



Magnolia Messenger

JULY - SEPT, 2010 -- VOLUME 32; NUMBER 3 -- Our 32nd Year

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

Magnolia Messenger

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1910

100 Years (1910 - 2010)
Centennial Celebration -- Gospel Meeting -- Old Union Church
(Story on Page 12)

Miracles: Why Written? Answer "The Question Box"

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The Holy Spirit "His Greatest Gift"

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SUMMER TIME... And, the Clothes Fall Off

(Page 22)

Who Am I; What am I... Religiously?

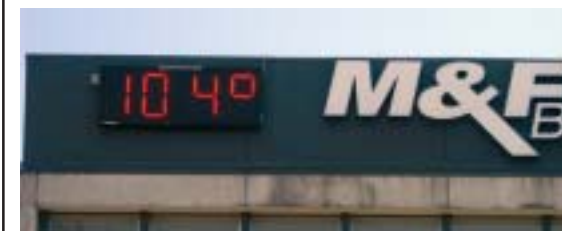
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A Reader Asks:

What does the Bible really teach about the kingdom? I don't believe in the premillennial idea, but in refuting that idea we say the kingdom and the church are tantamount to the same thing. Some passages, however, sound like the kingdom is heaven.

And what is the difference between the "kingdom of heaven" and the "kingdom of God"? (C. R.)

Cecil May Responds on page 3



104°

So, You Think it is Hot! (Turn to Page 19)

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- 2011 -

Holy Land Trip

We are still in the planning stages of our 2011 cruise to the *Lands of the Bible* from **Rome, Italy**. We plan to have details available in the next issue of the Magnolia Messenger. We would love for you to go with us. *Our trip to Israel last year was truly a life changing experience.*" (alf)

A Question to Prayerfully Ponder Is God Humbling America?



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Be of the Same Mind

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75 Years

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Strengthened For Service

(Power in Prayer: Pg 6)

2nd Annual
Mid-South

Golden Years' Rally

Goodman Oaks
Church of Christ
Southaven, Mississippi
September 25, 2010

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Remembering My Daddy

Editor Confesses: (Page 8)

My First and Second Impressions Were Both Wrong!

Magnolia Messenger



Magnolia Blossom

Seen in editor's yard
(Picture taken 5/11/10)

A New Picture

A Renewed Purpose

"To be the best paper possible in order to glorify our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus our Saviour."

Please Pray

For Our Joint Efforts!

Magnolia Messenger

Our **32nd** Year

Circulation

25,000

"Into Every State"

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)

Dear Bro. Al,

I was just reading the MM and read of the passing of Bro. Jack Exum. He was such a wonderful man. He stayed in our home when Ray was preaching in Grandview, MO and in Waynesboro. I have many wonderful memories of him. One night after I had fixed supper, when he got up to preach, he said if I start crowing I just filled up on chicken at Bro Ray's and Sis Pat's.

Won't it be a wonderful meeting when we all get to Heaven. I don't know if you knew I lost my husband, S.P. Hudson, in December. He was a wonderful Christian man and preached a lot in this area. Please pray for me; the church is not real strong in this area.

I am working with a lady friend who was a member of the church as a teenager, but left the church when she married and went into the Mormon church. She is a widow now and not in good health I keep talking to her trying not to offend her and pray she will see her way back to the Lord. I have some preachers helping me with some material to help me better understand Mormon teaching. I so enjoy the paper and have fond memories of you and June. God Bless you and your efforts.
Pat Hudson

Brother Franks:

Received my copy of the Magnolia Messenger today and I have answered

the questions of the question box sending them tomorrow. I appreciate the good articles I read today but was greatly impressed with the final page and the special presentation for Jane Bell, the recent Bible winner. I am so glad that you presented the Bible to her family. That made my heart feel good in a world so filled with sin. Keep up the good work! —**Ole Tom**

I recently spoke with someone associated with the Magnolia Messenger. I gave them my father's address so he could receive the Messenger. He is 81 and recently read a copy of the Magnolia Messenger for the first time and really enjoyed it. We receive the Magnolia Messenger at the congregation I attend. My father began preaching when he was 35. He preached for three different congregations until he was in his early 70's. He did this while holding a full-time secular job. He gave up preaching to take care of my mother. Since our mother passed away, dad has continued to be active at the congregation he attends. He can't do much as he use to, but he does what he can... I have sent a small donation to help with the printing and postage of the Messenger. Thank you for sending it to my father. (**Ronny Stubblefield, Slaughters, KY**)

More Readers' Response

(throughout this issue)

Thanks for Reading the MM

Magnolia Messenger

Church of Christ - Kosciusko

Published every 2-3 months (as funds and time permit). Mailed **without charge** to all who ask to receive it and to others for whom it is requested.

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!**

Supported By Contributions

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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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Remembering My Daddy

Not Perfect, but Penitent

- Editor -

June 20, 2010, the most recent "Father's Day." Leaders in our beloved nation have set aside a special day each year to honor fathers. I am grateful -- for the annual day and to have had a father worthy to be remembered; a father who was not perfect, but penitent.

I am writing this little "memorial" a few days late. It is Monday, July 5, 2010. This morning, I have been reading from the book of Philippians where I came across something that got me to thinking about my earthly Father.

My Dad's name was Lovis Alfred Franks. (I am named for him; "Alfred", *not* "Lovis"; thankful!). He was born in southwest Louisiana on September 25, 1911. Had he lived until next year, he would be celebrating his 100th year on earth. But he didn't and he won't. Daddy died "early" at the age of 59, back in 1971.

I remember my Daddy. He was "self-employed" most of his life; he made a living for his family through farming -- raising cattle and hogs. He also owned and operated a slaughtering house and sold fresh meat to area grocery stores. Daddy never made a lot of money; however he was blessed to make a few wise investments, enabling us to live fairly comfortable. I am thankful.

I remember my Daddy. He dearly loved his one and only wife, Lucille (*Belvin*) Franks -- my precious mother. To my knowledge, he never gave any reason for anyone to doubt his love for her and his faithfulness to her. His example as a devoted, faithful husband, has had a great influence on me. I am thankful.

I remember my Daddy as a man who loved the Lord and His church. He didn't think you could separate Christ from His church (Ephesians 5:23-32; Acts 20:28). **But**, I also had reason to realize that my dad was *not perfect* (*I John 1:8-10*). There was a time, in his early life (when I was very young) that my dad ceased attending the night services of the church. I remember asking him why he (and we) did not attend on Sunday evenings and Wednesday nights. I couldn't understand why, if it were really important to attend services on Sunday morning, why we didn't "go to church" at night. His explanation, as I recall was, "We do not go to church at night because all they do is argue about the Bible." I was puzzled.

Yes, I remember my Daddy. Not long after he gave me the "excuse" for not attending night services, Daddy did something very impor-



Alfred (Al) L. Franks

- Editor -

tant. I later learned that what he did was called "repenting." Something or someone influenced him to rethink his relationship with the Lord and his responsibility as a husband and father. So, my Dad *stopped* making *excuses* and *started* showing that he truly *loved* the Lord and His church (Matt. 22:37; Heb. 10:25). Of course, my mom and sister and myself; we followed in his footsteps. He started attending every service -- so did we!

The little; yet, thriving country church did have Bible studies where members offered comments and ideas and, sometimes, not everyone agreed with everyone else. It didn't take long for me; however, even as a very young person, to learn that my dad had simply made up an excuse for not being faithful to the Lord and His church.

Thank the Lord. Daddy admitted he was wrong. He repented, publicly confessing his sin and making known his desire to demonstrate his love for the Lord by serving Him with all of his heart. My Dad's admission of wrong doing and/or failure to do right and his repentance, made a deep and lasting impression on my mind.

Because my father was humble enough to admit mis-

takes and determined enough to show true repentance, I was blessed to spend most of my developing years in a family that never again "missed a service" of the church. The Lord had become Number One! The way it should/must be.

Because my father was not perfect; yet, was penitent, he greatly encouraged significant decisions made in my own life. **One**, was to become a Christian, which I did at an early age. **Two**, was to become a gospel preacher, a process which started when I was very young and continues to this day. These two decisions and many others were influenced greatly by my father.

As I remember my Daddy, I believe one of the most significant things he ever did was to *admit he was wrong* and make needed changes. He was not perfect, but thank God, he was penitent!

If he could hear, I would say: "I love you, Daddy. Looking forward to seeing you again... up there. It won't be long! Your thankful son." Maybe he can! Jesus does. (Alfred L. Franks)

Thank You

For Receiving, Reading & Responding to the MM

Bible Questions Answered

QUESTION: What does the Bible really teach about the kingdom? I don't believe in the premillennial idea, but in refuting that idea we say the kingdom and the church are tantamount to the same thing. Some passages, however, sound like the kingdom is heaven. And what is the difference between the "kingdom of heaven" and the "kingdom of God"? (C. R.)

RESPONSE: Last question first.

There is no substantive difference between "kingdom of heaven" and "kingdom of God." Both refer to the same kingdom. Matthew uses "kingdom of heaven" in reporting discourses where the other gospels, reporting the same discourse, say "kingdom of God."

For one example out of many, after the arrest of John the Baptist, Jesus took up the same message John had been preaching, "Repent for the kingdom is at hand." Matthew uses "kingdom of heaven" in reporting it (Matthew 4:17); Mark says "kingdom of God" (Mark 1:15).

Matthew is a Jewish author writing to Jewish readers. Jewish sensibilities often dictated the use of euphemisms for God. That is usually suggested as the reason for the different wording.

Kingdom Equals Church

Often the church and the kingdom are "tantamount to the same thing," to use the questioner's words.

The kingdom the Old Testament prophets promised and described by inspiration was eagerly anticipated by many Jews in the time Jesus was born and lived. They were expecting it to be an earthly, physical kingdom, as they remembered the one over which David and Solomon had reigned in what the Jews considered their "golden age."

The "Anointed One" or "Christ" would be "son of David." The Jews, they believed, would rule the world including the Gentiles. All would worship the LORD, and peace would reign throughout the world.

The basic problem premillennialists have is that, like the Jews of Jesus' day, they believe all kingdom prophecies must be fulfilled literally and therefore they expect a physical kingdom. So since in their view the prophecies must be fulfilled literally, and have not been, they posit a huge prophetic "gap" and declare they will be fulfilled in a

kingdom to be established when Jesus comes again.

Jesus, on the other hand, from the time Simon Peter correctly confessed at Caesarea Philippi that he was the Christ, began to show that his kingship was spiritual, fulfilling the "Suffering Servant" prophecies of Isaiah (Matthew 16:21). His kingdom, he declared, "is not of this world" (John 18:36).

The strongest refutation of premillennialism results from a demonstration that the New Testament itself, Jesus through his apostles and prophets, spiritualize the Old Testament prophecies of the kingdom. Their fulfillment is said by inspiration to be located in the work of Christ during the time of his first coming and in the kingdom/church he established at that time.

The evidence for that spiritualization has been given in responses to earlier questions in previous editions of this column.

When men and women heard the gospel as preached by Peter at Pentecost, those who gladly received the word were baptized and received forgiveness of sins, the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38) and were added to the number of the saved who constitute the church.

Acts 2:47 in the King James Version says, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

The 1901 American Standard Version, however, and every English or American translation since of which I am aware follow a Greek text that does not have the word for *church* in it. ASV says "And the Lord added to *them* day by day those that were saved." ESV has, "And the Lord added to *their number* day by day those who were being saved" (emphasis mine, CMJr).

Following those pronouns through Acts to determine to whom "them" and "their number" refer, the reader comes to "the whole church" (Acts 5:11, and afterward).

Response by Cecil May, Jr.



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So, as is often the case, even a text determined to be not what Luke originally wrote still teaches what is true: the saved are added by the Lord to the church; the saved are the church; the church is the saved.

According to Paul in the Colossian epistle, when we were redeemed, God "delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son" (Colossians 1:13). It is also true, therefore, that the saved are transferred into the kingdom; the saved are the kingdom; the kingdom is the saved.

The same people constitute both the church and the kingdom.

John the Baptist (Matthew 3:2) and Jesus (Matthew 4:17) both proclaimed, "Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand." "At hand" means very near, or in our idiom, "just around the corner." Jesus taught on another occasion that the kingdom would come within the lifetime of some of his disciples (Mark 9:1).

The kingdom did indeed begin on the Day of Pentecost, fifty days after Jesus was crucified and raised. It is in this sense that "Daniel 2, Isaiah 2, Joel 2 and Psalm 2 are all fulfilled in Acts 2." The kingdom these prophets talked about is a never-to-be-destroyed kingdom, as several of those passages say, but it will end "at his coming" when he "delivers the kingdom to God the Father" (1 Cor. 15:23-26).

The church which Jesus promised to build also began on that same Pentecost. Jesus said to Peter that he would build his church and give the keys of the kingdom to Peter, using church and kingdom, it seems evident, interchangeably (Matthew 16:18-19).

Since, to repeat, the redeemed were transferred into the kingdom; and the saved were added to the church, the church and the kingdom consist of the same people.

Kingdom Equals Heaven

There are passages, however, in which the kingdom is said to be entered only at the end of a faithful life.

"Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:10-11).

In his picture of the judgment, Jesus says he will say to those who have ministered to the needy and are therefore "on his right hand," "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34).

Again Jesus pictures judgment and says, "Depart from me, all you workers of evil! In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God" (Luke 13:27-30).

Entering the kingdom in these passages is equivalent to going to heaven.

In the chapter of Revelation that glorifies the Lamb in heaven (Revelation 5), the elders and creatures around the throne sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:9-10).

Jesus at his second coming, after destroying the last enemy, death, by calling forth the universal resurrection, then pre-

sents the kingdom to God. It consists of those he has redeemed "from every tribe and language and people and nation." You and I, if we are among the redeemed, will be part of that kingdom presented, as Jesus will be able to say, "Here, Father, is the work you have sent me to do."

The kingdom, in the first sense, all the saved of all ages, is delivered to God to become the eternal kingdom in heaven, enjoying forever fellowship with God, Christ and all the holy saints.

The Reign of God Within

On other occasions *kingdom* seems to refer to the reign of God within the heart of the individual Christian.

"Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them, 'The kingdom of God does not come with observation, nor will they say, "See here!" or "See there!" For indeed, the kingdom of God is within (entos) you'" (Luke 17:20-21, NKJV).

Jesus did not come to establish a temporal kingdom through the overthrow of Roman occupying forces. Instead he came to inaugurate a kingdom equivalent to the rule of God in men's hearts through their faith in the Lord Jesus.

It would come quietly as contrasted with the pomp usually associated with the arrival of a king and the inauguration of a kingdom.

Jesus said his kingdom is like leaven, permeating a lump of dough until the whole is transformed (Matthew 13:33). Paul said, "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17), attributes all to be found within the heart.

When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Your kingdom come," they likely thought of the kingdom which Jesus and John the Baptist said was at hand. They would probably be praying for what would be the events of Pentecost to come.

However, when Jesus added to the suggested prayer, "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," he made it appropriate to pray for the reign of God--his kingdom--to more completely dominate our hearts and minds; so that at least in us God's will may be done as it is in heaven.

Some commentaries and trans-

See **KINGDOM** on page 16

The
Spanish
Preacher
and the
English
Translator
Speak in
Kosciusko



Raciél Ramirez (Mexico) and Keith Olree (Alabama)

Sunday, July 25, the South Huntington Street church of Christ in Kosciusko was blessed to have the **Raciél Ramirez** family from Guanajuato City in Mexico visiting for the worship services. Brother Raciél preached in Spanish; however, his message was heard in English because **Keith Olree** did an excellent job translating.

Les Ferguson, Sr., preacher for the South Huntington Street congregation wrote in the church bulletin, "I want to thank you for your reception of the Raciél Ramirez family. They were impressed with your friendliness and our support of them.... We had a great crowd (for us) in attendance Sunday morning and very good number stayed for lunch. It was a very enjoyable day

as we worshipped God together. Raciél did a great job in his lessons and Keith Olree's interpretation was so very good. Our loving thanks to all who helped me in this great time."

Raciél and Lise Ramirez and their family have, within the past few years, devoted themselves to establishing a church of Christ in the city of Guanajuato -- a city of half a million souls. The congregation presently brings together 25 - 45 each Lord's day.

Brother Ferguson informed the Kosciusko church that the church in Statesville, NC was accepting the sponsorship of the Ramirez family. He stated, "We will still have fellowship in that we will send our agreed funding to North Carolina and they will disseminate it to Raciél." Brother Les added, "Please pray for all the churches in Mexico...." His address:

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Sermon: *Sin is Serious*

On Thursday night, May 27, 2010, we were privileged to visit the closing night of a gospel meeting in Durant, Mississippi. The speaker, on the night of our visit, was a former preacher for the Durant church, Greg Ledbetter. Greg worked with the church for several years while he was a student at Magnolia Bible College. The following is a brief report of the sermon preached in Durant by Brother Ledbetter.

The preacher stated the goal of his sermon by saying, "I hope this lesson will help develop within you a greater disgust and hatred for sin." The talented preacher warned about the dangerous deception of sin, calling attention to the enticing ads for the sale of alcohol and the attraction of immoral behavior as portrayed on television. He ably noted that sin not only separates one from God; it also separates man from a "better self". He called attention to at least three "D's" which can be used to describe sin and to show its seriousness.

Using the example of Eve in the Old Testament, he reminded us of the fact that "**Sin is Deceptive**." He also pointed out that "**Sin is Destructive**". For ex-

ample, he spoke of the value of a "good name" and how that sin can destroy one's good name. He noted that sin's connection with certain names of people has discouraged the use of such names in our day; for examples, what were once *good names* like "Jezebel" and "Judas". Greg also made the point that sin can and often does destroy our bodies and can even destroy the church.

A third point made by the MBC graduate was that "**Sin is Deadly**." Using Romans 6:23, he reminded us that the "wages of sin is death." However, not wanting the sinner to feel hopeless, the preacher emphasized that while the "wages of sin is death"; yet, the "*gift of God is eternal life*." Greg called our attention to the fact that God is a "forgiving God." This point, he illustrated by using the example of the "prodigal son" in Luke 15. Greg also stated, based upon I John 1:9, that God was willing to forgive all sin if the sinner is willing to meet His conditions.

Yes, we went away from the study/sermon preached in Durant with a greater realization that "sin is serious," but *it is forgivable*. There is hope for all through Jesus Christ. (alf/editor)

Greg Ledbetter

- * From Jackson to MBC
- * While at MBC, he served the Durant church for 5 years
- * From Durant to Elliott where he preached for two years.
- * This summer, from Elliott to Killen, Alabama, where Greg is to serve as a "Youth Minister" for the Atlas congregation.



*If MM reaches you
too late; at least, you know
what was planned!*

ANNUAL SONGFEST

Cox Boulevard
CHURCH OF CHRIST
303 Cox Boulevard,
Sheffield, AL 35660
(256-383-1618)

FRIDAY
AUGUST 13, 2010
6:30 pm until...
(Singing starts at 7 PM
but we have to be early
to get a good seat forward.)

**Hundreds Gather
Each Year
Excellent Singing!
Fine Song Leaders From
Throughout the Shoals
Area!**

Take A Break Any Time
Plenty of Food and Drinks
Just Down the Hall

Load Your Vans
Pack Your Cars

Heavenly Singing!

Stay As Long As You Like
Leave When You Want

The Bible Says,
(11) *Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;* (Rom. 12)

Long time
Elder at
Goodman
Oaks,
Smith
Howell,
Died
At the
Age of
94



Wife, Allene, Preceded Smith Howell in Death

SMITH HOWELL, SR
1915-2010

**An Elder
(54 Years)**

by Ken Joines

He died quietly, peacefully and powerfully—just as he lived. Smith Howell, the mischievous little boy, the strong but loving family man, the wise Elder, loving and sympathetic Shepherd, and my old hunting buddy and close neighbor took his flight to his Eternal Home on May 5th at the age of 94. His wife, Allene Belew Howell, preceded him in death.

His mind was clear up until a few hours before he breathed his last there in his own bedroom. He honored me by asking that I deliver the eulogy at the Goodman Oaks Church of Christ in Southaven, Mississippi.

He often talked freely and openly about his death. Less than a week before his death, knowing that I was about to leave to preach a gospel meeting in Anderson, Indiana, he called me to his bedside and reminded me that I was to conduct his funeral. We talked about my being gone for the following six days. I said, "Now, you'll have to hang on until I get back next Thursday." He said, "I'll do my best." He died the following Wednesday evening and I conducted the funeral on Friday just as he had asked.

He served as an elder of the Whitehaven/Goodman Oaks church for fifty-four years. His handprints will be seen on so many us for the rest of our lives. He loved the unlovely, cared about the homeless and helpless, and when you had royally messed up your life, he might well be the first to contact you and offer help and hope.

I was his preacher for almost twenty-nine years. He and I sometimes sharply disagreed, but during the final weeks of his life he called me to his house just three doors down from ours more than once to talk with me about serious issues facing the church we both loved.

He served for many years on the Board of the Mississippi

Christian Foundation which operated Sunnybrook Children's Home in Jackson, MS.

Smith has been a huge part of my life for thirty-five years—nearly half of my life. We made numerous trips to hunt Elk, Deer and Antelope in Wyoming and Colorado, always sleeping in the same tent out on the snowy mountain sides. Such experiences forged a friendship that was never to be broken.

He knew how to affirm and encourage a preacher. In the early years of my ministry with this church, I distinctly recall numerous times when he thought I had preached a good sermon that the congregation needed to hear, that he would walk slowly down front and to the pulpit where he would admonish the congregation to take heed to what they had heard. He and I conducted several funerals and weddings in tandem.

His entire professional life was spent in the employ of Hoyt Wooten, the father of Radio & Television in the Memphis market. He retired after working there for 48 years, but even after retirement, Channel 3 retained him as a Consultant. He was the brainpower behind construction of one of the first radio stations in Memphis with studios in the basement of the Peabody Hotel.

Although he never attended a day of architect school, I cannot begin to list all of the quality buildings he designed and drew the plans for. He drew plans for my house and for the original Goodman Oaks house of worship. But not being a registered Architect, he had to take his finished work to such a one to have them stamp it to make it legal. He conceived the idea and drew the plans for the impressive Channel 3 TV studios standing today on the banks of the Mississippi River in Memphis; his office was on the top floor overlooking the Great River.

He was more than just an employee of Hoyt Wooten—he was literally Wooten's right-hand man. When Wooten needed a couple of bird dogs trained, Smith got the job. No job was too small or too large. When, during the

Turn to **HOWELL** on page 20

Quitman, Mississippi A Small Church; But...

1. Good Singing
2. "Lots" of Young People
3. Effective Older Preacher

On Sunday morning (July 11, 2010), we enjoyed visiting with the Quitman church in SE Mississippi. At the invitation of **Glen Tucker** (regular class teacher), I was pleased to teach the Sunday morning auditorium class on the planned topic of "Time".

We were favorably impressed with the song service led by long time leader -- **Austin Dickerson**. Although the assembly included only about 40 worshippers; yet, the singing was very good. Three reasons may be given. (a) a talented leader; (b) a building well designed, acoustically; and (c) the participation of almost every person in the audience. These blessings made the singing of "*Worthy Art Thou*" and "*Blessed Assurance*" so very meaningful, uplifting and edifying.

Two young men (both named **Tucker**) presided at the Lord's Table. They took their job seriously and, through scripture reading and prayers, along with their reverend demeanor, contributed to an inspirational period of worship as we remembered the sacrifice of our Lord who willing gave his body and shed his blood for us. Thank you, **Cody** and **Thomas** for showing such reverence and respect as you served the Lord's Supper to each of us.

The morning sermon was delivered by Quitman's long time preacher **Richard Gooch** (16 years... and still counting!). I do not know exactly how old brother Gooch is; however, I think I heard him say that he and his wife (**Josephine**) had been married **63 years!** I do know that the older preacher did a very good job presenting the Bible answer to "Who Are We?" or "What is the Church?"

Much of his sermon emphasized the relationship that Christians have with each other, as members of the body of Christ. Using I Corinthians 12, beginning with verse 12, the preacher stressed how body members need each other, the importance of unity in the body and the necessity of following the body's head, Jesus, "who went about doing good" (Acts 10:38).

After the sermon, I appreciated the opportunity of speaking briefly to the congregation, sharing words of encouragement to the church, along with information about the Magnolia Messenger. I could not help but notice the unusual percentage of young people present for the worship service. It appeared to me, that at least half of the morning attendance was under 20 years of age. *Very encouraging in these days!*

Morning worship services were followed by a "fellowship meal." This special occasion enabled us to spend even more time together as the "body of Christ", sharing our love and concern for each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. It was an encouraging day and a delightful visit in Quitman. We thank God!



Richard Gooch
Preacher: Quitman, MS
16 Years. Still Counting!

Richard Gooch, in commenting to me about his long time work at Quitman said, "*Over all these years, we have never had a disagreement that led to a falling out with anyone.*" Very commendable! (alf, editor)

News Notes

VICKSBURG

Willie Nettle, minister for the Bypass Church of Christ in Vicksburg, Mississippi, was recently awarded the 2010 *Alumnus of the Year* award by the Graduate School of Religion, Harding University, Memphis, Tennessee. The "Alumni Briefs" states, "Willie Nettle's commitment to God and to the church in Vicksburg make him an ideal representative of what we want our alumni to be able to do," said **Everett W. Huffard**, vice president and dean. "His congregation gives us a glimpse into what we have been exploring as this year's theme - Christian community."

SARDIS

Ladies' Retreat Sept. 24-25, 2010

The Fifteenth Annual Ladies' Retreat is scheduled for September 24-25, 2010 at Sardis Lake Christian Camp, Sardis, Mississippi. The speakers are **Kathy Segars** from Greenwood, Mississippi and **Doris Stocklin** from Ripley, Tennessee. The theme this year is "Harvest Time" and the host congregations are Mountain Home, AR and Winona, MS.

GREENVILLE

"Sunnybrook Day"

"Sunnybrook Day" is scheduled for September 26, 2010 at the South Main Church of Christ, Greenville, Mississippi. **Danny Holman** is the local minister for the South Main congregation.

Meet Meridian's (Highway 19, N) New Minister

Josh McCrary



Josh McCrary

We kept hearing reports about the "new" preacher for the Meridian church on Highway 19, North. We also received requests to come over and meet Josh McCrary, who has been in Meridian for about a year. Well, finally we made it. We met him; glad we did.

Joshua McCrary came to Meridian from Belmont, Mississippi, where he got his first experience as a full-time preacher, after finishing his studies at the Memphis School of Preaching. Josh and his family (wife, **Moriah**, and young son, **Josiah**) seem very pleased to be a part of the Meridian church. Several members of the Meridian church have expressed to us their pleasure in having Josh to work with them.

We not only had the opportunity to meet Josh; we also were blessed to hear him preach on Sunday evening, July 11, 2010. His sermon was based on the story (parable) of the "Rich Fool" as related by Jesus in Luke chapter 12.

Using "power point" very effectively, the young, talented preacher made four vital points concerning the parable of the "Rich Fool."

First, Josh pointed out that though the man was **rich**, being rich was not wrong within itself. "It is not a sin to be rich", the preacher stated. He called attention to Abraham, who, although he was rich; yet, he was called "the friend of God" (James 2:23). He also mentioned Job, who was said to be "greatest (richest) of all the people of the East"; yet, he was "blameless and upright, one who feared God and shunned evil" (Job 1).

A *second* point made by Meridian's preacher was that the foolish farmer was not just rich; but, that he was "**Ravished**" with his riches. He placed his trust in his wealth (possessions) rather than in the Living and giving God. His real problem was his trust in earthly riches; it was his "**Love of money**" that led to his downfall.

In the *third* place, brother Josh called attention to the "Rich Fool" and his plans for "**Retiring**." The foolish, prosperous farmer, who made plans for his retirement, did not take into consideration such scriptural truths as, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." (Prov 27:1)

Also, the "Rich Fool", like so many today, did not take seriously the truth found in James chapter four which admonishes, "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the

morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that."

Finally, in the *fourth* place, the "Rich Fool" did not realize that something very precious to him was about to be "**Required**." That something was his soul. God said, "This night, your soul shall be required of you..." (Luke 12:20). The knowledgeable young minister in Meridian made several applications to the four points in his sermon. He called upon each of us to place our faith and confidence -- not in material and/or temporal things, but in the living, Eternal God.

Note: Josh McCrary now serves as preacher for what is known as the "Meridian Church of Christ", located on Highway 19, North in Meridian. This church presently brings together about 75 (more or less) on Sunday mornings and operates on a weekly budget of \$2,700.00. In addition to local efforts, according to a recent church bulletin, the church also supports mission work in the South Pacific, Pine Vale Children's Home and the preacher training program at Faulkner University.

The elders of the church are **Dwight Callens**, **Tom Fair** and **Jesse Simpson**. Three special servants have been selected. They are **Jason Collie**, **Twayne Mobley** and **Albert St Clair**.

The Meridian church was organized about 25 years ago and in the early days of the congregation, the editor of the Magnolia Messenger was privileged to do some of the first preaching. So, it is always a blessing to return to Meridian and visit with our brethren who call the facilities on Highway 19, North, their "home base". (alf, editor)

A Serious and Sober Warning

The Bible Says,

*"Know you not that **the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?**"*

Be Not Deceived:

*Neither fornicators,
nor idolaters,
nor adulterers,
nor effeminate,
nor abusers of themselves with mankind,
nor thieves,
nor covetous,
nor drunkards,
nor revilers,
nor extortioners,
shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

And such were some of you:

*but you are **washed**,
but you are **sanctified**,
but you are **justified**
in the name of the Lord Jesus
and by the Spirit of our God."*

(I Corinthians 6:9-11; emphasis by editor)

There is hope; there is forgiveness!

The Bible Says,
14 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. (Rom. 12)

Strengthened For Service

Editor's note: The following article is being published in hopes that more and more of God's children will daily demonstrate gratitude to **The Gracious Giver** for providing both life and health. A truly thankful Christian will surely want to learn more about and to practice "good health habits." And, certainly all Christians should believe in and *use to the fullest* the privilege of prayer.

May we never forget that our Creator truly cares for each of us. Jesus said that God's care is so great and intense that He actually knows the number of hairs on each of our heads (Luke 12:7). So, let's *pray without ceasing* to our loving Heavenly Father, who promises to hear

- Dianna Alcede -

Many have asked me about my recent weight loss. While it was a mere by-product of solving a different problem, when I begin explaining, the conversation immediately becomes, "Oh I have that, too".

Often times the common denominator was the same, acid reflux. After being on medication for 9 months or so and trying four times to quit taking the medicine, I went searching for answers. A small quiet voice kept telling me, "The acid is there for a reason".

For some 20 years I had suffered with chronic bursitis in my left hip. In 2007, the pain in my neck was determined to be degenerative disc disease with ruptures. Believing that this was a normal part of aging I continued on, some days praying that God would just allow me to be able to get my work done.

In an attempt to avoid a cervical fusion, I agreed to take a non-narcotic muscle relaxer. Up to now the med count went as follows: anti-inflammatory, muscle relaxer, Nexium, and thyroid medication. In July of 2009 my doctor told me my cholesterol went to 222. You guessed it, another med.

I thank God for sending me a husband who is always willing to help me. He found a book on line with information on how I could get off the acid medication the natural way. The book also explained that the muscle relaxer probably caused the acid reflux because the



Dianna Alcede and her husband, Joey

esophagus is a muscle. Also the acid blockers affect receptors in your liver making your cholesterol elevate.

The book was written by a certified clinical nutritionist selling nothing but information.

Don't get me wrong, if I am broken, I want my doctor to fix me. I feel we can help ourselves through proper nutrition. Not only is my body strengthened for service, so is my faith. It is my prayer that all will be anxious to serve Him. In Christian love,

Nutrition is an interesting little word often overlooked.

As I studied the book, I kept thinking God put Adam and Eve **in a garden not a bakery**. I was determined to get off the medications as I didn't feel they were good for me. The book explained that the acid blockers were just treating the symptoms -- not the underlying cause.

Due to the over use of antibiotics, a condition known as yeast overgrowth can occur. No matter what diet you try, if you don't get the yeast in balance, you won't be able to keep the weight off because yeast craves sugar. It explained the only way to get the body's biotics regulated was to "starve the yeast". A simple process,

and, according to His will, to answer the prayers of His precious children. Remember: "The effective fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16 - NKJV)

We appreciate the author of this article, **Dianna Alcede**, for sharing with MM readers some of her struggles and triumphs. Dianna and her husband (Joey) are members of the Enterprise Boulevard Church of Christ in Lake Charles, Louisiana where our son (Paul Franks) serves as the local preacher. Her thoughts were originally written for the benefit of those who were close to her and had asked about her health problems and solutions. (Editor)

NO SUGAR. Out of desperation I tried it.

The book recommended probiotics, a plant based supplement to get the gut right. When you starve the yeast and get the gut right, all is well. Within a week of no sugar, all pain in my hip, neck and hands were gone. I immediately started eating "THE GARDEN" where it all began.

As I would study a b o u t nutrition, scriptures kept flooding my mind. I knew I was **fearfully and wonderfully made**. Can it be as simple as just eating the right foods? Ask yourself what impurities you put in your mind and your bodies.

Will what you eat strengthen you for service?

Not easy to deny yourself, but well worth it -- in my book, as I no longer take four different p r e s c r i p t i o n

medications. Additionally, I was recently sick with a sinus and bronchial infection. I didn't take any medication, prayed often and believed I would be healed. I increased my fruit intake and rested.

Don't get me wrong, if I am broken, I want my doctor to fix me. I feel we can help ourselves through proper nutrition. Not only is my body strengthened for service, so is my faith. It is my prayer that all will be anxious to serve Him.

In Christian love, **Dianna Alcede**

The Bible Says,
10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; (Rom. 12)



Elders of the Liberty Church of Christ in Dennis, MS

Benford Pierce, Harold Oswalt, Tommy Moody and Raymond Carr

The Liberty Church and the J.C. Choates Fifty Years Together

- Betty (J.C.) Choate -

We are approaching a great milestone in the history of the work done by J.C. and Betty Choate, under the sponsorship of the Liberty Church of Christ in Dennis, MS. — 50 years of working together in foreign mission fields! In 1960, J.C. resigned the local work he had been doing for two years with the Central church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He and Betty came back to her parents' home in Winona, MS, without salary and without a sponsor or any promised support for the mission work they had committed to do in India. They did have faith that since God had commanded the church to evangelize the world, He would surely supply the means to help them to obey that command.

Thus began a whirlwind of visiting churches by appointments, by drop-ins, by reference, by contacts and net-working, Sundays, Wednesdays, even finding one elder in his berry patch! In the process of the fundraising, J.C. visited the Liberty church and asked for their support, which they committed to give. Unable at the last to obtain visas for India, the young Choate family spent the next four years (1962-1965) in Pakistan.

When J.C. and Betty came home in December of 1965, their sponsoring church in Ada, Oklahoma was in the process of beginning a Bible school for their area of the state, so it became necessary to locate a new sponsor for the work the Choates desired to continue doing overseas. J.C. had been well impressed with the elders of the Liberty church, so he asked them to consider taking the sponsorship. Though the church at that time was serving as a branch home for the Sunnybrook Children's Home, and had no experience in sponsoring overseas work, they agreed to the proposal. The relationship that began with monthly support about fifty years ago blossomed into a long-term partnership that has been a blessing to many people in the world.

Brother Freed Lindsey, one of the original elders and the one who served as the bridge between the Choates and Liberty, made a trip to India and Sri Lanka with J.C. and Betty in 1984. He was able to see the work being done and to meet and talk with Christians who made up the leadership in the congregations with

which the Choates were working. Throughout his life and service as an elder, brother Lindsey was a continual support and encouragement in all that was being done.

When, after 48 years of involvement, J.C. had a recurrence of cancer and passed into that world of immortality in February of 2008, a wide-spread program of work was still active: radio programs, TV programs, monthly magazines and other literature, and interaction with numerous brethren in India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Myanmar, and in 80 countries through the publication of the quarterly magazine, **The Voice of Truth International**. Churches and individual supporters had continued faithfully during J.C.'s illness. But with his death, a critical question hung in the air: would the work itself die with him? Would the framework of support that had been built through the years disintegrate?

The current elders of the Liberty church are Benford Pierce, Harold Oswalt, Tommy Moody, and Raymond Carr. They met immediately with Betty, along with Wayne Barrier who had been a co-worker for more than 20 years, and with Louis Rushmore and Jerry Bates, brethren who had joined the team shortly before J.C.'s death. The elders were assured that everyone involved was committed to keeping the entire work program alive. In response, the elders pledged their on-going sponsorship, and they sent a letter to that effect to all supporters. By their quick action and wisdom, support for the work suffered no interruption, and the work itself has not only been sustained but has continued to grow.

Only eternity will reveal the ultimate good done, world-wide, under the authority of the Liberty church. Their vision and long-term commitment have resulted in faithful obedience to the command to "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature..."

World Evangelism

P. O. Box 72
Winona, MS 38967
Phone: 662-283-1192
E-Fax: 1-901-234-7419
E-mail: choate@worldangelism.org.

Liberty Church of Christ

689 Highway 25
Dennis, MS 38838

Be of the Same Mind

Romans 15:5

- Eddie Lewis -

The following story appeared in the Millennial Harbinger of April 1854. A missionary to the Seneca Indians by the name of Cram spoke to a council of chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations at Buffalo Creek, New York, in the presence of the United States Agent for Indian Affairs, in the summer of 1805.

"I am come, brethren," said the missionary, "to enlighten your minds, and to instruct you how to worship the Great Spirit agreeably to His will, and to preach to you the Gospel of His Son, Jesus Christ. There is but one way to serve God, and if you do not embrace the right way, you can't be happy hereafter."

The Seneca chiefs replied, "Brother, we understand your religion is written in Book. You say there is but one way to worship and serve the Great Spirit. If there is but one religion, why do you white people differ so much about it? Why not all agree, as you can all read the Book? Brother, we do not understand these things."

"We are also told your religion was given to your forefathers. We also have a religion which was given to our forefathers. It teaches us to be thankful for all the favors we receive, to love one another, and to be united. We never quarrel about religion."

"We are told you have been preaching to the white people in this place. Those people are our neighbors; we are acquainted with them. We will wait a little, to see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find it does them good, makes them honest and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will then consider again what you have said."

There are several lessons we can learn from this story. One is that Satan's primary strategy to keep the Gospel from reaching the sinner is to destroy unity among Christians. The only way we can defeat this strategy and have an influence on our community for Christ is to be of one mind (Rom. 15:5).

In Christ's prayer for unity in John 17, He made direct reference to four major teachings in



Eddie Lewis

Christianity—salvation, incarnation, sanctification, and glorification. Central to His prayer is one major request that His disciples experience unity as He and the Father are one (17:11). Later, He prayed for all believers, "That they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in

Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou did send Me" (17:21). His concern for the church was unity—oneness in Him. This prayer reveals the nature of the Gospel, that God has reconciled the world to Himself in Christ (2 Cor. 5:19).

Satan's strategy has been throughout to destroy this unity in Christ's body. If he can do that he can destroy the most powerful means we have of communicating the Gospel of Christ to lost man. It blurs the message of God's grace and mercy (John 20:30-31). When Christ was on earth He worked miracles to show men that He was God. When He ascended to Heaven He left the church with the mission of communicating the Gospel. The ingredient that convinces lost men that Jesus was God in the flesh is unity—being of the same mind one of another. History tells us that Christians have not been good examples of unity. Humans fight about everything. But when people see true unity, and true oneness, they are touched by such love and kindness and will turn to the Lord and listen to His message.

I believe the Jerusalem church is an example of this type of unity.

Their unity was profound. "And day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart" (Acts 2:46). Later Luke adds, "The congregation of those who believed was of one heart and soul" (4:32).

This doesn't mean that there were no problems or disagreements. Satan tried to destroy their unity. Problems with the Greek widows being overlooked in the distribution of food for the widows created a problem (6:1-4). But the Apostles faced the problem with wisdom and discretion, and appointed qualified men to handle it and the situation was resolved. Luke reports that as each of these problems was resolved the congregation grew in favor with the community (2:47).

There is a direct correlation between unity in the body and reaching the lost. "And the word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem" (6:7). Unity produces growth.

Paul also carries this concern for unity in the church. Consider his prayer, "Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus; that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom 15:5-6). Earlier he had exhorted them to "Be of the same mind toward one another" (12:16). Also he said, "Let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another" (14:19).

Paul gave the same exhortation to the Ephesians, "Be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). He also exhorted the Philippians, "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel" (Phil. 1:27).

We conclude that a functioning church is a unified church. In fact they work together.

See **SOUND MIND** on page 16



Meeting Place for the Liberty Church of Christ in Dennis, Mississippi

Father's Day at Liberty

June 20, 2010

A Preaching Visit in Dennis, Mississippi

The day known as "Father's Day", 2010, was very special. My June and I were blessed to spend a memorable "Heavenly Father's Day" with our brothers and sisters who make up the Liberty Church of Christ in Dennis -- a small town in northeast Mississippi.

It was at the invitation of the church elders that we were pleased to "pinch hit" for their regular voice in the pulpit -- **Ron Deaton**. Brother Ron recently underwent surgery for what is called "sleep apnea". Although his recovery is on schedule, he had to cut back on his speaking responsibilities.

It was a pleasure to preach in his stead and to get better acquainted with the Liberty congregation which brings together about 150 to 200 disciples each Lord's day. (165 were present the Sunday of our visit.)

I find it interesting to note that northeast Mississippi is home to more churches of Christ than any other section of our state. Traveling north on Highway 25 from Fulton to Iuka, signs and/or buildings indicate the presence of a church of Christ about every 5 or 6 miles. And, although the area is considered "rural", a few of the congregations are relatively large. Such is the case with the Liberty church, in a very small community; yet, a congregation of nearly 200.

Ron Deaton, a "home boy" has apparently served well as their preacher over the past 9 or 10 years. The Liberty church is overseen by four capable elders, who are: **Raymon Carr, Tommy Moody, Harold Oswalt and Benford Pierce**. Their "Youth Director" is **Jimmy Moody**. Eight deacons also serve the active church.

The Liberty church has

long been involved with World Evangelism, especially in connection with **J. C. and Betty Choate**. Although brother J. C. died a couple of years ago, the mission work he and Betty started, continues with the blessings and the involvement of the Liberty church.

June and I wish to publicly express thanks for the kind reception given by the Liberty church to our visit. It was a memorable day, a day we shall long remember. We could not have asked for a more encouraging response to our efforts to "preach the word." (alf)



Merl Trimm Active at Age 92

Liberty member, lives alone, drives his car, attends all services, **reads the MM "from front to back"**

The Bible Says,
12 Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; (Rom. 12)



Long time preacher, Ron Deaton and his wife, Pat

A Tribute To The EDDIE RAY Family



Eddie Ray and Family of Natchez, Mississippi
His wife, Sherrie; daughter (Mary Ann) and son (Claude).

“Claude died Saturday”

Eleanor Staten

I received a telephone call from Eddie Ray of Natchez, Mississippi on February 22, 2010. Having known Eddie for approximately 35 years; it was not unusual to hear from him and his devoted wife, Sherrie. Although his voice was calm, I could sense that this was not a visit just to say, “Hello.” I asked how he was doing and he said, “I’m okay, but I just had to call and tell you that Claude died Saturday.”

I have been privileged to be acquainted with the Eddie Ray family for 35 years. Before I began working at Sunnybrook Children’s Home in 1975, Brother Wiley Edwards, a member of the church in West Point, Mississippi, had made arrangements with Sunnybrook Children’s Home to care for his four grandchildren. Eddie and his family grew up at Sunnybrook and Eddie graduated from Natchez Trace Academy in 1981. He then joined the military.

The next time I heard from Eddie, he had married Sherrie Redd of Natchez, MS. At this time, I was Director of Social Services at Sunnybrook Children’s Home which included residential care, foster care and adoption services. During his tour of duty with the military, he had become pen pals with Sherrie through the *Magnolia Messenger*.

When he returned, they met and soon began dating. They were married on April 2, 1988. Eddie related that he and Sherrie would like to talk to me about becoming foster parents for Sunnybrook Children’s Home. They shared that they were unable to have children and also related that this decision had resulted from much thought and prayer. Eddie also related that besides their desire to foster children, he felt that his background would give him a

better sense to understand some of the feelings and problems of the children. I will never forget another statement he made, “I feel that being a foster parent might be one way of repaying Sunnybrook for giving my brothers and sisters a home.”

Eddie and Sherrie were quite determined in the licensing process of becoming foster parents. They had their paper work completed in record time. There was only one small problem from the initial application. They were a few months short of having been married two years. They asked, “Why can’t we attend the in-service-training and have everything in order before our second anniversary and we will be sure to be ready when a child becomes available?” They were licensed on April 2, 1990.

Their first two foster children were placed on 09-24-91, Mary Ann, a beautiful 1 month little girl and her handsome 28 month old brother, Claude. Eddie and Sherrie were thrilled, and the children were soon known all over Natchez. Their older brother, Charles age 7, joined them in 1992.

Eddie and Sherrie took this sibling group not knowing how long they would have them. Federal law now requires that all efforts to return children to their biological parents must be exhausted. An immediate plan must be made and if the terms of the plan are not met, other efforts are made to insure that a child has a permanent home. This placement was very challenging and successful with a happy ending. All three of the children were adopted by the Rays on November 13, 1997.

Claude was very sweet as a young child and eager to please. He posed very few problems as a son and was baptized into Christ at age 12 at the Covington

Road Church of Christ. He was always involved in the youth activities and was an excellent role model for many other young people.

He attended the public schools in Natchez and received his GED from Co-Lin Community College in Natchez. He was extremely active in Boy Scouts and was also very active in the Adams County Search and Rescue Team, and the Foster Mound Volunteer Fire Department.

Foster parenting is many things—it is fun, it is caring, it is giving and a lot of hard work. Many prospective foster parents will say, “I can’t do that, I would get too attached.” As a social worker, after explaining the importance of attachment to an early caretaker has a significant impact on the child’s ability to make and maintain secure relationships in the future, I would usually add, “I wouldn’t want you to become a foster parent unless you can attach to the child.”

Eddie and Sherrie were asked, “What would you say to others considering being a foster parent?” They responded, “Do it, it will change your life for the better. You may have difficulties but you will get through them. All the children were very loving. All they wanted was some love back.”

There is no way to know when children are born how long their biological parent will have them. The same is true of foster or adopted children. Neither is there any way to know how they will respond to even the best Christian upbringing. But, one thing I am sure of by having the privilege of working with Claude and his parents in his early years, he would not have accomplished the responsibility, family loyalty or have become a Christian if he had remained in the situation he came from.

When someone as young as Claude leaves us, we are reminded that we are only pilgrims here on earth for a while. Our real home is heaven. All of who knew Claude, in the many facets of his life, should be happy for Claude who just went home a little earlier than we thought.

My hope is that others will be inspired by this situation to consider reaching out to a child and do whatever it takes to help him reach his highest potential, “to grow as Jesus grew, in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man.” (Mark 2:52)

(Written by Eleanor Staten who attends the Madison Church of Christ. She is a clinical social worker, primarily focusing on counseling and adoptions. She may be reached at 601-540-7105)

Editor Confesses:

My First and Second Impressions Were Both Wrong!

- A. L. Franks -

Recently, while visiting out of town, my June and I went into our favorite restaurant (“CB”). While enjoying our meal and, probably, talking about our great-granddaughters, I noticed a strange looking man sitting nearby. He appeared to be a good bit overweight, was alone, sported a “crew cut” and was wearing an old pair of faded bluejeans -- held up by suspenders.

At first sight, my impressions of the man included uncomplimentary thoughts; such as, “Something is wrong with that fellow; he’s not exactly right; he’s lived a sinful life and is probably poor because he is too lazy to work.”

A couple of days later we went back to the same restaurant and there he was again. The same man. I looked him over for a second time. My first impressions were “confirmed” by my second impressions.

A few minutes later, however, while I was paying for the common meal that my June and I had shared, I noticed that she was talking with that strange looking man. After paying, I walked over to where they were standing and talking. Thank God I was given an opportunity for a “third sight.” As I looked and listened, my impressions of the man began to change greatly.

My wife and the stranger were talking about his wife to whom he had been married thirty-two years. I heard him say that his wife was seriously ill and could not be with him because she was presently confined to a “treatment center.” I soon was to learn that the man, himself, was suffering from an inoperable brain tumor. As I listened to him speak I was much impressed with the kindness of his voice and the understanding with which he spoke. My first and second impressions were changing more and more.

He wanted to talk. He needed someone to listen. By this time I was listening intently as he spoke lovingly about his wife -- including their courtship and marriage. He mentioned their “wedding night” and commented that it was the first time he and she had “slept side by side.” He further spoke about God’s plan for marriage; that marriage was to last “until death”

(“What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder” (Matt. 19:6). He said something about hating divorce, reminding me of the words penned by the Old Testament prophet, “For the Lord, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away....” (Mal. 2:16)

Secretly, I felt embarrassed. As I listened to the words spoken by a man who seemed very intelligent, well educated and thoughtful, I was deeply impressed with his respect for the authority of the Scriptures and his belief in the sacredness and permanence of marriage. I realized that my first and second impressions were wrong.

I recall the example of God selecting David to be king over Israel and the words He spoke to Samuel. He said, “the Lord

seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” (I Sam. 16:7).

Yes, I was mistaken. I was prejudiced; I had misjudged. My first **and** my *second* impressions were both **wrong!** Thank God for the opportunity to have a “third impression.” The third time was the **charm!**

Now, I didn’t think it necessary to explain to the man what I had previously thought about him. He never knew and would likely never know; he didn’t need to know. But, the truth is: **God knew.** And, now you know. So my message to myself and to you is: **Be careful about “first impressions”; yes, even “second impressions.”** Be slow to speak. Only God knows the heart. (franksmm@aol.com)

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(L-R) Corey Cofer, Bill Richard, Brian Stapleton and Chad Wages

Deacons Are Installed at Madison, MS Church

The Madison Church is happy to announce the installation of its first deacons Sunday, February 28, 2010. Corey Cofer, Bill Richard, Brian Stapleton and Chad Wages are servant leaders who will work alongside elders Bob Brown and Kyle Smith.

Corey Cofer is a native of north Alabama. He and his wife Raina have two children, Lillie and Corbin. He is employed as a graphic artist with Ducks Unlimited.

Bill Richard and his wife, Barbara, have three daughters, Lisa Fendlason, Pam Huber and Lea Ann Womack who, with their families, worship at Madison. Bill is retired from Bell South.

Brian Stapleton and his wife Jan have two children, twins Joe and Shelby, who are recent graduates of Madison Central High School. Brian is the director of computer operations for Madison County Hospital.

Chad Wages is a civil engineer and graduate of Mississippi State University. He is a native of Pascagoula. He and his wife Marsha have four children: Sara Ann, Ginny, Chad Marshall and Ava.

We are delighted to have these four dedicated servant leaders. They are a major reason that the future of the congregation looks bright. (Report sent to us by the Madison congregation. **Thanks.**)

\$\$\$ Costs of Sin \$\$\$

-Jim Howard-

Most of us are aware of the spiritual cost of sin. As the apostle Paul states, "For the wages of sin is death..." (Rom. 6:23). But have you ever considered what sin costs in dollars and cents?

Let's start out with your weekly trips to the grocery, discount or department store. Are you aware that you pay 10% more for every item you buy because of "shrinkage" (a euphemism for employee theft, shoplifting, intentional product damage, etc.)?

Or, how about insurance costs? In the last few years my hospitalization premiums have doubled. Your's probably have too. Why is hospitalization so expensive?

Consider the following factors. Greed on the part of many within the medical field inflating costs. The fact that an estimated 50% of patients in hospitals (whose bills are being paid by our insurance premiums) are there because of psychosomatic illnesses, many related to guilt resulting from sinful life-styles, lack of faith, etc. A large percentage of those hospitalized are there because of health problems resulting from cigarettes, alcohol or illegal drugs.

Since alcohol is involved in an estimated 50% of fatal automobile accidents, the property and personal liability involved must of necessity increase our auto insurance by 25% to 50%. Why is

homeowner' insurance so expensive? Several years ago a friend told me how many people he had heard brag about "taking" the insurance companies by fraudulent claims following Hurricane Allicia.

How about taxes? Billions of dollars annually are lost to Uncle Sam because of dishonesty in federal income tax reporting. Guess who makes up the difference? Who foots the bill for the millions of dollars in welfare payments (funded by our tax structure) to the totally undeserving - the lazy or those who through gross immorality continue to swell "Aid to Dependent Children" rolls? With roughly half of our total national budget going to defense, what are the war-mongers of this world costing us?

We haven't even mentioned the costs of corruption in government, shoddy product workmanship, personal theft and burglary, unjust lawsuits, and a myriad of other hidden costs. The point is this. **Sin not only costs in the next life. It costs in this one.**

Jim Howard is the preacher for the church in Madison, MS.
Address: P. O. Box 1845;
Madison, MS 39130

Miracles: Why Written?
Answer
"The Question Box"
(Page 14)

Is God Humbling America?

Editor's Note: The following article is excellent; it is scriptural and well written. It was sent to us by its author who, several years ago, lived and ministered in Lake Charles, Louisiana. The writer, of whom we know very little, **Dave Verret**, now resides in the state of Hawaii. His thought provoking article is disturbing; yet, very timely. Its central message -- **God is still in control**, is greatly needed. Please read brother Dave's thoughts with prayer. (alf)

- Dave Verret -

I originally sent some of this to a friend over a year ago in answer to some questions he raised on current events. These seem to tell us that America is rushing to its own funeral. While America sleeps, it just doesn't see what's happening to it. While we are content with *American Idol* and sports, reality shows, etc., our country is dying. I, too, cringe when I watch the news and see the corruption and greed in our government, the threats from within and abroad. Current events are important - BUT THESE ARE ONLY SYMPTOMS.

We have the same God as Israel did when it was conquered in 722 B.C.; the same God of Judah that was conquered in 586 B.C. While I watch apathy abound and our country decay, I am thankful that, at least, I see God's plan being fulfilled in my lifetime.

I have been and always will be a student of the Bible, especially Biblical History. I find it very useful to know the background, the context, or what was happening in history at the time the books of the Bible were written.

For instance, when asked, some people will answer that the Book of Jonah is about the big fish that swallowed Jonah. Well... not only did that fish swallow Jonah, it swallowed the whole message of the Book. Israel's arch-enemy at that time was Assyria. What was the capitol of Assyria? Nineveh. Where was Jonah sent to preach, that the city might repent? Nineveh.

So, Jonah figures if he DOESN'T go to Nineveh, they won't repent. If they don't repent, God will destroy the city and Empire. No evil empire, no threat to Israel, thus Jonah is a hero. What a plan. So, instead of going to Nineveh like God said, he gets on a ship and heads THE OTHER WAY - to Tarshish. Along comes the great fish, swallows Jonah, spits him up 3 days later and that

helps Jonah decide to go to Nineveh. He preaches. They repent and God spares them and thus they continue to be a threat to Israel (and will eventually conquer 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel in 722 B.C.).

So, when Jonah sees that Nineveh repents and will be



spared, Jonah gets mad at God because he figures he's ruined. Finally, the message of the book comes late in chapter 4... That even though Israel considers Assyria a "gentile" nation, God tells Jonah that there are many people there whom He loves. Wow... what a lesson, huh?

This has nothing to do with my subject line. I'm just showing you how HISTORY plays a part in the Bible. (And as a footnote... if the story of Jonah wasn't true, one would have to wonder why Jesus would use Jonah's *three days and nights in the belly of the great fish* as a symbol of His own three days and nights in the heart of the earth (when He died)). Why would Jesus speak of this story as true if it were only a fable?

Assyria continued to rise in political/military power, and several years later, even though Israel had had the blessings of God for so long but had not cherished them, nor appreciated them, God used Assyria to put an end to 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel in 722 B.C. In Biblical terms, this marked the end of Israel. Two of the 12 tribes continued even until the time of Jesus, and these were known as Judah.

Now I will broaden the picture a little and get closer to my subject. Jonah is just ONE of FIVE writers whom Biblical students call the "8th Century Prophets," why? Because they preached in the 8th Century B.C. -- or that specific time just before Israel fell to Assyria. The five writers are: Amos, Hosea, Jonah, Isaiah and Micah. I'll come back to them in a minute.

Written over the course of several hundred years was the

Book of Psalms. One Psalm in particular will serve as the foundation for my writing is: **Psalm 33:12**. "*Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord.*" This was likely written by King David about 100 years before the 8th Century Prophets.

Under that heading, let's come forward to the 8th Century B.C. and the 8th Century prophets again. Remember Micah? Micah 6:8 tells the people of ISRAEL (strange to say such things to "God's people" unless there was some kind of problem): "*He has showed you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?*"

And now the most telling, Amos. Look FIRST at Amos 3:11 ...speaking of Assyria.... "An ADVERSARY shall surround the land and bring down your defenses from you and your strongholds shall be plundered." Now look how EACH of the following verses end: Amos 4:6; Amos 4:8; Amos 4:9; Amos 4:10 and Amos 4:11. These are so very telling, as you consider each paragraph to which these verses are the end. They each tell how God had blessed Israel, but then had sent them various warnings... "YET YOU DID NOT RETURN TO ME." Finally, here comes the SLEDGE HAMMER: Amos 4:12. "**BECAUSE, I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God.**"

As for Judah, one should read Jeremiah, chapter 7. The people of Judah prided themselves in thinking "nothing bad could ever happen to us, the Temple of the Lord is here." Perhaps we, too, pride ourselves in saying "In God We Trust," or "God Bless America." Judah's words didn't help. Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, watched Jerusalem and the temple burn at the hand of the Babylonians in 586 B.C. Will our words and religious institutions protect us any more than Judah's did?

As Winston Churchill once said: "The further back one looks, the further ahead one can see." As what happened in Israel, as what happened later (in 586 B.C. to Judah), are the same things happening now to us? We need to see that God is in control.

Historically, He has raised up nations to defeat even those who once were loyal to Him. He sent warning after warning after warning, but the message was not

See **Is God Humbling...** on page 18

“Churches of Christ Disaster Relief”

EDITOR'S NOTE: Within the past few years, churches of Christ in Louisiana and Mississippi have experienced, first hand, the generosity extended by fellow Christians in times of disaster. Many brethren also have come to know about special program known as “Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.”

The following report, written by and sent to the MM, by Ken Joines provides interesting information about this very special cooperative effort to bring immediate relief to those affected by natural disasters. Thanks, Ken! (alf)



CHURCHES OF CHRIST DISASTER RELIEF

The big semi had rolled in the previous night with thousands of pounds of canned meat from the Armour Packing Company in Iowa. This nourishing protein was bought at mere pennies on the dollar and now needed to be labeled and boxed to send out to any area of this nation where disaster strikes in the form of flood, hurricane, fires, earthquake or tornado.

Jan and I recently accompanied a group of seventeen to Nashville from Goodman Oaks church in Southaven, Mississippi to spend two full days helping to ready these supplies to go out on a moment's notice. This was the second such trip for our group. As we worked, trucks were being loaded to head for Rhode Island where floods had wrought so much havoc. In another week they would be rushing to Yazoo City, Mississippi with more aid to storm victims. As I write this, intense efforts are under way to relieve hurting in Middle Tennessee where floods have destroyed the houses, businesses and lives of so many people.

Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc. was originally the 1990 brainchild of five men in Nashville, TN: Joe Dudney, Al Daugherty, Glenn Huff, Charlie Tarkington and Neil Howard (deceased). At 86 years of age, Joe Dudney is still on the job every day seeing that things run

according to plans. They saw the need for God's people to give immediate response to helpless and homeless people in time of tragedy.

Office space was provided by the Tusculum congregation in 1990 and work was started under the name Nashville Disaster Relief. Growth was rapid and it was soon known as Tennessee Disaster Relief, but in 1994 this operation was functioning on a much broader front and known as **Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.** and was spreading love and good will all across America wherever the need arose.

That same year they purchased a 48,500 square foot warehouse and the growth has been phenomenal. Joe Dudney said, “In 1998 we shipped \$4.1 million in aid. In 2004 more than \$6.5 million and in 2005 we shipped \$16.3 million in aid to disaster victims all over the continental United States.” They soon leased another 20,000 square feet and now have plans to expand even more in the near future.

This work is governed and managed entirely by volunteers. Caring people from local churches work daily sorting and prepackaging everything from medical supplies, foodstuffs, infant formula, toiletries, cleaning supplies, refrigerators, ranges, dishwashers and bedding. It is not uncommon to see more than 300 people at work manning the box assembly lines. The operation runs as smoothly as a well-oiled machine. Even their professional semi drivers are volunteers!

It will please you to know that this entire operation is financially underwritten by hundreds of our congregations in all 50 states. Generous individuals, corporations and other non-profit organizations—people who care—from all across this country—these are the ones who drive this work. Major corporations from a wide range of places donate a substantial amount of products and services. More than 82% of every dollar donated goes directly to disaster victims themselves.

I know of no other non-profit of this magnitude that can boast such efficiency. The present facility was bought in 1994 and paid for in just four years. They have purchased four more

houses adjacent to this property and will soon expand again.

They can purchase most items for about ten cents on the dollar, so when you give them \$100 they can turn it into a thousand. They have a contract with Whirlpool whereby Whirlpool can drop-ship new major appliances to the disaster site. Four bedding companies can load up to 100 mattresses on a truck and do the same thing, thus eliminating the need for warehousing these bulky items. The trailers are owned by CCDRE and they lease the tractors.

Local congregations in the disaster areas prepare to receive and distribute the supplies. A handy informative “how to” booklet is rushed to church leaders to help facilitate the work. First to arrive are medical supplies, water and food. Later in the recovery process they send new appliances and other items. Everything given is new. Efficiency and speed are always key to being prepared for the next disaster. Disasters seldom give advance warnings.

Our recent visit there went something like this: On Monday we loaded two of our church vans with mostly Senior Citizens (each paying his/her own way), made reservations for two nights at a nearby motel and drove the 200 miles to Nashville. At 8:00 Tuesday morning we arrived at the warehouse and worked until 4:00 PM. We enjoyed a pleasant meal at a nice restaurant in nearby Franklin. Wednesday morning found us on the job by 8:00, working until 3:00 PM at which time we left for home—very tired, but in a wonderful sort of way. Warehouse Foreman Bobby Tucker said that during those two days we had labeled some 160,000 cans of meat.

A group from your congregation can do the same thing. This is a wonderful service project especially for Senior Citizens who are usually eager to help with such good work if only someone takes the initiative to plan and organize it. One of our Elders, Jerry Winstead, planned this work for us.

Distance should not be a factor, since many Seniors sometimes hop a plane and head for some pleasure destination only to bring back a T-Shirt. Why not charter a bus or take a plane to Nashville and spend a day or two or three giving your very self to others in the name of Jesus Christ? I can assure you that you will bring home far more than a T-Shirt; you'll bring home a wonderful heartfelt feeling of satisfaction in knowing that God has used you to provide the needs of others.

I strongly urge individuals and churches everywhere to make regular gifts to this outstanding work of love. You never know when the next disaster will strike—it may even be in your own neighborhood. Be sure to call before going, and let their office arrange a time when you are

most needed. Here's the needed contact data:

Churches of Christ Disaster Relief Effort, Inc.
410 Allied Drive
Nashville, TN 37211
Phone: 615-833-0888
Website:
www.disasterrelieffort.org



Goodman Oaks Folks at Work

From left: Drew Saradpon, Jeanette Williams, Jane Brooks, Delmas Brooks, Betty Shackelford, Jan Joines and Ann Walker



More Good Work by Folks from Goodman Oaks From left: Jeanette Williams, Drew Saradpon, Gwen Coker, Jan Joines and Janie Hayes

Are We All Headed For The Same Place?

via “The Salt Shaker”

Editor's Note: When visiting the Sherman, Mississippi church, we picked up a copy of their weekly bulletin and noticed the following article written by Ron Boatwright had been published. We reprint; believing it is worthy of your time. (alf)

- Ron Boatwright -

We have all heard the statement made by people that “we are all headed for the same place, but are just going different ways.” This is only wishful thinking. This is what Satan wants us to believe. Jesus says, “Enter, ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” Matthew 7:13,14).

According to the Bible we are not all headed for the same place, but we are all headed for either one of two different places: Heaven or

Hell, “into everlasting punishment” (Matthew 25:46) where they “will be cast into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth” (Matthew 8:12). Many people don't believe this, but one day they will. Only few people will be going to Heaven, “into eternal life” (Matthew 25:46) where they “will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away” (1 Peter 5:4).

We actually make the choice as to which of these two places we will go to in eternity. God's word says, “Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve ... But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15). The many who end up in the eternal torments of Hell will only have themselves to blame, because they chose to go there. There will be many surprised people on Judgment Day when they find out that we are not all headed for the same place. Let's make sure we are among the few who go to Heaven.

2nd Annual Mid-South Golden Years' Rally

Saturday
September 25, 2010

Registration: 9:00 am
Luncheon: 12:00 pm

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A.L. Franks

Editor of the Magnolia Messenger
June Franks: Women's Class
Special Assistant to MM Editor



Singing Led
by
Ken Joines
(former preacher at
Goodman Oaks)

Goodman Oaks Church of Christ

1700 Goodman Road
Southaven, Mississippi
662-349-3600

75th Anniversary Hattiesburg, MS

September 19, 2010

The Kensington Woods church of Christ, formerly the Hardy Street congregation, in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, will be celebrating its 75th Anniversary on Sunday, September 19, 2010, God willing.

We would like to invite all former members. Please come back home and celebrate with us. Different Gospel preachers will be presenting lessons on that day; lunch will be served for all attending. **Please RSVP 601-264-2945.** We look forward to a joyous Lord's Day.

Kensington Woods
Church of Christ
Hattiesburg, Mississippi
(Announcement sent to us by Ken Upchurch, one of the church elders. Thanks, brother Ken!)

Enclosed is a check for the Magnolia Messenger. Hope you all are having a good year. (Dr. & Mrs. Robert McCrory, Benton, KY)

Campaign for Christ

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7:00 PM Nightly



evangelist
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of Henderson, TN

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Meeting Place for the Sherman, MS Church of Christ

A Sunday Night Visit With Saints at Sherman

I asked my June, "How long has Joe been preaching at Sherman?" She answered, "A long time." She's right. Joe Connell has been serving as Sherman's preacher for probably 10 or 12 years.

After a very long time as Gloster Street's (Tupelo) full-time preacher, brother Joe, having become an older man, decided to enter "retirement". Not wishing to stop working, he became Sherman's preacher. In addition, Joe continued his interest, and became even more involved, in overseas mission work.

As reported in the last issue of the MM, Joe has made 15 mission trips to Ghana in Africa. He stated, "Fifteen years ago in the Brog-Ahafo region there were 30-40 congregations. Today there are 135-150. The brethren in those older congregations have rallied to do a great work."

The Sherman church is also doing a good work. Average attendance, for the past several months, is near 70 for the Sunday morning services. Contributions in April, 2010, ran from \$1,300 to over \$3,000 each week.

My June and I were privileged to visit the Sunday evening services of the Sherman church on May 30. We really enjoyed being with the brethren and hearing a meaningful lesson by brother Connell on how the church can increase its influence in the local community (a much needed emphasis).

I am grateful for the opportunity given to me to speak a few minutes to the church, sharing words of encouragement and information about the mission efforts of the Magnolia Messenger.

Following services, we were blessed to visit at length with some of the faithful members. Then, Joe and his wife, Pat, invited us to go with them to a nearby restaurant in Tupelo for "supper" (seldom do we turn down an invitation to eat). When we entered the eating place (Danvers ?), we were pleased to

see and visit briefly with several brethren from other area congregations who also had "eating on their minds."

When the evening was ended and it was time to go back to our RV (our "home away from home"), we made the short trip with pleasant thoughts about the day. We had enjoyed an encouraging visit with the Sherman church, including extra time with Joe and Pat. We were reminded, again, that June and I are among the world's most blessed people. We are very grateful for the opportunity God has given to us to associate almost daily (personally and through this paper) with the world's best people -- Christians. (alf)

Hello all at the Magnolia Messenger. Hope you are all having a great month. Keep up the good work. Keep smiling. God Loves you. In Christian Love, (Tammy Byars, Bruce, MS)

Saving A Soul

The power of the gospel
in the hand of a
friend or relative

A few months ago, I heard a relative (Joey Franks) preach in Leesville, Louisiana. He spoke on the importance of spreading the gospel of Christ. Joey mentioned a survey he had read in which church members were asked who/what influenced them the most in their decisions to become Christians. As I recall, the following figures were included in the survey. I find them intensely interesting.

- 3% -- Special Need
- 3% -- "Just walked in"
- 6% -- Liked preacher
- 1% -- Sign out front
- 5% -- Bible classes
- 3% -- Special programs
- 79%** -- Influence of a friend or relative. (Personal contact with someone who knows and cares.)

*Above figures (percentages) are not exact; however, they do make a vital point! Let's not forget our relatives and friends. Become a friend. Be a friend. Love your relative. Save a soul!

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3:30 a.m. CT

Billy Lambert
Speaker



Reaffirmation of Vows

Gene & Madolyn Gibson

50 Years Later

Editor's Note: On Saturday, July 10, 2010, my June and I were privileged to be among many friends and family members who gathered in Greenwood, Mississippi, to witness the public reaffirmation of vows taken fifty years ago by a dear couple in Christ -- Gene and Madolyn Gibson. We were so impressed by the words written and spoken by the Gibsons, that we asked permission to share their "reaffirmation" with readers of the MM.

Mark 10:6-86...

God 'made them male and female.' 7' For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, 8 and the two shall become one flesh; so then they are no longer two, but one flesh. (NKJV)

Gene's Words to Madolyn:

Our love that began over fifty years ago, led us to make vows before God that have been the basis of our marriage. How many of us, in the beginning, realize that the true point in the keeping of those vows in living our day to day lives, serves to increase that love.



Gene and Madolyn Gibson and Their Son, Robby

One of their three children, a son, Robby (now a physician in Alaska), is shown expressing gratitude to his parents on their special day of reaffirmation. This event took place at the West President Street Church of Christ in Greenwood, Mississippi.

In sharing together the birthing and raising of three wonderful children, living through times of need and times of plenty, in continuing in sickness and in health, not only of our own, but that of children and other family members; in sharing the grief accompanying the deaths of parents and siblings and close friends, these are the experiences from which a love has grown that greatly transcends the love that brought us together at the first.

Perhaps the greatest single blessing that has helped us to realize the oneness that God gives to married couples has been our being joined spiritually in growing in our knowledge of God and His word and worshiping together God and our savior, Jesus.

As I look back from this day, I know that God's providence brought about our meeting, our love, and our dynamic lives together. And as I look to the future, I know that He will sustain us no matter what the future holds. I pledge again to you my love and fidelity for as long as God allows me to live on this earth.

Madolyn, I declare the success of those vows from fifty years ago, and I pledge anew my love to you from this day forward to the end of life that God blesses me with on this earth and if He allows into eternity.

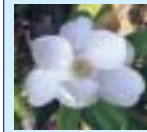
You are the ONE that I will love; You are the ONE that I will be FAITHFUL to.

You are the ONE I will cherish as God's special gift to me!

Madolyn's Words to Gene:

Today is one of the happiest days of my life as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our love.

When I was a little girl, I dreamed that my "knight in shining armor" would come and take me away and we would share a lifetime of love and adventure. God sent YOU into my life and YOU have truly been my knight in shining armor. We have had a



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!

In Memory Of

BOBBIE MOFFETT
Hazel Lewis, Steve & Cookie
Midgette
(Petal, MS)

JOHN FAUGHT
Sydalia Palmer
(Corinth, MS)

EDNA WARRICK
Tony & Ginny Luther
(Columbia, MS)

VALERA KEY
JERRY "BUCK" BYRD
STEPHEN ALDRIDGE
Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

DAYTON & JEAN CALLENDER
Harry & Betty Barkley
(Jackson, MS)

DORIS ADDISON
Rick Bishop
(Columbus, MS)

DAYTON CALLENDER
Charles & Pauline Aldridge

(Jackson, LA)
JIMMY BRADSHAW
James & Deanie Bradshaw
(Indianola, MS)
Brain & Tamara
(Bradshaw) Billingsley
(Alligator, MS)
Charles & Myrt Boyer
(Boyle, MS)

EARLEDGE
Pine Bluff Church of Christ
(Toccpola, MS)
Ben & Margaret Ratliff
(Toccpola, MS)

In Honor Of

DR. ARTHUR & BARBARA HUME
Bonnie Strickland
(Brandon, MS)

RAY & MELBA PENNA
Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

Thank you

Please send your gifts in memory of or in honor of family and/or friends to:

Magnolia Messenger
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090

lifetime of love and adventure, lots of love and lots of adventures. You have made all my little girl dreams come true.

I thank God for blessing us with these fifty years, for giving us our beautiful family and for being able to share our love today with friends and family.

And now, Gene, I honor you today as my beloved husband by pledging again my love to you.

*I will always love you
I will never leave you
I will always be faithful to you
I will always cherish you as my richest gift from God now and forever.*

Congratulations to Madolyn and Gene for their loving example. May God continue to bless. (alf/mjf)

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Meeting Place of a church of Christ

Somewhere in Alabama

A Drop In Visit



Home of the Beech Hill Church of Christ. Here we got a taste of the "Spirit that is Beech Hill"



"Blessed at Beech"
There is an important "hill" in Tippah County (north central Mississippi), known as "Beech Hill". And, when "Beech" and "Hill" are connected with the phrase "Church of Christ", it takes on a very special meaning.

"Beech Hill" is truly *out in the country*. The nearest town of any size is Ripley (the county seat; population about 5,500), which is about 7 miles to the east. At Beech Hill is found one of the largest country congregations among Mississippi churches of Christ.

On the last Sunday of May, 2010, my June and I were blessed to be among those who assembled for worship and fellowship on that special "hill" known as "Beech". And when I say we were **"blessed at Beech"** -- we really were!

We arrived at the church building a little past nine A.M. The very first person we met was a sister named **"Grisham"**. She had come early and, along with others, was making preparation for the fellowship meal planned for later that day. A brief visit with her was very delightful and helped set the tone for what turned out to be an encouraging day with the friendly

folks who make up a very special congregation.

After many other warm meetings and greetings, we were privileged to sit at the feet of Beech Hill's long time preacher -- **King McCarver**. Brother King welcomed every one to the auditorium class and made several encouraging comments about the paper you are now reading -- *"The Magnolia Messenger."* We were, to say the least, indeed thankful!

The Bible study for the day was taken from Acts chapters 10 and 11, using a workbook prepared by **Willard Conchin**. Brother King spoke at length about the church at Antioch, referring to the church as a "model" congregation.

He gave special emphasis to the work of Barnabas at Antioch, in conjunction with the labors of the apostle Paul. He also called attention to that very special name "Christian" which, according to Acts 11:26, was first applied to the disciples at Antioch.

After an interesting and informative class study, the buzzer was sounded. Time was up. Shortly, the other class groups started coming into the auditorium, swelling the morning attendance to 235. With not much time separating Bible Study and Worship, the time quickly came for all worshippers to be warmly welcomed by **Ryan Simpson**, who was in charge of announcements for the month of May.

Stan Grisham led congregational singing, using "Sacred Songs of the Church" (edited by **W. D. Jeffcoat**, a long time friend and brother in Christ). **David Hobson**, in his public reading of the Bible, called attention to the words of Christ, as recorded in Matthew 16:24-26. The opening prayer was led by **Tony Farese**.

After having being capably led in meaningful worship through singing, Bible reading and prayers, it was again time for a serious study of God's word by preacher King McCarver. In his morning sermon, the scholarly minister drew an interesting parallel between David and Jesus. Calling attention to Saul's animosity toward David, even to the point of seeking to kill him, the preacher noted that David continued to do his job. In like manner, Jesus continued to do His job in spite of those who hated him and who eventually crucified Him.

In his application, brother King stressed that, like David and like Jesus, we should remain dependable, stand fast and do our job faithfully -- no matter what. King spoke of the need to "teach the truth" -- regardless; to yield not to the temptation to be "politically correct" or to the common practice of being overly cautious; that is, trying not to ever upset or offend anyone. The preacher said that God's message is "urgent", that the world needs to hear the truth and that while all church leaders and workers in the Kingdom should deal wisely; yet, they must do the work that needs to be done and do it "stronger and bolder" -- like David and Jesus.

The morning services were followed by an extended period of delightful fellowship, including feasting upon delicious food which had been prepared by some of "Mississippi's best cooks." During this fellowship period, we were blessed to enjoy visits with several of those who are members of the Beech Hill congregation. We were especially grateful for the time we had with **James and Rose Horton** (James

serves as one of the two preachers for the friendly church.)

We were also thankful to visit a little while with the oldest of the four elders, along with his wife, who have been married for 66 years. We also were pleased to get to know the brother who is said

to be the "oldest living member at Beech Hill." (See pictures on this page.)

After a delightful meal and time of fellowship, like almost everyone else, we chose to re-assemble in the auditorium for an afternoon service. Again, King McCarver brought an inspiring lesson based on I Peter 2:7. Skillfully, brother King explained the admonition penned by the apostle Peter: *"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being*



Milton Simpson
Active at Age 93
("Oldest member at Beech Hill")

heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." Among the many vital points made by the experienced preacher was the truth that an *inappropriate* relationship between a husband and his wife can and will **hinder**

A note from one of Beech Hill's preachers requested, *Pray diligently that our love, our unity and our devotion to one another, and to our Heavenly Father, increase as we all strive to bring glory to God by our daily lives! Today, yet again, we have seen the best of the "Spirit That Is Beech Hill!"* (JH)



Bowden and Melba Grisham
-- Married 66 Years --

Brother Grisham is a long time elder at Beech Hill and serves with three other elders. They are: Dan Harrell, Don Ward and Stanley Ward. From our observations, it appears that the church is "in good hands."

prayers. Something to think about! Truly is. Need to get along!

This article was written a couple of days following our very pleasant visit. As I reflect on the short time we spent at Beech Hill, at least three important considerations seem to really stand out.

(1) It is possible, even in our day, for the Lord's church to -- not only survive, but **thrive!** The Beech Hill church is a thriving congregation -- alive and active in the service of God.

(2) Young people, even in our day, are still interested in New Testament Christianity as represented by churches of Christ. The Beech Hill church includes many young families who evidently have taken seriously the command given long ago to "multiply and replenish the earth." The sounds coming from small children, scattered throughout the place of assembly, were a *welcomed* noise.

(3) To attract sincere seekers of truth, even in our day, it is **not necessary** to change from following the guidance of the inspired scriptures in (a) the matter of music, in (b) the distinctive and different roles of men and women in public worship assemblies and/or (c) emphasizing the Lord's Supper each and every Lord's day and *only* on the Lord's day.

We are thankful to report that the Beech Hill church of Christ, in its country setting, continues to attract many sincere believers who want a *"thus saith the Lord"* for what they believe and practice in spiritual matters. . May their notable example encourage others. (alf & mjf)



James Horton and King McCarver, Ministers

The Bible Says,
18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. (Rom. 12)

The Bible Says,
17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. (Rom. 12)

Elders Are In God's Plan For the New Testament Church



Three Elders Serve the Ivey Street Church in Philadelphia, MS
They are (from left): M. D. Cameron, Johnny Beckwith and Sayle Johnson

After some time had elapsed following his first missionary journey, the apostle Paul returned to churches he had established and "ordained them elders in every church." (Acts 14:23). The apostle also left a co-worker (Titus) in Crete so that he may "set in order the things that are wanting and ordain elders in every city..." (Tit. 1:5).

When Paul wrote to the spiritually mature church in Philippi, he addressed his letter to "all the saints in Christ Jesus... with the bishops [elders] and deacons." (Phil. 1:1). Furthermore, the mother church in Jerusalem included not only the leadership of the apostles, but also that of the elders (see Acts chapter 15). The importance of the role of elders in the church is seen through the required qualifications of elders (also deacons) in I Tim. 3:1-6 and Titus 1:5-14).

It is a great source of

encouragement when we hear of churches of Christ, following the New Testament pattern, who select, appoint and/or ordained elders in every church. The Ivey Street congregation in Philadelphia, Mississippi, recently strengthened their eldership with the appointment of **M. D. Cameron**, as a new elder, to serve along with **Sayle Johnson** and **Johnny Beckwith**.

Johnny Beckwith, an elder and also the local preacher for the Philadelphia church, spoke recently (June 6, 2010) to a large assembly of more than 150 brethren who had come together in Philadelphia for an afternoon of fellowship and worship. Brother Johnny announced, "We now have three elders. One was ordained last Sunday." He added, "**We hope that our example will encourage other congregations to select elders.**" To which we say, "Amen!" (alf, editor)

Old Union Church Celebrates Centennial 100 Years In Same Church Building

The week, beginning with July 18, 2010, was very special to the Lord's church known as "Old Union", located in Carroll County, Mississippi. This country congregation is able to trace its beginning back to about 1840 and its present meeting house to the year of 1910.

We were richly blessed to be invited to help the congregation celebrate their "Centennial" in



100 Years Old: 1910 - 2010

their old building which, of course, has been updated with carpet, padded pews, indoor plumbing and central air conditioning. The meeting began on Sunday morning and was followed at noon by "Dinner on the Grounds". Attendance for all services was very encouraging ("largest crowds remembered").

The church which brings together about 30 to 35 on Sunday, was excited to see their building almost filled with members and visitors from the community and area congregations. On Tuesday, attendance reached a **high of 84**. **Mike Schmitz** has been their capable preacher for 10 years.

Keith King, local member, prepared a very interesting and informative booklet, detailing the 170-year-history of the Old Union Church and is available to readers of the MM. (Contact us if you would like to have a copy -- alf, editor)

Holy Spirit "His Greatest Gift"

Ponder these passages:

(a) 2 Tim. 3:16 -- "All scripture is given by inspiration of God..." (b) I Pet. 3:21 -- "but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (c) Acts 1:16 -- "This scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas..." (d) (I Tim. 4:1 -- "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times..." (e) John 16:13 -- "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you in all truth..." (f) Rev. 2:7,11,17, 29; 3:6,13, 22 -- "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

"The Holy Scriptures... The Inspired Word... **The Bible...**". Heaven's message to man, the Bible, is a gift from God, lovingly made available to mankind, through the work of the Holy Spirit. This precious book, sacred and divine, is truly a priceless gift! Can you think of a greater gift?

The Bible provides needed information about "the beginning" and our beginning (no need to

spend billions exploring outer space to learn *how* it all started!). Within the sacred pages of the "Good Book" we are informed as to our origin, our purpose and our future. We can come to know a "creator" from *nature* (only a foolish man who has *no excuse* would deny divinity, see Romans 1:18-23); however, special "revelation" (the Bible), is necessary for us to come to know the One and the only true God and His Son, our Saviour!

Through the inspired scriptures, and the Scriptures only, can we come to know God as our Father and find true assurance that we are His children. This very special family relationship of the "creature" (man) with the Creator (God) is made possible only through the revelation of the most sacred of all books -- the Bible.

Man's spiritual handbook, the Holy Bible, provides all the information needed to be saved and to live earthly life in an abundant fashion. This book, "the Book" teaches us how to prepare for eternity, enabling us to *depart* and go to be with the Lord and the redeemed of all ages, forever.

In heaven, I believe we will want to repeatedly thank the Holy Spirit for giving us His Greatest Gift -- the Holy Bible, the Inspired Written Word. (Editor) franksmm@aol.com

P. O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090.

Fulton Bible Institute Completes Study of Bible History II

48 Students -- 14 Congregations

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Yvonne Hughes
Louis Miro
Marilyn Leary
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Carolyn Wren
Barbara Baskin
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Beth Shappley
Steve Shappley
Willa Dean Gibson
Bill Miles
J. B. Markham
B. R. Sellers
YOUR NAME...
...Next Course?



Fulton Bible Institute in Fulton, MS recently finished another successful course. Above is a picture from the Spring 2010 banquet. The class studied Bible History II with an average of 48 students from fourteen congregations throughout the North Mississippi area. The **next course** will be "The Minor Prophets" that is to begin **August 24**. The school is overseen by the Fulton Church of Christ.

Who Am I; What Am I... Religiously?

-MMEditor-

Frequently, as a preacher, I am asked, "Who/What are you religiously?" My usual response is, "I am a Christian." Understandably, in today's world, this *short* answer is usually not considered sufficient. A **second** question often follows, "Okay... but, what *kind* of a Christian are you?"

My usual response to the second question is, "I am *just* a Christian, *that's all*." Now, I realize that such a simple answer may not provide the response expected from the one asking. What the questioner really want to know is: "Am I a Baptist, or a Pentecostal, maybe a Methodist, or some other popular denominational name, used by many believers who express a desire to follow Jesus Christ."

Let's look more closely at the questions asked ("Who/What?) and the answers expected ("Baptist", "Pentecostal" and "Methodist" or some other name).

1. Am I a "Baptist"? Yes, there is a sense in which I could be called *baptist*. The dictionary defines "baptist" as one who believes *baptism is for adults*; that is, one old enough to understand right from wrong, and one who thinks that baptism is accomplished through "*immersion* (dipping) in water." So, maybe, in a way, I am baptist? Yes. Sorta.

2. Am I a "Pentecostal"? Yes, there is a sense in which I could be called *Pentecostal*. The dictionary defines "pentecostal" as *relating to or occurring at Pentecost*. I certainly believe that the Lord's church was established on the "day of Pentecost

"(Acts 2). I believe that the gospel was first preached in its "fullness" on that first Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus. Furthermore, I understand that the plan for salvation, as given on the day of Pentecost, is the same plan to be followed in our day. So, maybe, in a way, "I am pentecostal". Yes, sorta.

3. Am I a "Methodist"? Yes, there is a sense in which I could be called *methodist*. The dictionary defines "methodist" as "*one who insists on or emphasizes systematic methods*." I certainly believe that "methods" are an intrigal part of Christ's church on earth. God's plan (method) for saving souls is clearly taught in the Scrip-

tures (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38); the Bible teaches us how to worship the Father "in Spirit and truth" and sets forth God's method (plan) for church organization. (*Christ is the head; the only head; elders are to oversee; deacons are to serve and members to function according to their abilities*). So, maybe, in a way, "I am methodist." Yes, sorta.

4. "Am I a Presbyterian"? Yes, there is a sense in which I could be called *presbyterian*. The dictionary defines "presbyterian" as *of or relating to ecclesiastical [church] government by presbyters*. The New Testament teaches that it is the plan of God that each church of Christ be organized with elders or *presbyters* to oversee the work and to shepherd the flock. (I Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-11; cf. I Tim. 4:14) So maybe, in a way, I am presbyterian. Yes, sorta.

Please consider this important question: Were followers of Christ in New Testament times (the first century) ever called "Baptists", "Pentecostal", "Methodists", "Presbyterian" or any other similar designation common to the present denominational world? (True, John was called "baptist", "the baptist" but he is the only one so called. In the New Testament neither his disciples nor the

disciples of Jesus were, at any time, called "baptists" .) Followers of Jesus Christ, in New Testament times, were called "disciples", "brethren", "saints", and, along with other designations, also were known as "*Christians*." (see Acts 11:26; 26:28; I Peter 4:16).

In closing, may I say that the teachings of the New Testament have influenced me, as a disciple of Jesus, and as a brother to/in the Lord, to gladly and thankfully respond to the question "Who/What are you?" with the simple answer, "I am a Christian... *just a Christian*." Who/What are you?

Additional Note

Seeking to "speak as the oracles of God" (I Peter 4:11), I do not desire to be identified as a "*church of Christ Christian*";

rather, just a Christian. The phrase "church of Christ" is not a denominational name. No, not in the New Testament of our Lord.

However, since Jesus Christ established (built) *His* church (Matt. 16:18), purchasing it with *His* blood (Acts 20:28), I am very thankful to be a member of the Lord's church which, along with other designations, is spoken of in the New Testament as the "*body of Christ*" (I Cor. 12:27) "*the church of God*" (I Cor. 1:2), the "*kingdom of his dear Son*" (Col. 1:13), and the "*household of faith*" (Gal. 6:10). Finally, in Paul's letter to the church at Rome he wrote, "The *churches of Christ* salute you" (Romans 16:16). This phrase, "*churches of Christ*", denotes *divine* ownership and a very special relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am thankful, content and confident, based upon the authority of God's word, to be simply a "Christian" and a member of Christ's church -- the church of Christ. This is what I am, who I am and why I am what I am. **What about you?** (alf/editor of MM)

ARKANSAS CHURCHES PROMOTE UNITY

Good news reported in the church bulletin from Higden, Arkansas. The bulletin states: "About a year ago seven congregations (Higden, Mars Hill, Greenbrier, Oak, Liberty, Robinson and Center, and Harrison and Willow) came together to work on an area wide Gospel Meeting... **One:** To combine our resources and creative might for the purpose of evangelizing the lost in as broad and mass-appealing way as possible. **Two:** To come together with equal partnership and grow stronger in our relationship with one another.... A recent bulletin also states they began the week with an "incredible crowd of 800 in attendance, followed by 600 on Monday then an average of 500 per night." One soul obeyed the Gospel and another was restored." (Report by: **Matthew Martin**, one of the ministers for the Higden congregation.)

**The Bible Still says:
"Preach the Word"**

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

Restorer

David King of England

- S. Claytus Wilson -

David King was born in Clerkenwell, London on February 28, 1819. Upon hearing a moving sermon entitled, "Begotten of God," King joined the Wesleyans. Later under the teaching of Mr. Robert Aitkin, he broke off his affiliation with the Wesleyans. He now had a determination to study the Bible that he might find the truth.

King discovered a group in America claiming only the name Christian. He obtained some writings from America. One was entitled, "Baptism and the Remission of Sins." Realizing his former Wesleyan conversion was without divine assurance, he was immersed for the remission of sins in 1842, when he was 23 years of age. James Wallis, editor of The Christian Messenger, and John Black helped him to come to a knowledge of the truth and Gospel obedience. King's wife soon learned the truth and obeyed the Gospel.

King began to preach the Gospel. He was invited to preach to a group of Seventh Day Adventists. After several weeks of teaching, he baptized the entire congregation of 150 members.

King was a prolific writer and editor of several periodicals. First was the Bible Advocate, published in 1847 with W. Godson as co-editor. In 1861, James Wallis asked him to edit The Harbinger, also known as The British Millennial Harbinger. The Harbinger continued until 1890 when it was changed to The Bible Advocate.

David King was well acquainted with Alexander Campbell and contributed articles to the (American) Millennial Harbinger, edited by Campbell.

King had several debates on different subjects including the action and design of baptism with a Baptist and Church of England clergyman. He held a number of debates with secularists.

King pleaded with tongue and pen for a return to primitive Christianity for 52 of his 75 years. He refused to adopt the title of "Reverend."

King made it plain there was but one true church. "Eighteen hundred years ago, the old church which is the Church of Christ, and the only church approved of God, was planted in Jerusalem."¹

"Reader, take upon you the name of Christ (if you have not yet done so). Be a Christian in name

and life. Unite with those who congregate, not as a church of human origin, bearing a name of man's devise; but as a Church of Christ, having no scripture but the Bible, no plan of salvation but that preached by the Apostles, no order of worship but that known to the first churches, no government but that instituted by Christ, and no aristocracy, but that of Christian excellence."²

"The Church of Christ had no existence until after the earthly life, death, burial, resurrection and ascension of the Savior. The day of Pentecost was the birthday of the New testament Church, when the outpouring of the Holy Spirit came forth from the risen and glorified Lord; then, and not until then, was the Church of Christ set up on the Earth."³

David King was a man of deep conviction. He loved the Word of God and had a faith that never shrank. He deeply believed in the one faith, one baptism, and the one body, the Church. He debated and fought all false doctrine and denominational practices. He was England's most distinguished preacher, teacher, editor, debater, and scholar of the nineteenth century. He was a humble man that gave Christ all preeminence and contended earnestly for the faith once delivered for all time. What Alexander Campbell was to America, David King was to England.

(Footnotes)

- 1 Memoir of David King, pg. 206.
- 2 Ibid., p. 209
- 3 Ibid., p. 222, 223.

Claytus Wilson

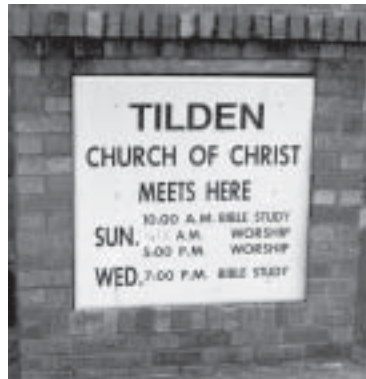
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Readers' Response

Dear Sir or Madame:

I look forward to the arrival of each issue of the Messenger and enjoy reading each article regarding biblical teaching. I also enjoy reading about sister congregations and the work they are doing; and of course I especially enjoy answering the questions. I would like to add my mother's name to the subscription list. She is 82 old and in poor health, but reads her bible daily and attends church as much as her health allows... I have also enclosed a contribution to help with the continuance of your work. Sincerely, (Kaye Wise, Hohenwald, TN)

We appreciate all you do and the good articles. The world needs more people like you two. (The Grays, Amory, MS)



“Drop - in Yet Another Visit”

Home of Itawamba County's "Tilden Church of Christ"

Itawamba. Interesting name - worn by a county in northeast Mississippi. Itawamba County is populated by approximately 23,000 precious souls -- each made in the image of God. This rural county serves as home to several churches of Christ, one of which, on the south edge of the county, is known as "Tilden."

On Wednesday evening (June 2, 2010) my June and I were blessed with the opportunity of *dropping in* for a midweek service with the country church which is located about 8 miles south of the county's largest community -- Fulton.

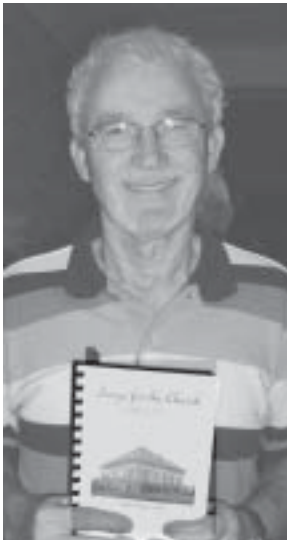
When I think about our visit at Tilden, the word "encouraged" comes to my mind. Now, if you are a regular reader of the *Magnolia Messenger*, you may have noticed that some form of "encourage" often appears. No apologies.

I am grateful that we can honestly use the word "encourage" frequently, for it truly describes what takes place in our hearts when we visit among the churches of Christ -- especially in Mississippi.

We are thankful for all of God's people, where ever they may be, who regularly assemble in the name of Jesus Christ and who earnestly seek to worship the Father in "spirit and in truth." And to have the privilege of continually visiting among brethren, observ-

ing first hand their dedicated service to God and man, is truly a source of great encouragement. This was certainly true with our recent visit to Tilden.

We learned that the Tilden congregation traces its beginning back to about 1840 -- making it one of the oldest churches of Christ in Mississippi. Presently the congregation of nearly 100 is overseen by two elders -- **Benny Davis** and **Junior Tucker**. Two special servants (*deacons*) likewise minister in the church. They are **Tony Brazil** and **Freddy Tucker**. **David Paden, Jr.** is their preacher, having ministered with/to the congregation for nearly nine years.



Benny Davis, song writer & leader, holds copy of his book.

Their church buildings are located on land donated to the church in 1905, based upon the condition that mechanical instruments of music in worship would "never be used".

A few of the many preachers who have served the church include such men as **W. D.**

Jeffcoat, Paul D. Murphy, J. A. Thornton and Cecil May, Jr. As already noted, their present long-time preacher is **David Paden, Jr.**, a graduate of MBC.

Our "drop-in" visit happened to be on "Singing Night". Apparently the first Wednesday evening of each month is set aside for emphasis upon worship in singing. David Paden welcomed everyone and invited song selections and wrote the numbers on the board.

Tony Brazil, one of the deacons, started the special service, leading songs about our hope for eternity.

One was about "No Tears in Heaven"; another was about "Paradise Valley". Several of the men took turns leading various songs -- some old; yet, some new (to me). A few were taken from a song book written by one of the members (an elder) at Tilden -- **Benny Davis**. The congregation participated well in the service; to the extent that, when I was invited to lead a song, I agreed to do so. The church made it easy.

After an extended period of singing and making melody in our hearts, David Paden, led our thoughts in a devotional Bible study. He used as an example the Israelites, who, according to Exodus 36, were so generous in giving to the building of the tabernacle that Moses had to *restrain* the people from giving too much! He noted that the Israelites, instead of trying to give as "little as possible" actually "gave more than was needed." (verses 5-7)

Tilden's talented preacher called upon us to have the attitude of the Israelites and to give freely and generously. He also applied their good example to all we do in work and worship; encouraging us to not try to "just get by" by doing as "little as possible" but rather to do as "much as possible" to serve our gracious and good God.

After the devotional, I was blessed with an opportunity to speak to the church for a few minutes -- seeking to encourage the brethren at Tilden who were so encouraging to us. It was another visit that brought, as usual, *encouragement*. (Al & June Franks)

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(Center) **David Paden, Jr.**, preacher with one of his three daughters, **Madison**. (Right) **John Moore**, age 90, "oldest member of Tilden church."

SAME MIND

(Continued from page 7)

Unity creates an effective functioning church. This is what God wants.

How do we develop unity? First, we have to realize it is possible! Even though we have different personalities in a local church, Christians can be drawn together by one heart and one mind. It was the spiritual dynamic of the New Testament church where Christians of all social and racial backgrounds sat side by side to worship God. That is the reason Paul said, "Be diligent!"

Second, we have to realize unity is not automatic. We have to work at it. It is a doctrine of Christ. But there is also freedom in Christ in areas of opinion and in practical application. Unity is achieved when we all do our part in loving and forgiving one another in the Body. Imagine what would have happened if the Apostles had not faced the reality of neglected widows (Acts 6). No doubt a split would have occurred. Imagine what would have happen if the leaders at Antioch had not faced the theological problem created by the Judaizers (Acts 15). If they had not taken action, along with the Jerusalem Counsel, the whole church would have been confused about this doctrine. But because they faced the problem and took action, unity was restored.

Carl and Sam were "at outs" with each other. They could not even remember the initial cause of friction, but their hostility had grown over the years. A deeply concerned deacon in the church prayed that God would use him as a peacemaker.

He called Carl. "What do you think of Sam?" he asked. "He's

the sorriest guy in town!" "But," countered the deacon, "you have to admit that he's a hard-working man." "No one can deny that," Carl said. "I've never known a person who worked harder."

Next the deacon visited Sam. "Do you know what Carl said about you?" "No, but I can imagine his lies," he responded angrily. "This may surprise you," said the deacon, "but he said he's never known a harder worker." "He said that?" Sam was stunned. "What do you think of Carl?" asked the deacon. "It is no secret that I have absolutely no use for him." "But you must admit he's honest in business," said the deacon. "There's no getting around that," said Sam. "In business he's a man you can trust."

Later the deacon met Carl again. "Do you know what Sam said about you? He claims you're absolutely trustworthy in business, that you are scrupulously honest." "Well, how about that," reacted Carl with a smile.

Soon the peacemaking deacon noticed Sam and Carl would cautiously nod in a friendly sort of way. Before long they were shaking hands, talking, even visiting in each other's homes. Today they are best of friends.

Paul said, "Be diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." I pray we will rip this page from the peacemaking deacon's notebook. Unity is the only way we can show the world that we are the children of God and lead them to Christ.

Eddie Lewis, Associate Minister, Germantown Christ of Christ, Germantown, TN.
eddielewis@gtownchurchofchrist.org

KINGDOM

(Continued from page 3)

lations, including the English Standard Version which I use, understand John 17:21 to say "the kingdom of God is in the midst of you," understanding *entos* in a different sense. The meaning, in that case, would be that in Jesus as Anointed King ("Christ"), the kingdom is present in prospect.

Jesus taught something similar to that when he told the Pharisees, "But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Matthew 12:28).

Weighing in favor of the meaning, "the kingdom of God is within you," is the fact that in the only other occurrence in the New Testament of the word *entos*, the word translated "within" or "in the midst of," the obvious meaning is "in-

ward." "You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside (*entos*) of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean" (Matthew 23:26).

Conclusion

"Kingdom," therefore, is a broad term used in several senses.

1. It is the same as the church, containing all the redeemed, beginning on the Pentecost following Christ's resurrection and ending at the second coming of Christ.

2. It is the same in some usages as heaven.

3. It also refers to the personal acceptance of Jesus' reign in the heart of Christians.

The Bible Says,
15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. (Rom. 12)

Free Book Offer

NOTE: A few weeks ago, Jon Gary Williams of LaVergne, Tennessee, wrote to us with information about a free book offer involving three books he has written. Brother Gary stated,

These books are still being made free in any quantity to individuals and congregations. Last year we published another book, A Practical Guide to Bible Study.

The first two were, The Other Side of Evolution and The Book of Mormon - A Book of Error and Fraud.

We have distributed thousands of these across the country, principally through mention of them in Jim Waldron's, Bulletin Briefs, which is mailed to about 13,000 congregations...

...I'm hoping you can make mention of these for those who receive MM. They can be ordered through me at:

**Books,
P.O. Box 35,
La Vergne, TN 37086**
or
jongaryw@aol.com



“Jesus Was All That!”

(Part 2)

Rodney Livingston

The perfect nature of Jesus cannot be better displayed other than through His death and resurrection. In the first part, we sought to prove the nature of Jesus based on His birth and His life, both of which were perfect in nature. This part seeks to show how those events made it possible for Jesus to have a perfect death and the perfect resurrection, therefore, completing the perfect life of the only perfect one.

You might say, ‘How was his death perfect?’ That is a great question. It is amazing, according to Wilson’s book, that every letter of the law was broken during the trial of Jesus. All the measures that were necessary to convict an accused person and especially to hand down the verdict of death were violated in the course of Jesus’ trial. (1)

If the process was to take place during the day, it happened at night in Jesus’ case. If they were to have a certain number of witnesses to make an accusation, one was plenty in the case of Jesus. If there was a time frame in which the case was to be considered, a speedy and rash decision was necessary in Jesus’ case. All this knowing the one whom they wished to crucify was innocent; He was the only perfect part of the trial and death process. The violet robe was the symbol of sin and evil. By Jesus wearing it, it was to show the mockery of the people upon the sinless one. (2)

As their mockery continued in many forms, Jesus was in perfect control at all times, Matthew 27:28-30. In 2 Timothy 1:7, the Bible clearly states that God has given us a spirit of self-control. It was this perfect self-control that Jesus displayed in His death. He was spit upon, cursed, and even mockingly accused; yet, He refrained in perfect submission to the will of the Father. Only the Sinless One could do such a thing.

How can the command to turn the other cheek be so forceful for us today? The Man who gave the command is a perfect example of how to do that very thing. Perhaps the hardest thing, in this student’s opinion, would have been to remain on the cross when He knew He had the power to come down. Even in the darkest hours of His physical life, when people were walking by and mocking Him to his face, Mark 15:31-32, Jesus still perfectly submitted all the way until He was able to say, “It Is Finished,” John 19:30.

However, the perfect birth, life, or death would not have been



Rodney Livingston

completed without the perfect resurrection. Having made the previous comment and giving up the spirit of life, Jesus was perfectly dead. If not, why did they bury him?

Many have suggested He was just sleeping or in a trance or something but the spear in the right side and separation of the fluids in His body suggested a death had occurred. Thus, He was buried and laid in the earth as He claimed for three days, and at that point, early in the morning, Matthew 28, He had been raised in a bodily form.

The greatest evidence for this perfect event is the appearances that Jesus made to the apostles. Some have suggested they were hallucinating, but many reasons could be given for why this was real and not some phenomenon going on among the apostles. Besides, if this is true, why did it cease so soon? (3)

Of course, many other explanations could be given to prove that this was not a figment of the apostles’ imagination, but rather Jesus was really raised in bodily form. One must prove that the apostles are creditable sources and they are honest. (4) Then, their claim of seeing Jesus after He was raised will be substantial for the perfect nature of Jesus before returning to the Father, Acts 1. The apostles affirmed that Jesus had been raised by God, Acts 2.32, and Matthias was chosen as being one who had witnessed the resurrection of Jesus, Acts 1.22.

In any judicial case the one who can establish the most witnesses with the same testimony is the one who will be deemed the winner of the case. In the case of resurrection, Matthew, Luke, and John all speak to the resurrection with some differing details. However, none of the details are contradictory with each other, but rather work together to give a broader picture of this great event. (5)

The perfect birth of Jesus being born of the virgin as prophesied from many years earlier, the perfect life of Jesus where He was directly tempted of Satan and yet resisted to the point of never sinning (Matthew 4) to the perfect attitude and demeanor through His fake trial and death sentence, up to the very last appearance after the resurrection, Jesus’ nature was all perfect. There is not a better word one could use to describe Jesus. It was the perfect start all the way to the perfected finish, through the Father, that provides the conclusions of this student to the nature of Jesus. These claims and the realities of Jesus’ life are such as to have no equivalent with any other human who has lived on this earth. This makes Him deity; the son of God having come into the likeness of humans to serve, Philippians 2.7.

(Footnotes)

1. L.R. Wilson. The Triumphant Jesus. 1952, (pgs. 171-80).
2. Wilson. (pg. 203).
3. James Bales. The Biblical Doctrine of Christ. Central Printer, 1966, (pg. 19).
4. Bales, (pg. 18)
5. Leon Crouch. The Deity of Christ. Star Bible and Tract Corp, 1977, (pg. 77).

STARKVILLE

**Nine baptisms
in
Seven days**

The church bulletin from Starkville, Mississippi (Lee Ave), recently reported nine baptisms in seven days. As **Andy Miller**, preacher for the Starkville congregation stated, “What a great time of rejoicing!”

Gospel Meeting

Sept. 12 - 15, 2010

Evangelist

Marshall Eubanks

Sunday

Bible Classes -- 9:00

Worship -- 10:00

Evening Worship -- 7:30

Monday -- Wednesday

7:00 PM Each Evening

Caledonia

**Church of Christ
Caledonia, Mississippi**

local preacher

Shane Meredith,

Please Remember to Pray for the *Magnolia Messenger*

LA/TX RV Rally

Date: October 27 (Wednesday) thru October 31 (Sunday)

Where: Salmon Lake Park – Grapeland Texas 75844

Phone for park: 936-687-2594

RV sites are already reserved for you; no need to call. If you want a cabin at the Park call the Park to reserve.

For more information on other possible places to stay contact Ray or Donna Franks. 337-786-3095 (Home) – (Cell) Ray 337-515-0866 – (Cell) Donna 337-842-5821

Theme:

“Let’s Dream The Impossible Dream”

A Better Life; A Better Country;

A Better Family; A Better Church Family

Thank you for thinking of the Magnolia Messenger when you remember and/or honor Friends and Relatives (See Page 12)

The Bible Says,
20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. (Rom. 12)

Churches Looking For Preachers

Notice: We are pleased to run ads for congregations seeking to find preachers to work with them. Please mail your request to: "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!**

Searching Waynesboro, MS

The Waynesboro church of Christ, located in southeastern Mississippi, is seeking to fill the pulpit with a sound New Testament minister.

Our congregation was established in Waynesboro in 1952 by only a few faithful Christians. The congregation size consist of about 50-55 each Sunday morning with a weekly budget of \$1,700. The population of Waynesboro is approximately 6,500 with the church building located on Hwy 145, North. The Waynesboro church has no elders or deacons.

Salary

Base of \$37,000 + (Negotiable upon qualification/experience)

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

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!

Lone Oak

(Columbus, MS)

(6-11-10)

The Lone Oak Church of Christ located in east central MS is looking for a sound New Testament preacher. The congregation is over 100 years old and is the oldest in the county. Average attendance 62-68 each week. We have two elders and two deacons.

House provided, a 3BR,2 full baths, with large walk-in closet and deck. Has new paint and floor covering through-out. Those interested should be well grounded in the scriptures, able to preach and teach the whole truth; friendly, working to restore the unfaithful and visiting the sick and shut-ins.

Contact:

William P. Mason
662-251-5076
Mason1404@bellsouth.net
1404 Sanders Mill Road
Steens, MS 39766
Adrian Sanders
662-356-4440
418 Logan Lane
Steens, MS 39766

"...How shall they preach, except they be sent?..."

(Rom. 10:15)

Brandon, MS

Presently looking for a scripturally sound experienced full time gospel preacher for the North Brandon Church of Christ. This is a congregation with a Sunday morning attendance of approximately 160 located in central Mississippi, just east of Jackson. Brandon is a city with a population of 20,600 and last year was rated by Money magazine as the 54th best small city in the country in which to live.

Interested preachers, please send a resume and a recorded sermon to:

North Brandon Church of Christ
Atten: Austin Brantley
PO Box 251
Brandon, MS 39042

If you need additional information please either call **601 825 3986** or email Abbrandon@aol.com

Madison

(Jackson, MS)

(7-25-10)

The Madison church of Christ is currently searching for a Youth and Family Minister to serve our congregation. The congregation has a membership of 110 and we currently have 2 elders and 4 deacons. Please submit resume to

Madison church of Christ
P.O. Box 1845,

Madison, MS 39130.

Or contact Brad Guth @ Email :

bradandamyg@gmail.com.

Phone: 601-988-3439.

Preacher Available

Buddy Borland

Preacher Available for local work with 43 years experience. Have experience as pulpit minister, visitation and personal work minister, and involvement minister.

Buddy Borland

Call: 205-652-7889 Home
205-652-2308 Church Office

Starkville Searching For Preacher

Lonnie Smith, a member of the Metro East congregation in Jackson, recently wrote. *"I still help in serving with the North Montgomery congregation in Starkville... a minister [is] needed at North Montgomery. Please note that resumes' can either be sent to P.O. Box 1953, Starkville, MS 39760 or e-mailed to LonSmith1981@gmail.com for review. Also, if any questions are asked about the position, please call at 662-617-2199 and leave name and contact if not available.*

**Need a Preacher?
Run an Ad. -- No Charge**

A Challenge to Parents

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

ARAB CHURCH OF CHRIST

Arab, Alabama

(6-26-10)

Position:

Minister of Outreach

Salary:

Competitive - depends on qualifications; experience level

Position Description:

The individual selected will serve as the church outreach minister. All tasks/works will be assigned by the eldership. The individual will report to the eldership. Administrative support will be provided by the church staff as needed.

This position is envisioned as a beginning full time job for a qualified Bible Studies graduate. Excelling in public speaking (pulpit preaching) is not mandatory, but certainly would be a plus for the candidate. Enthusiastic song leading talent will have significant bearing on the selection.

Qualifications

(Minimum):

1. Degree in Bible from recognized brotherhood college/university or equivalent.
2. Some church related experience as an intern, part time church work or leadership in worship services.
3. Demonstrated work ethic (put in 40 hour week plus).

Arab Church Of Christ
1005 N. Main St - PO Box 376
Arab, AL 35016
Ph 256 586 8158
e-mail address:
acofc@otelco.net

Jackson Grove

Jackson Grove church of Christ -- a small country congregation about 100 miles south of Memphis TN, in Tallahatchie County, Mississippi is seeking a sound gospel preacher who is retired or has a job that would allow him to be available on weekends.

The position will be available July 4, 2010. Contact **James Kiihnl** 662-647-3448 or **John Deaton** 662-647-2085.

Lepanto, AR

The Lepanto Church of Christ is looking for a full-time minister to work with the church here in Lepanto. The congregation's attendance ranges from 40 to 50 members. We do have housing available. If you would like to apply, have any questions or just want more information, please contact:

J. C. Lewis

at 870-475-2156 or

Whit Herndon, Jr.

at 870-475-3838

Lepanto

Church of Christ

P. O. Box 339

406 Kenwood Street

Lepanto, Arkansas 72354

News Notes

TUPELO (Gloster St)

Youth Rally Planned

on

"Faith Basics"

A Youth Rally called "Faith Basics" is being planned for August 21, 2010 at the Gloster Street Church of Christ in Tupelo, Mississippi. The time is 9:00 AM. - 2:00 PM. The theme is "Rightly Dividing the Word" and the Key-note Speaker is **Doug Burleson**.

Other news from Gloster Street: There were forty-three individuals from the Gloster Street congregation who went on a campaign this summer to Freeport, Illinois. They were able to knock on 1,338 doors, resulting in several from the community attending both the Vacation Bible School as well as the Gospel Meeting. **Chad Ramsey** and **Brian Galloway** are the local ministers.

CORINTH

Archers - 70 Years

Congratulations to **Ed and Ella Archer** on their **70th** wedding anniversary. A special anniversary party was given them on July 11, 2010 at the Weaver Center in Corinth. The church bulletin from Corinth also stated that brother and sister Archer will both be 90 years old this year.

Bay St Louis Church of Christ

35th ANNIVERSARY / HOMECOMING

Friday, October 15 -- Sunday, October 17, 2010

Gwyneth Ford (Nashville, TN), Speaker

Friday: 7:00 - 8:00 PM -- Sermon with snacks

Saturday: 4:00 - 5:30 singing; 5:30 - 7:00 PM free time;

7:00 - 8:00 PM - Sermon, snacks following

Sunday: 9:00 - 9:45 Bible Classes; 10:00 Worship service;

11:00 - *Lunch provided at the building*; 1:30 - PM Sermon

Address: 501 Pine St; Bay St Louis, MS 39520

bslcoc@bellsouth.net; 228-342-1386 (Charlie Buckley, minister)

DeRidder, LA Church Makes Second Mission Trip to Sunny Glen Children's Home

The Glory Belongs to God!

A group of twenty-four people, from the Church of Christ in DeRidder, Louisiana, traveled, for the 2nd year in a row, to San Benito, Texas. They put on a three day Vacation Bible School for the children living at Sunny Glen Children's Home.

Through puppets, classes, singing, crafts and team-building activities, *Jesus' Power to Heal* was taught. In Matthew chapters 8 and 9, His power to heal and to forgive sins is revealed when He heals the leper, the centurion's servant, the woman who had been ill for twelve years, the little girl, and the paralytic.

The group from DeRidder wishes to praise God for everything good that came from their trip. Their thoughts are summed up in this statement:

"All the work and effort put into the mission trip to South Texas was to further the kingdom of God. He receives all the glory.

"We are humbled. Humbled because we experienced just a glimpse of the sad situations some of the children have come from. Humbled because we watched God work through the staff at Sunny Glen to reach out and comfort each child that comes their way. Humbled by the house parents who sacrifice an enormous amount to provide love for broken children. Humbled by the faith and enthusiasm of the director and his wife, even though the economy is taking a toll on the Home's finances.

"And humbled by the smiles and laughter we heard from the

children. In the midst of turmoil, they have found comfort, safety and reassurance at Sunny Glen. Praise God for this facility, and others like it around the world, who share Jesus with children who might otherwise be forgotten. Please, pray for their efforts."

As mentioned above, our poor economy is being felt by Sunny Glen. They have already taken some measures to save money in certain areas, so that the care given to the children won't suffer. These precious children deserve to be nurtured and taught in the admonition of the Lord. Contributions and donations are down this year. If there is anyway you or your congregation might help this tremendous work for the Lord, please, contact them immediately.

"For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen." (Romans 11:36)

"Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father." (Colossians 3:17)

Contact Information:

**Sunny Glen
Children's Home
P.O. Box 1373**

**San Benito, Texas 78586
(956) 399-5356**

Email: info@sunnyglen.org
Donations can also be made online at: www.sunnyglen.org
Above article submitted to MM on behalf of the DeRidder church by:

Julie Fariss
wjfariss@earthlink.net



104° Temperature on Sunday, August 1, 2010, in Kosciusko, MS

So, You Think It Is Hot!

When the thermometer shows 104, and humidity considered, the heat index reaches 110 to 115, you don't just *think* it is hot -- you *know* it is hot! When I remember the way it "used to be", fifty or sixty years ago, I can not help but say, "Thank you, Lord, for air-conditioning."

While we think (know) it is hot now, consider what is yet to come. Jesus issued warnings about future heat. Repeatedly, he warned about the "danger of hell fire" (Matt. 5:22). He spoke clearly

about a future "furnace of fire", where "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:42).

Near the very close of the New Testament, in Jesus' revelation to John, a voice from heaven stated, in no uncertain terms, that sinners who refuse to repent will have their part in "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone..." (Rev. 21:8). This is a most serious warning. And, remember: There will be no air conditioning available in hell. Study prayerfully Luke 16:19-31. (Editor)

Is God Humbling America?

(Continued from page 9)

received. This did not happen overnight... but after a slow decay that took decades. People... God's people... slowly but surely took steps AWAY from Him... in their personal lives, in their business lives and eventually in their country's lives. Those countries ceased to be. That was THEN.

We are dealing with the same God NOW. And the further back we look (the 8th Century B.C.) the further ahead we can see. The same thing that happened to THEM is happening to US. Why???? Because we have the same God – regardless of whether or not we acknowledge that.

I watch the news with the same trepidation as many others. When I consider current events and lay them along side of my view of Biblical history, I am of a mixed mind. I am scared on one hand, yet inside, I know we are just seeing the consequences of our actions. Current events are just SYMPTOMS of a greater problem. They are just signs of God's intervention in history even still. He has ALWAYS held man accountable for his actions.

A thousand years from now, somebody will pick up their history books and the Bible and read of the problems of Israel... Judah... the U.S., and realize that as a nation begins to trust less in God and more in themselves and their political/military/economic power, the more God intervenes to bring down those countries.

He used internal and external forces THEN. He's doing the very same thing NOW. We have internal corruption and an ever growing threat externally – from Islam, (who, by the way, while most of us will call them "evil," let's remember that pornography, adultery, etc.,... things that God has said are wrong (and ARE TREATED AS WRONG AMONG ISLAM), that are protected by law here) God is raising them and many other threats up for a reason.

A simple truth is, given the impact of one's beliefs in their daily lives, Muslims BELIEVE IN THEIR GOD MORE DEVOUTLY THAN WE DO OURS. Islam is a way of life. While we often say "Oh My God" and use God's name disrespectfully and discount the authenticity of the Bible, may God help the Muslim who uses the name Allah disrespectfully or who discounts the Koran.

Our God is and has been systematically taken out of our society and mostly limited to

church buildings. The Bible is being reduced to fairy tales. Some will criticize and say, "You can't legislate morality." Well, we don't seem to have too much of a problem legislating immorality.

God is SUPPOSED TO BE IN OUR DAILY LIVES. He was in the lives of those who founded our country (read **UNDER GOD**, by Tobi Mac) and as long as that piety existed, we were blessed, as was Israel and Judah. Someone has said, "Piety begat prosperity and then the daughter divorced the mother."

Remember this lesson in these trying and worrisome times. God has been, and always will be in control. To illustrate this, one last time, look in the New Testament book of Romans. Chapter 13, verse 1 says, "For there is no authority except from God, and THOSE THAT EXIST HAVE BEEN INSTITUTED BY GOD." God puts leaders in the position they are in – for HIS REASONS.

And notice the answer Jesus gave to Pontius Pilate who claimed his power this way in John 19:10, "Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?" To which Jesus replied, "You would have NO POWER over me UNLESS IT HAD BEEN GIVEN YOU FROM ABOVE."

What Jesus? Say that again please? "You would HAVE NO POWER OVER ME IF NOT GIVEN TO YOU FROM ABOVE." God is in control. He puts people in positions to fulfill His plan.

We have many external threats. We have even more internal threats. Perhaps one could say that these have always been present. "Paul Harvey's America," published in 2009, looks back at a time in the early 70's when there was the Vietnam War, Watergate, high inflation, high unemployment, etc., when pessimism reigned. He updated a speech originally given in the late 1950's. He said THEN:

"History promises only this for certain: We will get exactly what we deserve." Paul Harvey also viewed America as a miracle of history as well, impossible to replicate or, if lost, impossible to restore:

"I know well from what has gone before, if all this (nation) stands for dies, it will not rise again. Daniel Webster said, "that which has happened but once in six thousand years cannot be expected to happen twice."

Mr. Harvey continues, "This magnificent accident, government

under God, will not happen twice... And one day the trumpet is going to blow, and we shall shout "Hallelujah!... which way to Paradise?" And the soft, calm voice of Final Authority will say, "You have had it mister, you have had it."

In 1952 Paul Harvey wrote: "Almighty God, send us a leader. A man with his feet planted firmly in American tradition. A tall man... with his head above the fog of selfish interests. Not a common man. This time, God, send us "an uncommon man" ...a statesman. We don't deserve him, but send him anyway. And hurry please. The hour is late. The candle of freedom burns low."

Different problems, but the same definition... SYMPTOMS.

After nations that were once favored by God turned to their own ways only Judah learned the lesson and returned to God for a time after 70 years of national captivity by the Babylonians in 516 B.C.. Sadly, we know of the religious state of Judah's people by walking with Jesus in the Gospels. Judah would fall again, this time to Rome, not 40 years after Jesus walked the Earth.

The only... the ONLY question that matters is, given a history of not seeing the signs, will we, as a country, receive the message? History reveals we won't. Current events are evidence of that.

One could say that there have been bad times before. That is true. But the closer we get to our country's God-trusting foundation, we see that people were good. People had ethics and values. Thus, our COUNTRY HAD VALUES. We have taken steps that have systematically removed God from our national consciousness. Are we really better for having done so? Now, our country, like other God-favored nations before, is losing that foundation, those values, and thus, its soul.

A sad but predictable epitaph is being written for the tombstone of our country. "Yet you did not return to me."

Thanks for reading.

(Written by Dave Verret;
Mililani, Hawaii)
twocajuns@mac.com

Dave added: *I wish to thank Dan S. in Thailand who provoked me to write the original letter that would become this essay. Also, John G. in Hawaii, Patti J. in Texas, Janice H. in Louisiana for their encouragement, support and review of this paper.*

Please Pray for the MM

“Modest Apparel” -- Who Decides?

Godly Women or an Ungodly World?

- A. L. Franks -

The first human couple, after sinning and realizing they were naked, sewed fig leaves together and “made themselves aprons” (Gen. 3:7). Later, before driving Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden, God made for them “coats of skins” and “clothed them” (Gen. 3:21).

Please note that man made aprons, but God made coats. And, it was after they were given coats to wear that Scripture says they were “clothed.”

The New Testament teaches that women are to adorn themselves in “...modest apparel...” as “...becometh women professing godliness” (I Tim. 2:9,10). Jesus, in His great “Sermon on the Mount”, spoke about the sin of “mental adultery” when He warned against the danger of looking on a woman “to lust after her.”

It is a known fact that clothing, or the lack of it, can be and often is a major factor in creating lusts (unlawful desires). Christian women must never forget their God-given responsibility to dress modestly so as to not contribute in any way to “lustful thoughts” on the part of male onlookers or admirers. This point brings us to some very important questions that need to be considered when women choose what to wear or not to wear.

* How elaborate (costly) is not too elaborate (costly)?

* Am I emphasizing the outward person or the inward person?

* How low is too low?

* How short is too short?

* How tight is too tight?

* How revealing is too revealing?

Who decides these vital questions? Do we just leave it up to an evil and adulterous world of men and women who are sex-crazy and money-hungry, or should women who profess godliness make these decisions? I ask: *Who makes these important decisions in your life or in the life of your daughters?*

May we suggest that “Christian women” make such decisions for themselves and their daughters, relying on Scripture and advice from other “godly women.” (It may also be very helpful to seek the input of trustworthy, godly men who are well acquainted with the “facts of life.”)

I beg of you: Please don’t just listen to or go along with the standards set by money-hungry, sexu-

ally-starved worldly folks of this “adulterous and sinful generation” (Mark 8:38). Please respect the wisdom of Godly women who, in consultation with their Godly men, reverence God and His word in making important decisions as to what to wear or not to wear.

I challenge you: Dare to be different! Become and be a shining light in a world of darkness and sin. (Editor)

Caution... Caution to all Concerned Parents

1. Don’t expect your children to just know what is proper or improper in wearing apparel.

2. Do realize the enormous pressure that children feel from their friends; along with the daily temptation to go along with the style (trend) and the strong desire of us all to “not be different.”

3. Remember the accumulative power of television, movies, the internet and magazines.

4. Make daily Bible study practical and applicable to everyday living. (It is!)

5. Call upon church leaders (preachers and elders) to frequently use the pulpit and classes to instill Scriptural principles governing “modest apparel”.

6. Pray fervently for our faithful and godly women (young and old) that they will see a good example from the faithful and godly men (young and old) and, together, we will all have the courage to do, not our will but, the will of our Heavenly Father.

Recommended Reading

Turn to Page 22

This issue, MM

Here you can read the words of a godly, older woman who calls attention to scriptural teachings about the dangers of immodest clothing, especially in the summertime. And, remember the writer (Sylvia Waites) is simply doing her job. The Bible admonishes the older women to teach (train) the younger women in many areas of life. (Titus 2:3-5)

News Note

CORINTH

The Magnolia Messenger likes to recognize those older members of the Lord’s Church who have continued faithful and are still active in spite of their age. One such member is Altha Rogers who now resides in Corinth, Mississippi. Sister Rogers celebrated her 90th birthday on June 30, 2010. Belated Happy Birthday wishes!



Earl Edge

4/30/24 - 7/4/10

Another Gospel Preacher Has Departed This Life

After 70 years of preaching the gospel, Earl Edge of Southaven, Mississippi, departed this life on July 4, 2010. His last sermon was preached a couple of months earlier -- on April 5.

Earl Edge was born April 3, 1924, in Searcy, Arkansas. In 1940, he obeyed the gospel after hearing it preached for the first time. His mother was baptized the next day. At the age of 16 he preached his first sermon in Live Oak, Florida.

Earl met and married Lorene Duncan after a courtship of only two weeks. They were together for 64 years and were the parents of three children -- Timothy, Tanna and Tammy. Through the years, Earl gained a noteworthy education (including work on a doctorate), faithfully preached the gospel and taught school in several communities in Arkansas, Tennessee and Florida. During the last ten years of his life, he served as one of the preachers for the Pine Bluff church in Toccoola, Mississippi.

Brother Earl’s daughter, Tammy (Edge) Pruett, wrote about her father and said: “He always encouraged young men to preach and teach. He was an ardent visitor of the sick and shut-ins. He was forgiving and kind. He was a wonderful father and husband. But, above all, he was a Christian... always putting God first. He never met a stranger and taught me to be the same. He was my daddy. He has blessed my life. Words cannot express how much I will miss him!”

The address for Lorene Edge, Earl’s wife, is: Lorene Edge, 5260 Bent Road, Southaven, MS 38671. His daughter, Tammy, who supplied the information about his death, can be reached at the same address. (alf)

The MM
Requests
Your Prayers
and
Your Suggestions

Spirituality and Grief



- Doug Greenway -

Let me make a few suggestions about Christians -- their spirituality and grief:

#1: You need to make your disaster response plan “before disaster comes.” All of us need a crisis plan. If you’re not in a crisis, or just getting over a crisis, your next crisis is just around the corner!

#2: The “predictable” things in life help us to bear the “unpredictable things” in life! God foreknew that mankind would need a wife, father and mother. Children were in the plan, and this was explained with the side comment that “it was not good for man to be alone.” (Gen. 2:18ff.) Who and what’s in your life that you can count on?

#3: We all need a healthy “support system” in place! There are 7 days in one week, and we need 7 arms of a support system -- one to use each day! Your spouse, your children, your parents or siblings, two or three close friends, your preacher, a mental health professional and/or your doctor might serve well here for a while.

So, “How do/ should I see my situation?” might be a good place to start! Then, “What assets do I have?” Finally, “In which areas do I need more support?”

As a Christian, you and I must not automatically fall apart and decide to

never recover because we have had some disappointments and losses in our lives!

Some of you are today in mine fields and swamps with your life. But, you’re still here. God’s not finished with you yet! Ephesians 2:10 (ESV), “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

#1: Realize that God has a plan for your life!

#2: Not a single thing in life has been wasted, if we’ve learned something from it. (See Ps. 139:16.) Trust God about your past; trust Him in your present and trust him for your future. “‘For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” (Jer. 29:11)

doug_greenway@yahoo.com

(Doug preaches for the West Main St. church in Tupelo, MS.)

HOWELL

(Continued from page 5)

Cuban missile crisis, his boss wanted to build a really elaborate Bomb Shelter on his estate there in Whitehaven, Smith drew the plans and supervised construction of a facility that drew national attention—with beds for 54 adults, complete with its own power plant, weather station, and even a morgue to hold a few bodies in case such was needed.

And when Hoyt Wooten decided he’d like to have a really fine yacht, Smith was assigned the task. He bought the steel hull of a 98-foot boat and proceeded to build a yacht mostly of mahogany imported from South America. (Some of that mahogany that was left over was used recently to make a complete set of communion trays at Goodman Oaks). The vessel was a work of art. When it was completed, Mr. Wooten commissioned Smith as the Captain. Smith recoiled and said, “I’ve never piloted a boat even one fourth this size.” Wooten said, “Well, you can learn.” And learn he did, taking the family down the Mississippi and around Florida.

He made four extended mission trips to Malawi, Africa, three of them lasting several

weeks. He worked alongside Jim Judd designing and building various buildings and pieces of equipment. He designed the house of worship for the church in Mzuzu, Malawi. This building will stand long as a testimony to his love for the work of God in that faraway land. And therein lies another moving story.

The Christians in Mzuzu loved Smith so deeply that upon learning of his death, they planned a memorial service for him at the exact same hour we were conducting one here. Our service was at 1:00 PM, meaning those Africans stayed up till 11:00 PM to do theirs. Then with the help of a technician from Smith’s old employer, CBS affiliate WREG-TV here in Memphis and our own Calvin Dean, we were hooked up live to Africa via satellite. They could see and hear our service in Mississippi and we could see and hear them singing their African songs in Malawi.

Euman Smith Howell, Sr, friend of God. We probably won’t see his like again.

Ken Joines

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Southaven, MS 38671

kjoines35@hotmail.com

901-212-1601

(See Question Box)

These Sent In Answers

(Turn to Page 24)

1. Donna Gulley
2. Billy Willingham
3. Don "Ug" Lee
4. Madonna Michael
5. Dot Winslett
6. Travis Hamilton
7. Kenneth Harris
8. Brenda Vick
9. Carole Shelby
10. Marie Green
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21. B. J. Womack
22. MaNia Womack
23. Bralan Womack
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25. Jeremiah Woodard, Jr.
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Your Name on This Page

Means Much

1. You are a Bible student!
2. You encourage us and others!

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 414. Bobby Lively
 415. Alpaulthenia Cotton
 416. Nancy H. Blair
- NOTE:** All answers received through 8/4/10 have been included. Answers received later, will be (God willing) included in next issue. **Thanks for answering "The Q.B."**

The Sermon on the Mount

Answers: Last Issue

Our Heavenly Father

Jesus emphasized, in His sermon, our relationship with God. He is our Heavenly Father. We are His children. Match the phrase Jesus associated with our Father God (column 1), which best matches the reference given (column two). Supply the missing chapter or verse.

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 2 He is glorified through good works. | 1. Matthew 7:11 |
| 7 His will must be done (obeyed). | 2. Matthew 5:16 |
| 6 He knows/cares for all our needs. | 3. Matthew 6:4,6 |
| 7 He is perfect; He is our example. | 4. Matthew 7:21 |
| 8 He feeds the birds; He will provide! | 5. Matthew 5:45 |
| 5 He sends the rain; makes sun to rise. | 6. Matthew 6:32 |
| 3 He sees in secret and rewards openly. | 7. Matthew 6:48 |
| 1 He gives good things to those who ask. | 8. Matthew 6:26 |

Numbers Are in the Answers

9. List **three** acts of righteousness which, when done "in secret", bring blessings from God. **Alms, Prayers** and **Fasting**.

10. List **three enemies** which can corrupt or consume earthly riches. (**Moth, Rust** and **Thieves**.)

11. The word "Blessed" is found how many times in Mathew chapter five? Circle the correct number. (Answer: 4, 8, or **9** times)

13. How many times in Jesus' sermon did He speak of God as being "in heaven" and/or refer to Him as "heavenly Father"? Circle the correct number. (3, 5, 8, or **10**)

12. The expression, "I say unto you" is found how many times in chapter five? Circle the correct number. (3 __; 5 __ or **8**)

True or False:

- True** 13. I can quote the "golden rule" of the Bible. (?)
- True** 14. In His sermon on the mount Jesus mentions both dogs and hogs.
- False** 15. In chapter five Jesus speaks about sheep and wolves. (**chapter 7**)
- True** 16. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit.
- True** 17. To enter the kingdom one must do more than say "Lord, Lord."
- True** 18. A foolish man is one who hears but fails to obey the words of Christ.
- False** 19. The greatest of all sermons is divided into three chapters and 117 verses. (**110 verses**)
- True** 20. A person who seeks to correct another while he doing the same or worse is, according to Jesus, a hypocrite.

By/For/About Women... Mostly

SUMMER TIME... And, the Clothes Fall Off

"Summertime... and the living is easy," so goes the song. As Christian parents, we are to train up our children in the way they should go, wrote the wise man, Solomon. This starts with birth and continues until they are "of age". Then, they are responsible for their own actions. Hopefully, we have done a good job and their choices will be easy. Our purpose in this world is to glorify God.

In I Timothy 2:9-10 (NIV) Paul writes: "I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, (v. 10) but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God."

Summertime – and the clothes fall off. Mom and Dad, on the subject of modesty, how are you training your children? When the children are zero up to about age 12, is a very precious time for training them to be Christians. However, do we let them wear clothing that are not becoming a future Christian?

Do the young women wear short shorts and halter tops until "the summer/winter they turn the corner in their lives"? Then, as parents we expect the maturing young man/woman to suddenly change and become attired in "modest" apparel. As an example, do you think our Christian young ladies should be swimming in mixed activities in a bikini swimsuit that barely covers the body in strategic places? Likewise, the young men in their bikini bottoms?

In Peter 2:9 (NIV) - "But you are a chosen (*"peculiar"*, KJV) people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." We are to be a "chosen" (*"peculiar"*) people in the sight of man. This means, in my opinion, that we are to buck the majority when it comes to our priorities, our dress, our activities and, most certainly, our service to God.

In Proverbs 31, Lemuel's Mother sent an oracle about



women to her Son. The Old Testament is for our learning; therefore, this passage is appropriate for the subject.

In this world, so many things are asking for our attention. There are ways and means developed, like the computer, that can help us to teach and encourage others to serve God. However, the computer can also be detrimental to all of us as Satan and his deeds are readily available.

So, think upon these things. As parents, what kind of example are we setting or

enforcing for our children? Do we put God first, or only when we do not have a worldly activity to attend? Do we speak to encourage and exhort others around us? Do we dress in a manner pleasing to God? Are our actions and speech showing God in our lives?

Philippians 4:8 (NIV): "Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" Philippians 4:4 (NIV): "I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

Romans 6:23 (NIV): "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord".

Ask yourself, "What would Jesus do.?" Summertime... and, the living is easy; Summertime... and, the clothes fall off.

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A Letter to Another Editor and Another Paper

Editor's Note: Avis Porter, a faithful member of the Pine Bluff Church of Christ, near Pontotoc, Mississippi, requested that we publish her letter which she sent to the editor of the Pontotoc Progress in Pontotoc, Mississippi. We commend sister Porter for speaking up and writing out.

Dear Editor:

I am a Christian great-grandmother. These thoughts were prompted by the letter from Mr. Garrett. He suggested that before a woman have an abortion that she should view her sonogram. That should indeed make a woman or teenage girl think twice and not take the life of her unborn child.

But there is a more excellent way to prevent her from making such a permanent decision. **Read and heed God's Word.** "These six things doth the Lord hate: Yea seven are an abomination unto Him." The seven abominations are listed in Proverbs 6:16-19. "Hands that shed innocent blood" is included. God also says, "Thou shalt not kill" (Exodus 20: 13 and Romans 13:9). Just because the Supreme Court gives a woman the constitutional right to abort her baby -- the Lord does not. "We ought to obey God rather than man" (Acts 5:29).

Young woman, if you are considering an abortion, I am pleading with you to not do something you will never be able to blot out of your mind

and that you will regret as long as you live. There are many childless couples that would love to have your baby.

Please consider: you would also be depriving the grandparents and great-grandparents of this precious child. In the future, you and your partner, make the decision to not commit fornication but if you do, *make the choice not to conceive a child*, by using measures to prevent it. Don't compound sin! "Flee fornication, Every sin that a man (person) doeth is without the body, but he that committeth fornication sinneth *against his own body.*" (1 Corinthians 6:18)

I am praying for you.

Avis C. Porter

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Thaxton,
MS 38871-
9711



Oak Ridge Church Tears Down to Build Up

The Oak Ridge church in central Mississippi, tracing its history back to about 1920, is one of the oldest churches of Christ in the area. (*There are at least two other "Oak Ridge Churches of Christ" in the Magnolia state.*) Oak Ridge brethren assemble for worship about 15 miles north of Kosciusko and presently bring together about 20 to 30 souls. **Brad Adcock**, a graduate of MBC, capably serves as their preacher (part-time).

My June and I were privileged to visit their services on Sunday, August 1, 2010. We found them meeting in a private home while their new building is under construction. A sister named **Helen Hopkins**, almost 94 years old, had opened her house for the morning services.



Helen Hopkins -- 94, Dec. 24th

Beautiful singing was led by **Corey Parish**, as the small group of worshippers lifted their voices in praise to God. An opening prayer was led by **Gene Massey**. Preacher **Brad Adcock** delivered



The New Building for the Oak Ridge Church is "Taking Shape"



1956 Meeting Place Torn Down (Rotting lumber and termite damage)

a very meaningful sermon based on God's "strange" directions given to Hosea in the book that bears his name (chapter 1). There was something special about the closeness we felt as we worshipped together in the small living room. We certainly enjoyed being with the brethren and having an opportunity to speak brief words of encouragement and to share some good news about the MM.

Floyd Hopkins, a long time church leader, told us about their decision to tear down the old building and to build a new facility. He was pleased to tell us that they had the necessary funds to frame their new building (*so far, they have spent about \$27,000.00.*) However, they estimate it will cost 40 to 50 thousand more to finish the new facility. Being a small congregation, he did say they needed "a little help" and that any and all assistance from interested brethren would be greatly appreciated. Their address is:

Oak Ridge Church of Christ
C/o Floyd Hopkins
17368 Attala Road 3122
French Camp, MS 39745

TUPELO (East Main)

Two teams from the East Main Church of Christ went on Mission trips this summer. Both mission trips were in July. One team went to Panama and the other one to Brazil. The Panama Mission Team spent the week door knocking and setting up Bible Studies. The Brazil Mission Team planned to conduct a Vacation Bible School. **Gary Williams** and **Matthew Benfield** are the local preachers for the East Main congregation.

Magnolia Messenger
Circulation -- 25,000
Into Every state in the USA
We Thank God & You

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

A Worthy Example

- June Franks -

Our example is so very important. God is not only watching us; people watch us as well. We just never know who may be observing us from a distance.

According to Webster, the meaning of example is, *one serving as a specific kind of pattern, as one setting a good example*. Paul told Timothy: "Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation (manner of life), in charity (love) in spirit, in faith in purity." (I Timothy 4:12)

We are given an example of a woman in Proverbs 31. She is referred to in the Bible as a virtuous woman. She could also be called a worthy woman -- one who is worthy of us following. Worthy means to *have worth, merit or value*.

Recently, we had the opportunity of visiting in the home of a young woman whose example made a positive impression on me for good. I believe her example is a worthy example and one that we could imitate in so many aspects of our life.

We have known of this Christian lady's dedication to the Lord for several years, and have always admired her desire to do what is right. It seemed she did right even in what was not always ideal circumstances.

In our visit with her, we were reminded, once again, of her faithfulness to the church. We could tell by her actions and her speech that she truly loves the church and that she seeks to put the church first in her life. The Bible says, "But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

According to our observations, and as we were also told by others, she is very faithful to attend all services of the church. She takes the Lord's command seriously. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together..." (Hebrews 10:25).

She must, also, believe the first of all the commandments, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment." (Mark 12: 29,30)

If one truly loves God with all their being, then they will put the Lord's church first in their life; it will be a joy and privilege for them



June Franks

to attend church services. The Bible also says, "If ye love me you will keep my commandments" (See I John 5:3).

Even though the young woman, with whom we visited, lives some distance from the church building she still drives the many miles to be in fellowship with her brothers and sisters in Christ. One brother in the church told about how he and his wife often followed her home at nights to make sure she arrived home safely.

So many times we make excuses. Through the years we've heard all kinds of excuses for people not attending church services. But this young lady did not make the excuse to us, that she lived too far from the church building to be able to attend.

To us, she never used the excuse, that her husband did not attend with her all the time, so therefore she couldn't go. Even though I'm sure she would love for her husband to attend all services with her, she evidently realizes that each one of us must give account for ourselves. She understands that when we know to do good, we should not let anyone stand in our way -- not even our mate. God should be put first as we have already noted.

She also has two small children and, if they are not sick, they attend with her also. As parents, we are instructed to bring our children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:1). Our children, that God blessed us with, deserve to be brought up in the church. Our children should be, yet another reason for attending all services of the church.

You know, we never heard her say, "Well the church I attend is so small and we don't have many young

people." If she wanted to, like so many others, she could use this for an excuse for not attending the services of the church.

The church may be relatively small where you attend. There may not be all that many younger couples, but if you attend and do your part, just maybe, you could help encourage more young people to come.

Far too often, we tend to separate the young people from the older people. Maybe we make a mistake in doing so. I believe the older people enjoy being with the younger people. The younger people should recognize the responsibility God has placed on the older people to teach the younger people.

We should never let the idea that "all who attend the church are older people; therefore, I don't want to attend there." This is just an excuse.

In our visit with this young lady, she never said anything negative about the church of which she is a member. I'm sure there are some negative things she could have said, but she didn't! This could be a lesson to us. Even though there may be, and probably are, some negative things, we should never be critical about the church of our Lord to others, especially those outside the church. What we say often influences others. We should also keep in mind that there is not a perfect congregation!

We chose to not identify this special young lady. Be assured; however, she is a real person with a real life. She would probably be the first to say that she doesn't deserve any commendation or praise for her actions and that she, too, falls short at times. However, her example touched me and caused me to want to share it with the readers of the Messenger.

Maybe it will help each of us to consider the example we are setting. Are you a good role model? Our main goal in life should be to please God. If we are doing this, then our example will be one that anyone should be able to follow.

Mrs. A. L. Franks
P. O. Box 1578
Kosciusko, MS 39090

Hello,

Please send me the Magnolia Messenger. I have really enjoyed reading them. The lessons are just wonderful. I can get a lot of studying that way. Thanks, (Burlean Leatherwood, Memphis, TN)

POEMS

By

Barbara

Barbara Cagle Ray

BCagleRay@Aol.Com



Blind of Soul

The doubter asked for a sign from God;
He waited diligently each single day.
The sun arose at dawn like a giant pearl;
At night the stars appeared in bright array.

He saw the farmers sow their acres wide,
And he watched the crops come in on time.
He saw a mother hold her newborn child,
Yet he saw no sign.

He saw the roses, the lilies, the violets—
Lovely flowers made by God's own design.
He strolled in drifting feather-white snow,
Yet he saw no sign.

He walked the colorful woodland trails,
With beautiful animals following behind.
He beheld an ocean blue and tempest-tossed,
Yet he saw no sign.

He continued to walk with a doubtful air,
Waiting and watching, now impatiently;
Yet he ignored God's signs all around him—
For he is blind of soul, and cannot see.

Tipton Street KOSCIUSKO Ladies' Day

August 21

The Tipton Street Church of Christ in Kosciusko, Mississippi plans a Ladies' Day for August 21, 2010 with their minister's wife **Pauline Dawkins**, doing the speaking. The theme is "*Always Room for More---Cultivating Your Faith*." The Ladies Day begins at 8:30 a.m. and will end after lunch. **Arnita Riley**, a nurse and a member at Tipton Street plans to conduct a workshop on the heart, "*Know Your Numbers*." All are welcome!!!

Another Reader Responds

I am Mae Adams. I go to Iuka Church of Christ. Bro. **Lance Foster** is the Minister. I would like the Magnolia Messenger and my sister would like the Magnolia Messenger... Thank you for all your prayers. I enjoyed your articles in the paper. Keep up the good work. Thank you very much. (Mae Adams, Tishomingo, MS)

Ladies' Day

(Ruleville)

Delmar Avenue
Church of Christ

September 18, 2010

Speaker: **Stella Winters**

Theme:

"**Dressed for Success**" (Ephesians 6)

Health Fair & Panel Discussion

Ages; 8 months to 80 years +

Inquiries: 662-756-2573

Use of the King James Version may be helpful

The Question Box

Is your name found on page 21?

Miracles: Why Written?

"Faith." Without faith, we cannot please God (Heb. 11:6). Faith is precious -- more precious than gold (I Peter 1:7). "Saved by faith; justified by faith" (Rom. 5:1). Faith in Jesus. "I believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." Do you? What about miracles? Why performed? Is there a connection between faith and miracles?

John, the writer of the fourth gospel, explains his purpose for recording the miracles performed by Jesus. He wrote, "Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, you might have life through his name." (John 20:30,31)

The *written* account of miracles, as recorded by John and other New Testament writers, are sufficient to produce faith in the Sonship of Jesus, the Christ. Such faith leads to eternal life. Need we say more? This month's study is very important, as we recall the wonderful miracles recorded by John and the reason why they are written.

You are invited to answer "The Question Box" and send your answers to us. By so doing, you will encourage others and **you** become eligible as a possible winner of a beautiful new Study Bible awarded to one person, each issue, who sends in answers. Please send your answers to us. Thank you for your interest in God's Word. (alf)

NOTICE: In the gospel according to John, the writer detailed eight marvelous miracles performed by Jesus as proof of Jesus' identity as the Son of God. They are listed below. You are to **match the miracle of Jesus with the appropriate phrase, reference and/or number in each of the sections below.** (Not every section includes **all** eight of the miracles.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Turned water into wine | 5. Walked on water in a storm |
| 2. Healed the son of a nobleman | 6. Gave sight to a man born blind |
| 3. Healed a cripple (impotent) man | 7. Raised Lazarus from the grave |
| 4. Multiplied loaves and fishes | 8. Filled a net with great fish |

SECTION I -- Match the the miracle listed above with the correct chapter in John where the miracle is recorded. Supply missing numbers for verses.

8 John 21: 1-14 ___ John 9: _____
 ___ John 2: _____ ___ John 5: _____
 ___ John 11: _____ ___ John 6: _____
 ___ John 4: _____ ___ John 6: _____

SECTION II -- Match the miracle listed above with the number associated with each of the miracles. Supply what is meant by each number.

___ Six _____ ___ 38 _____
 ___ 153 _____ ___ 7th _____
 ___ 7th _____ ___ Twelve _____
 ___ Four _____ ___ 25-30 _____

SECTION III -- Match the miracle with the place where each miracle was performed

___ Capernaum ___ Place of "much grass"
 ___ Bethany ___ Sea, near Capernaum
 ___ Cana ___ Siloam
 ___ Bethesda ___ Sea of Tiberias (Galilee)

SECTION IV -- Match the miracle with the best phrase associated with each one.

___ Five porches ___ Sick with "fever"
 ___ 5 and 2 available ___ Mary was present
 ___ "Be not afraid."
 ___ Clay ointment ___ Mary & Martha
 ___ Didymus involved

SECTION V -- Miracle produced faith. Match the miracle with the appropriate phrase.

___ "...This is of a truth the prophet that should come into the world." (6:14)
 ___ "And he said, Lord I believe...." (9:38)
 ___ "...and his disciples believed on him." (2:11)
 ___ "... himself believed and his whole house." (4:53)
 ___ "And many of the Jews... believed on him." (11:45)

SECTION VI -- Match the miracle with that over which Jesus demonstrated his mighty power.

___ Power over gravity
 ___ Power over birth defects
 ___ Power over death
 ___ Power over substances
 ___ Power over deadly illness
 ___ Power over crippling disease

True or False

- _____ 1. Another name for Thomas, the "doubter", was Didymus.
 _____ 2. Jesus used the word "sleepeth" to describe death.
 _____ 3. The Pharisees found fault with Jesus because he healed on the Sabbath.

Your Opinion -- Which of the eight miracles do you believe demonstrated most vividly the power of Jesus, the Son of God? _____

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

13th Annual MM MS RV Rally

To be held, Lord willing, at Percy Quin State Park in McComb, MS on April 27 - May 1, 2011. Our theme will be: **Living life focused on two days, This DAY and that DAY.**

Plenty of cabins and rooms at the lodge are available at the present time. All of the lodge rooms are reserved under my name. You can call the State Park (601-684-3938) and reserve a cabin/RV site today. Don't wait to the last minute. Make your reservations today.

If you need more information, you can call me at 337-515-7314. **(Paul Franks, director of Mississippi Rally)**

Don't forget
LA/TX RV Rally
Oct. 27 - 31; Grapeland, Texas
(Details on page 17)

New Bible Winner

92. Maggie R. Edmonds

Starkville, Mississippi

Congratulations!

LAKE CHARLES

The Enterprise Blvd Church of Christ in Lake Charles, Louisiana recently selected three new deacons. They are **J. D. Hankins, Josh Harris, and Jwill Sims.** **Paul Franks** is the local minister and **Jake Hance** is the Youth/Family minister.

Fellowship and Family

Amanda Wilson (wife of Crystal Springs' preacher, Keith Wilson) appears to be enjoying checking over the dessert table. She was helping prepare lunch for those who had come together on Sunday, January 17, 2010, to celebrate the "Opening Sunday" for the new building of the church of Christ in Crystal Springs, Mississippi.



We all know the importance of family and the benefits of families eating together. There is something special about eating together as a family. This is true, whether the family is physical or spiritual. Around the table, memories are made, love is enhanced and hearts are brought closer together. Some of our most vivid and precious memories come from the conversations and events taking place when we eat together.

The Bible speaks, on various occasions, of Jesus eating with his disciples. The book of Jude (verse 12) mentions "feasts of charity [love-feasts]", which had apparently become common among Christians of the first century. Although eating together, as Christians, has been associated with some problems (see I Corinthians chapter 11); yet, when properly done -- with due regard for all family members, it can be a very meaningful experience, serving to enhance our relationship with one another as "brothers and sisters in the Lord." We are family! (alf)