best friend you ever had.

"Reprove, rebuke and exhort" is the divine command given, Remember: for us the side of our Saviour was riven.

A preacher should also to himself give heed, Or of salvation -- he will find himself in need.

Bogalusa, LA - Price Report --

What can one say to describe the gracious love of God and his continued kindness. I find the depth of his love beyond my comprehension at times. Fifteen months ago, we began working with the Mission work at the Bogalusa Church of Christ. We were so small and seemed so helpless. We put our trust in Jesus Christ and his wonderful message as we lifted him up in the preaching of the death, burial and resurrection. Just as his word promised, people have been drawn unto him and we have new brothers and sisters in Christ.

We set an attendance record this last Sunday of 47. That number was in spite of the fact that we had two out ill and three traveling. We have a new convert, Maggy Polk and she brought her two grand children as well as her daughter and son-in-law. We are averaging between 31 and 35 in attendance. This is so wonderful considering the first time Nancy and I came to preach at Bogalusa there were only 12 in worship. Including me there were only 3 men and one was ill has died.

God has truly blessed us with some wonderful contacts, which turned into bible studies and new converts. We now have 9 men including me and have formed a men's fellowship and training class that meets at 6:30pm every Tuesday. We have a meal together, then a devotional study from scriptures concerning the Christian life style and leadership. Followed by a discussion of the work in Bogalusa and making plans for future activities to attract the lost and establish contacts for bible studies.

Please keep this work in your prayers... I am praying that I will not have to continue much longer holding a part time job due to a short fall in support of 750.00 a month while working full time with the Bogalusa congregation. God is doing great things here in Bogalusa and we truly need your continued spiritual and monetary help as we move to that day in the near future of being self supporting which is a priority with us....

Brother Mike can be reached by addressing:

Bogalusa Church of Christ
1516 North Columbia Ave.
Bogalusa, Louisiana 70427
mhsp68@gmail.com

Printing Equipment Needed

Small print shop equipment,
At reasonable price, needed

Send information to

Joseph Enterprises
P. O. Box 101
Viola, TN 37394

(Include description and price)

The MM
Requests
Your Prayers
and
Your Suggestions

The Baptized Cat

- Steven D. Cline -

One recent evening while assembling for Bible study, we decided to open the doors to Charlie, a neighborhood tabby. He was a mainstay around the church building and would sometimes dart inside as the people would enter. Since he was such a friendly feline, most of the members showed him plenty of attention. On the evening under discussion, our number was very few, so we saw no harm in letting him prowland explore the auditorium.

The door to the baptistry was ajar and Charlie, with the curiosity typical of cats, decided to investigate realms and frontiers in which he had never been. Perhaps he was seeking the proverbial "quiet church mouse". At any rate, while leading a song prior to the lesson, I suddenly heard the wild splashing of water directly behind me. Evidently, Charlie had ventured up the steps to the baptistry, fallen in, and was frantically but futilely endeavoring to claw his way up the slippery, smooth fiberglass wall. I reached over and pulled the soaked, panic-crazed cat out of the water and he made a bee-line for the front door. As of this writing, Charlie

has not been seen since. Save for Charlie, all of us had quite a laugh from the incident and one good sister sagely observed that our furry friend was like so many others ... they are baptized and then they are gone, never to be seen again. Despite visits, phone calls, and letters of encouragement, they vanish like wet cats. What a true assessment! **That** is not at all humorous.

That is to say, when the scarlet blood of Jesus removes our scarlet sins in baptism, they are no longer counted against us, and we are saved... saved from our former sins and now have a new life in Christ (Galatians 3:26-27).



Newly "baptized cats" need a helping hand. (Cat pictured, not cat baptized)

I have known, and I am sure you, the reader, have as well, so many who were baptized and then they are not seen "hide nor hair" of again. Could it be that they believe

baptism is the finish of the Christian life and not the start, or rebirth (John 3:3-7)? Could it be that they believe baptism is the end of the race and not the beginning (Hebrews 12:1)? Do they seem to be under the faulty impression that baptism

guarantees eternal salvation in Heaven?

But doesn't Mark 16:16 state that he who believes and is baptized shall be saved? Indeed! But does it say "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved forevermore in Heaven"? No.

From what then does baptism save? Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16 are splendid commentaries on Mark 16:16. The former verse says that baptism is for the remission (i.e., the putting away or forgiveness) of sins and the latter verse tells us that baptism washes away sins. Therefore rather than baptism being an act that insures unto us an unconditional pass to a future salvation in Heaven, it is an act that, through God's grace, insures unto us a salvation from past sins.

That is to say, when the scarlet blood of Jesus removes our scarlet sins in baptism, they are no longer counted against us, and we are saved... saved from our former sins and now have a new life in Christ (Galatians 3:26-27).

But to be saved in eternity is a different matter. We need to continue to be cleansed by the blood by walking in the light (I John 1:7), which is another way of saying that we must be faithful to Christ and His doctrine; (I Timothy 4:16). That is why Hebrews 3:14 admonishes that we are made partakers of Christ if we are steadfast unto the end. That is why Hebrews 10:36 instructs that we might receive the promise after we have done God's will. That is why Romans 11:22 exhorts us to continue in His goodness or face being cut off. And that is why Revelation 2:10 informs us that we will receive the crown of life by being faithful unto death.

A cat being "baptized" then "scatting" may be a humorous scenario ... a precious human soul doing so is not.

— — —
Stephen D. Cline; 146 Valley Road; Waynesboro, VA 22980

A cat being "baptized" then "scatting" may be a humorous scenario ... a precious human soul doing so is not.

I reached over and pulled the soaked, panic-crazed cat out of the water and he made a bee-line for the front door. As of this writing, Charlie has not been seen since.

(See Question Box)

These Sent In Answers

(Turn to Page 24)

1. Carolyn Harvill
2. Ruby Wright
3. Willa Fox
4. Jerry & Norma Inman
5. Betty Jo Stewart
6. Ima Jean Fogus
7. Eileen Williford
8. Michael Coleman
9. Ms. Doris Laird
10. Miriam Styers
11. Mary Jo Purdon
12. Sarah R. Day
13. Jennifer F. Gray
14. Sam Long
15. Ann McDonald
16. Lawrence Horn
17. Linda B. Keirn
18. Nancy Switzer
19. Lenola Balentine
20. Estella Glover
21. Connie Tice
22. Admiral Tidwell
23. Myrle Turman
24. Travis Hamilton
25. Joy Welch
26. Jeff & Debbie Shull
27. James Gooze
28. Patrilla Maddox
29. Mrs. Brenda Burlison
30. Ellene Vaughan
31. Lorene Lindsey
32. Dathol Camp
33. Gladys Bryant
34. Mrs. V. E. Buffington
35. Garry Gooch
36. Marie Sykes
37. Mike Sullivan
38. Hattie Hooper
39. Otis & Linda Baker
40. Betty A. Skinner
41. Joyce A. King
42. William Pyron
43. Myra D. Reaves
44. Jean Forrester
45. Fran Williford
46. Shirley Dewett
47. Barbara Loden
48. Madonna Michael
49. Barbara Beard
50. Ruth Christian
51. Ms. Linda J. Laird
52. Linda Hogue
53. June Faulkner
54. Gala Webster
55. Mary Ella Webster
56. Charlotte Ritter
57. Frederick Alan Jones
58. Annie Mae Pipkin
59. Donna Gulley
60. Peggy Wroten
61. Ray Ann Woodruff
62. Wilda Pounds
63. Glen Brady
64. Dot Winslett
65. Janie Green
66. Sue Gurley
67. Billy Willingham
68. Ken Harris
69. Carolyn T. Taylor
70. Juanita LeBouef
71. Linda Leech
72. Vera Spencer
73. Tommy Muirhead
74. Rosie Lee Odoms
75. Opal Wright
76. Willie Beardain
77. Johnny & Princess Watson
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120. Shelia Hall
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260. Ginny Luther
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357. Sue McDaniel
358. Mariah Wallace
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366. Jim Nowell
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368. Margaret Burnett
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370. Robbie Cole
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372. Veva June Calhoun
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411. Kristy Pipes
412. Shellie Hancock
413. June Brents
414. Lillie Cobb
415. Dorothy Laws
416. Bonnie Skates
417. Mary Adams Warren
418. Kay Bramlett
419. Sandy Dean
420. Bonnie Howell
421. Mildred Herrington
422. Nellie St. Clair
423. Shirley Bostick
424. Beulah Rupert
425. Gail Gurganus
426. Carole Shelby

YOUR NAME -- next time?!

NOTICE

All answers received before Aug 10, 2009, have been included. Thanks to all who read the MM and answer "The QB". (see page 24)

More Readers' Response

Hi,

My name is Tammy Wells and my husband and I are members of the Lords church. We meet at Ivy Street in Philadelphia under Johnny Beckwith. I'm writing to first of all say that I love the Messenger and would love to have a copy each time it is published. The messenger is a great source of information as well as a motivational tool. It offers insight and it enables you to put faces with names that you might otherwise not have the opportunity.

Again I say the Messenger is a great tool and a great work for those who are seeking AND those who need more. Carthage, MS. Thank You and God Bless the Messenger.

...Thank you for yet another very challenging lesson in MM. I love God's Word more each time I read and study it. Love, (Bronwen Pollard, Brandon, MS)

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to answer
The Question
Box.

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By/For/About Women... Mostly

Aging With Grace and Beauty

- Rosie S. Shepherd -

From the moment of our birth, we start to age. This starts happening month by month. Growing old is part of the process. Many of us look forward to the time that we are out of High School. Some of us -- to the time when we get out of college, get our first job, our first pay check, first apartment, first car, and many other such things.

If we don't age, these things won't happen. Then, why is it so difficult for some of us to accept aging? Are we just unhappy with the cards that time has dealt us through aging? Is that why we search for the fountain of youth? Will you recognize it once you have found it? Why not accept what has been cast upon us? Is it really worth all the money that is spent on trying to look young?

We battle wrinkles, gray hair, and age spots with a passion. How? By spending hours and way too much money on the inevitable. I know it is one's money to do as one chooses to do with it. This is just a reality check.

Have you ever thought about what Phillis Diller said? She said she worked so hard trying to stay young that it began to age her. Do many of us not do the same?

Statistics say, more of us are living longer, so let's be real about it. Somewhere along the journey we will age. So, let's do it with grace and beauty.

Cary Grant says when people tell you how young you look, they are really telling you how old you are.

My question is, How should we Christian women approach the reality of aging? Should we fight it with all that we have? Or should we just go with the flow? Why is age feared rather than respected? Psalm 37:25 says, "I have been young, and now I am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seeds begging bread."

Aging is like death; it is certain! These things will be should we live long enough.

Something good can be said about the *old things*. The prophet Jeremiah asked for the *old path*. When you find it, walk therein. (Jeremiah 6:16)

There is wisdom, experience, love, grace, godly living, education and many, many godly virtues in the old.

There are some who do not want to be called *senior citizens*. Why? We must realize in aging that we spend our years as a tale that is told. (Psalms 90:9)



Rosie Shepherd

We know in aging that birth and death are the book ends of life. Ecclesiastes 3:1 says, "There is a time and a purpose and a season for everything. A time to be born, and a time to die." Proverbs 16:31 teaches that gray hair can be a crown of splendor -- attained by a righteous life.

Aging in the Bible was accepted, even welcomed. We know in aging that our eyesight begins to fail; we may lose our hair, our teeth and our hearing. And, sometimes obesity creeps upon us. There is the loss of sexual desires, the lack of circulation. We have health problems and, of course, lose our ability to conceive.

However, these things associated with aging can make us stron-

ger Christians. There is value in aging. Long life brings understanding and wisdom in many, many things. So we are not to rebuke an old man harshly but, rather, exhort him as if he were your father (1 Tim. 5:1,2). Scripture commands, "Treat older women as mothers."

The key to aging is the realization that our God is not impressed, nor is He deceived by external appearances. Only the pure in heart shall see God. Don't ever forget: as these old bodies start to decay, we know we've got another building -- not made by hands.

Accept who you are, and be thankful. Never give up on your self. And, be the best that you can be with what you have left.

Remember, we are God's representatives in this world, no matter how old one is in age, or when she became a servant in God's Vineyard.

The spirit within that old body is renewed day by day. We must keep the faith, knowing that we are preparing for that eternal home in heaven. When Jesus returns, we shall be like him for we shall see Him as He is (1 John 3:2). Whatever these old bodies look like here on earth won't really matter; for in that day, all will be made new (2 Cor. 3:8)

Rosie S. Shepherd
717 S. Leeds Ave.
Whistler, AL 36612-1945

News from the West Point Church

(Highway 50, West)

I am a member of the body of Christ that meets at Hwy. 50 West in West Point, MS. I receive the Messenger and use it for my daily Bible study. It fills me with such great joy to read about what is going on in the brotherhood. But it disappoints me not to be able to read about what the black congregations are doing. I know that in the Lord's Church, race is not a factor and as a black woman and a Christian I truly love my white brothers and sisters, but I believe that nothing about the black congregations are written because we send nothing in... I would like to share some of the blessings of God that we are experiencing.

We have been here four years. We started meeting in a home in West Point and now meet at Hwy. 50 West. We started out with eight souls; now we are at about 21 people on Sunday mornings. We've had two baptisms so far this year...

Our minister is Bro. **Cloyd Garth** from Aberdeen, MS. We have had Vacation Bible School, Ladies' Day and Gospel Meetings

all four years we have been here. We have a strong benevolence and do hospital visitations every month. God is truly blessing us to be able to bless those in West Point, MS...

We sent in a picture of our 1st meeting in our building four years ago and it was printed in the Messenger. If any of you are ever in West Point, please drop in and visit us... You will find nothing but true love and a strong desire and zeal to serve God because we are his children.

If this article is printed, thank you so much... I love the Messenger and all my fellow congregations that I'm so blessed to read about and pray...

Letter Update: We had a glorious number of 36 in attendance on July 12th... We were blessed with 2 baptisms. We are knocking doors and setting up Bible studies. It is such a joy to go out and knock doors and see some of the people you have talked to and invited to service come and visit... (A sister in Christ; West Point, MS)



A Monday Morning Incident Involving Ten \$100.00 Bills at Goodman Oaks in Southaven.

On June 22, 2009, my June and I enjoyed dropping in for a short visit with **Steve Reeves**, pulpit minister for the Goodman Oaks church in Southaven, MS. In the midst of our visit, **Dixie Rodgers**, office manager, presented an envelope to Steve which contained ten \$100.00 bills. She explained that an unknown visitor had come into the office earlier that morning, spoke, then left the envelope and disappeared. Dixie opened the envelope and found \$1,000.00 in cash with a request written on the front of the envelope saying, "Good morning, Would like for this to store food bank."

An interesting incident. Maybe also, a worthy example. Jesus taught much about caring for the poor and feeding the hungry. He taught that one should not do

alms to be "seen of men" and not to let the left hand know what the right hand doeth (Matt. 6:1-3). Apparently this unknown lady wanted to help the needy but desired no personal recognition. As much as we would like to know her identity -- what really matters is that God knows and promises to reward. May we all come to better understand the "grace of giving" (2 Cor. 8:6,7) and that it is, indeed, "more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit with brother Steve Reeves and others who came and went from the office of the Goodman Oaks church that special Monday morning. I must say, however, that the envelope with ten \$100.00 bills made a lasting impression. (Editor)

An Important List

What To Do Today

A Reader Writes:

Thanks to all of you who write and publish the Magnolia Messenger. The verse at the bottom of the front page expresses my reasons. (Titus 3: 1) "Put them in mind ... to be ready unto every good work."

Many of us become comfortable in our little corner of our world of daily routine. When we read of the brethren throughout the state doing little kindnesses and big kindnesses for Jesus, we are provoked to start to reach out a little more. Each of us have our talents. We can write down a few on our list of things **to do** for today. And just do them!

A card in the mail might be just the blessing that helps a brother or sister take heart to find the strength to press on. A call might be the bright point for a lonely one. An email could bring a smile and a thank you to Jesus. A ten minute visit at the nursing home to an older member might be the high light of the day.

Last Thursday when we pushed my mother in her wheel chair down to the dining room, it was a little triumph for her in that she could show off her daughter and son-in-law. The ladies were joyful to see visitors from the

outside and greet us. The workers were glad to see that we were visiting my 92 year old mother.

It is disheartening to aids to see old people neglected. For the brethren who have no relatives in the area or close enough for visits, a little visit is such a blessing. They know they are not forgotten. In the past our church group would go and sing on Sunday afternoon followed by a message from one of the men. The residents loved it.

God will open a door for service if we open up our hearts and our hands for service for the Master. This unworthy servant can do better.

I love seeing all of the pictures of the church buildings across the state and the other events of the churches.

As I have stated before, I read every article as the days go by and pass the paper along to someone else. God bless your work for Jesus. (Shirley Sims; McComb, MS)

The Magnolia Messenger is Supported by Volunteer Contributions from Churches and Christians. Thank You!

... From A Woman's Viewpoint ...

Searching For Happiness

- June Franks -

As Americans we have been richly blessed to be able to live in this great country. But as a whole we have become a materialistic nation. It seems, as a people, we are always searching for something or someone to make us happy. If we are not careful, as Christians, we can also become caught up in materialism and this way of thinking.

We want to be happy. The devil has deceived us into believing that we are going to find happiness in things of this world. The things of this world may bring pleasure for a little while, but often we are left with an empty and void feeling.

In our search for happiness, we often think, "If I just had lots of money, then I would be happy!" Some have thought that if they could only win the lottery then they would be happy.

However, according to a television special, about former lottery winners, it has been proven that many who have been "winners" have said they wished they had never won the money. Even though they had plenty of money their lives were not fulfilled by just being able to buy whatever they wanted. Temptations were much greater to those who had won the lottery. Many developed drug and alcohol problems and their marriages had ended in divorce. The television special told of

Recent Bible Winner



Carole Shelby

Carole is a member of the Ripley church of Christ. We were pleased to visit the services of the church on Wednesday evening (8/12/09) and present her Bible. Thanks to the elders of the church for allowing us to give recognition to one of their faithful members. Thank you, sister Shelby, for answering "The Question Box". (See page 24 and 21)



June Franks

many lottery winners whose lives had also ended in tragedy. They learned the hard way happiness was not found in being able to buy whatever their heart desired.

God intended for each one to work for whatever they may have and not to do depend on winning at a casino or with a lottery ticket.

All we have to do is to also look at the movie stars and some of the famous singers of today and the years gone by. In their search for happiness, their money, nor their beauty, brought them true happiness. Many turned to drugs and alcohol which resulted in an early death. They had fame and fortune but they were not happy.

Are you searching for happiness? Someone wisely said, "If you are searching for happiness, you are probably not going to find it."

If we continually think of ourselves and if we put our trust in our possessions and the acquiring of more things then we are not going to be happy for very long.

Please consider the following rules for happy living. These rules were copied from the bulletin of the Foote Street Church of Christ in Corinth, Mississippi. In turn, they had found the rules, as published by Paul Sain of Flatwoods, KY, who had lifted them from *Bulletin Digest*.

Rules For Happy Living

1. **Count your blessings**, not your troubles. Though we have many problems in life, we are still richly blessed. The plaque on the wall stated, "I grumbled and complained because I had no shoes, until I saw a man who had no feet."

2. **Live one day at a time**. Regardless of what Satan may throw at you, it can be handled "one day at a time" (James 4:13-15). You can control and conquer, if you will take on obstacles one day at a time.

3. **Learn to say, "I love you"** to those near and dear. Break the shackles and learned restraints and express your love and appreciation to as many as possible each day (Mark 14:3-6).

4. **Be a giver, not a getter**. Often if you fail to get out of life what you want, it is because you are expecting to GET instead of Give (Luke 6:38).

5. **Seek good in everyone** and everything. Be a "good" seeker. Try hard not to be a "fault finder". When faults are present, deal with them lovingly.

6. **Pray every day**. Always take the time to express to God our appreciation for blessings and ask Him for guidance (Luke 18:1).

7. **Do a good deed each day**. The "grandest intention" is not as good as the "smallest deed." Follow the Lord's example (Acts 10:38).

8. **Watch your priorities**. Keep the important things in first place. (Matt. 6:33).

9. **Fill your life with good**. Throw away the "trash" from your life and replace it with good thoughts and deeds (Phil. 4:8).

10. **Laugh and cry**. Laughter is a good medicine. A good sense of humor overcomes many "ills and problems" of life.

11. **Learn to practice the happiness habit**. Smile, and the world will smile with you (Phil. 4:4). Make up your mind to "be happy".

12. **Let go and let God control your life**. To find peace and happiness, you must let God completely reign on the throne in your life. You must totally follow His will. It is for your own good. (*copied*)

In conclusion, our happiness depends greatly upon our own attitude. Other people can influence us, but ultimately, whether we are happy or not is in our own hands.

Being happy doesn't mean that you go around giddy and laughing all the time. True happiness comes from within - knowing that we are in the right relationship with God. It will greatly add to our happiness if we will follow in our lives the twelve rules that are listed in this article.

Mrs. A. L. Franks

P.O. Box 1578

Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090

franksmm@aol.com

Ladies' Retreat

Sardis Lake
Christian Camp
Sept. 26, 27, 2009

Schedule Speakers
Jane Maynard
and
Barbara Cooper

Theme
What's
In Your Bag?

By
Barbara

Barbara Cagle Ray
BCagleRay@Aol.Com



He Leadeth Me

He gently leads me along life's journey,
And guides every single step that I take.
Whether beside still waters or raging seas,
I know that His child He'll never forsake.

He is my shepherd, and I am His sheep;
I shall follow wherever His footsteps roam.
Great peace and joy He brings to me,
And one day His hand shall lead me home.

I shall fear no evil when He comes for me,
For He loves me with heart and soul.
His rod and staff shall point the way,
And I shall tread where gleams the gold.

Goodness and mercy shall follow me home,
My cup will overflow with joy, full and free.
I shall dwell in the Lord's house evermore;
Oh, blessed thought... He leadeth me!

A Glimpse of Eden

When earth awakes from winter sleep,
Give me a plot of soil to till.
The pulsing earth beneath my hands
This restless weary heart can heal.

'Neath the chocolate clods of earth,
I plant my dry seeds one by one,
Pat the soil securely o'er them,
Then wait for springtime's rain and sun.

Despite these restless modern times,
When city dwellers rush and toil,
I wait with patience just to see
A lacy leaf peek through the soil.

I till and water, kneel and pray,
Until unfolds before my eyes,
A glimpse of Eden before me-
My earthly bit of Paradise.

Sister Ray also may be reached by addressing, Barbara Cagle Ray, 520 Vinson Dr., Nashville, TN 37217

Sulphur, LA Church (Maplewood)

To Host Ladies' Day on 10/10/09

A Ladies' Day will be held from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 3, 2009 at the Maplewood Church of Christ, 104 Beverly Place, in Sulphur, LA. **Marilyn Jobe**, of Chappell Hill, TX, will be guest speaker. Her topics are: **Extreme Makeover - Spiritual Edition: Body, Mind and Soul**, and **Extreme Makeover - Home Edition: Hearth, Hormones and Hospitality**. A luncheon will be served. Please RSVP so we will know how much food to prepare. The church's phone number is 337-625-5739. (via Linda K. Gill)

Use of the King James Version may be helpful

The Question Box

Is your name found on page 21?

Well... Well... Well!

"Well... well." A favorite expression of many, including my mother's aunt Jay. Upon hearing someone exclaim, "Well!", the response has often been -- "a deep subject!"

This month's Question Box calls your attention to a few of the 256 occurrences of the word "well" in the KJV of the Bible. A few times the word **well**, as used in the English translation, refers to a source of water coming from the ground. This study asks you to examine some of the instances where "well", as used in

Scripture, means a hole dug in the earth where water is found.

Prayerfully study and answer each of the sections in this lesson. Upon completion, send your answers to us. By so doing, you will encourage others and you also become eligible to have your name including in a random drawing where one student's name will be selected to be awarded a beautiful Study Bible. Thank you for your interest in the Word of God as expressed through your answers to "The Question Box". (editor)

The Well at Bethlehem

(Answers are in 2 Samuel 23.)

1. Who said, "Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem..."? _____
2. The "mighty three men": Match the person's name (col. 1) with the appropriate identification (col. 2).

___ Adino	1. Son of the Hararite
___ Eleazar	2. the Tachmonite
___ Shammah	3. the son of Dodo
3. Surprise ending: What did the king do with the water brought to him from the well at Bethlehem? _____ Why? _____

Jacob's Well at Sychar in Samaria

Study each of the quotations below taken from John 4. Answer "Who Said?"

Ponder each statement. (All answers are found in John chapter 4. Supply the verse number.)

1. "Give me to drink." _____ (Verse ___)
2. "God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." _____ (___)
3. "The well is deep" _____ (___)
4. "Give me this water that I thirst not." _____ (___)
5. "...Master, eat." _____ (___)
6. "I have no husband." _____ (___)
7. "...whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst..." _____ (___)
8. "... Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." _____ (___)
9. "...he whom thou now hast is not thy husband..." _____ (___)
10. "He told me all that ever I did." _____ (___)
11. "...Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already unto harvest." _____ (___)
12. "... Now we believe... for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." _____ (___)

Wells and People Associated therewith.

Match the well [column 1] and the people [column 2] associated with the well.

Answers are found in Genesis 21; 21; 24; 26 and Exodus 2. (Supply chapter & verse)

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| ___ "Beersheba" (___:___) | 1. Moses and Zipporah |
| ___ Well near Nahor (___:___) | 2. Rebekah & Isaac |
| ___ "Shebah" (___:___) | 3. Isaac & His servants |
| ___ Well in Midian (___:___) | 4. Hagar & Ishmael |
| ___ Well in wilderness (___:___) | 5. Abraham & Abimelech |

Ponder this Passage: Fill in the missing words. (Proverbs ___:15): "Drink _____ out of thine own _____ and running _____ out of thine own _____."

Thank you for answering "The Question Box"

Please Send Your Answers to Us.

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____
 Zip: _____ Telephone: _____

Notice: Each person who sends in answers will be recognized in the next issue of the "MM" (see page 21). Also, by random drawing, the name of one student will be selected to receive a beautiful New Study Bible. **You may be the one.** Please send your answers to:

The Question Box
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

"A Live Oak" and the "Tree of Life"



Editor Standing by Live Oak Tree

On Sunday, July 5, 2005, while visiting in SW Louisiana, my June and I went for an early morning walk. Our motor home was parked next to the Boxwood church building where I was to preach later that morning. We decided it would be nice to walk the short distance down to the "old home place" where I grew up as a boy.

Standing under the old oak tree in the front yard of my childhood home, brought some very precious memories to my mind. I thought about how the tree had provided much needed shade in the long, hot Louisiana summers. And, that from one of its large limbs had once hung a swing which produced a "lot of fun." Beneath the tree there had once been grassless ground where I could easily scrape out a road in the dirt for my little home-made truck. But, even more importantly, that old live oak tree of ninety plus years, reminded me of an ever increasing and precious hope that I have, along with **all** who are faithful followers of Christ Jesus.

The old tree still standing in the front yard of my childhood Louisiana home is called a "Live Oak". That is, it stays green all year. Even in the dead of winter, the tree gives the appearance of life! Holy Scripture tells about a very special "tree of life" which was, at the beginning, placed in the earthly paradise called "Eden" -- home to the first family (Adam and Eve). The Bible seems to indicate that, had not Eve and Adam sinned, they could have lived forever in the paradise of Eden -- basking in the shade of and eating the fruit of the "tree of life". But, because of sin, they lost their paradise home and were separated from the garden and the tree of life.

But that is not the end of the story. We thank the Lord for more. What our fore-parents ("Adam" -- read Gen. 5:2) lost, through sin, can be regained through Jesus Christ ("the last Adam" -- read I Cor. 15:45). The "tree of life", which was present at the beginning, will once again be available and will bless all who are privileged to spend forever with God and the redeemed of all ages (Revelation 22). *What a blessed hope!* Are you a Christian? Are you truly "Christ-like"?

It seems such a short time since I was blessed to grow up in the shade of that old live oak tree. And, considering the rapidity with which the years of earthly life are now passing, it can't be all that long until, hopefully, through the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus, I will be at home with the Lord and in the lasting presence of the eternal "tree of life." So... once again: *What a blessed hope!* (alf)

Next LA/TX RV Rally
 Grapeland, Texas
 (Salmon Lake Park)
October 28-31, 2009
 (Details on page 19)

Our New Bible Winner
Mrs. W. C. Wells
 (Ethridge, TN)
Congratulations!



Pay for Preaching
 Thoughts About the Way it "Used to Be" (NEXT ISSUE)