



Our 34th Year

Magnolia Messenger

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

Volume 34
Number 3
July-Sept.,
2012

"Ain't It A Mixed-up World?"
(Page 13)



Please Pray For
The Magnolia Messenger

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A Visit in Jerusalem With A Muslim Family

Reminded MM Editor
**"It Takes More
Than Good Deeds
To Go To Heaven."**
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are they
PREACHERS
or
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Magnolia Messenger
"Into Every State"
Circulation
24,000
We Are Thankful!

"Maw Was There"
THE POWER OF
A GRANDMOTHER
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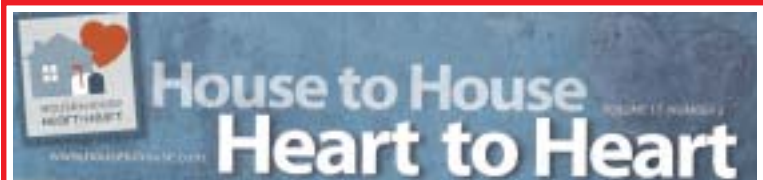
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A Bi-monthly Gospel Publication.
Up to 2.8 Million Copies of Each Issue
It began in Mississippi in 1994
(Story on Page 6)

News Notes

BATESVILLE

Dale Jenkins is scheduled to preach in a Gospel Meeting at the Batesville Church of Christ on October 21-24, 2012.

PONTOTOC

Evan Kirby is the new full-time minister for the Pontotoc Church of Christ. He was to begin his work with the church on September 2, 2012.

CORINTH

Malcom Geoge is scheduled to speak at the Foote Street Church of Christ in Corinth on October 28, 2012 at their Homecoming.

SARDIS

The 17th Annual Sardis Lake Christian Camp Ladies Retreat is planned for Sept. 21-22, 2012.

JACKSON

In August the Siwell Road Church of Christ hosted the SALT Youth Rally. According to **Derek Broome**, youth minister for the Siwell Road congregation, the youth rally was a great success. More than 250 people were in attendance. The speakers were **Nathan Segars, Chase Surrell, Wesley Thompson, and Josh James.**

COOKEVILLE, TN

Malcolm Hill passed away on June 26, 2012 at the age of 78. Brother Hill was a preacher of the gospel for more than 60 years. In 1975 he was the founding president of Cookeville's Tennessee Bible College, serving most recently as chancellor until the time of his death. He also served as an elder at the Northeast Church in Cookeville.

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

Readers' Response

(Comments & Suggestions Invited; Criticisms Considered)

I received my personal copy of this issue a couple of weeks ago and enjoyed it very much. I normally receive a bundle about a week later for the congregation at Midway CoC... Could you please send a small bundle (approx 8) to my address? If it is too late for this addition, please make corrections for the next one. Most of the members receive their personal copy as I do. Thank you for the good work you and your wife do. In Christian love, **Harold Mobley** 3534 Buck Williams Rd. Utica, Ms., 39175

P.S. The previous issue is the best issue I have ever read! It was outstanding!!!

"We Want to Make Copies"

We really appreciate the good paper you send out. Your topics are very timely and many of us know we have big problems in our country.

I would like to have printable copies of "A Sad Day in America," and "Homosexuality is not the only Sexual sin." We want to make copies and hand them out to our town and some local congregations of the Church. Thanks for helping spread the Word of the Lord. (**Eugene Farrar**, Minister; Newkirk church of Christ)

Brother Franks, your editorial in the last issue of MM was very good. What the church today needs to hear. I hope for it a wide readership. Thanks, (**Bill Burton**)

"I am no longer living."

Dear Magnolia Messenger:

Please, cancel my subscription to the **Magnolia Messenger** as I am no longer living. My current subscription is listed as: Anne Oxnam ... Franklin, TN 37064-8227; Sincerely, **George Oxnam** (Surviving Son)

I hope that all is well brother. I read the recent publication of the **Magnolia Messenger** and enjoyed it. I thank you for putting my article in there on anxiety. I want you to know that I received a response from an 80-year old brother who emailed me right after reading the article. He said it was just what he needed in his life. I encouraged him to get in worship services and be faithful in service to God. I do have one Bible study ongoing through hard mail with a brother in Eupora, MS over an article I wrote. He is reaching out to me for strength. Tell your loving wife I said hello. (**Seth Sullivan**; Associate Minister; Kensington Woods church of Christ; Hattiesburg, Mississippi)

Dear brother Al,

You are so kind to continue sending me the MM through the years. It is so good. I only wish every state had a paper like this. Texas had one for a while, but it takes real dedication on the part of someone like yourself to make it happen. And there is apparently no one else like you in any other state. (**Alvin Jennings**; Fort Worth, TX)

NOTICE: We read prayerfully and thankfully each letter (e-mail) received from readers.

Thanks For Your Thoughts!

Magnolia Messenger

Church of Christ - Kosciusko

Published about every 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 24,000 copies of each issue of the "Magnolia Messenger". Your prayers and support are **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 and/or do. We do not (can not) have full knowledge of every person or church mentioned in the 'MM'; furthermore, we do not believe that our role before God is to be that of a judge. We pray, however, that we will never lend encouragement to anyone or anything in conflict with, or not in harmony with that which is plainly taught In Scripture. Your comments invited and encouraged. (A. L. Franks, Editor)

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A Visit in Jerusalem With A Muslim Family

Reminded MM Editor

"It Takes More Than Good Deeds To Go To Heaven."

- Editor -

My June and I were on a "trip of a lifetime." We were richly blessed to be in the city of Jerusalem (Israel), along with twenty-six other Americans. We were enjoying a bus tour of the land where Jesus once lived.

The day was Wednesday. I had been attacked the day before with a painful "Bout with gout." Unable to walk comfortably I, along with **Lloyd Beard** of Booneville, Mississippi, chose to remain on the bus while the rest of our group went on a three hour walking tour.

After everyone else had left, the bus driver, a **Muslim**, informed us that he was going to his residence in Jerusalem and that we were welcome to go with him and visit in his home. At least, that's what we understood. Not having much of a choice, we agreed to go with him.

Driving up and down and around the hilly and winding streets, we finally reached the section of Jerusalem he called "home." After parking the bus in what looked, to me, like a "questionable" neighborhood, we walked with him to his apartment where he lived with his sister and her family.

All those in his house were of the Muslim religion. No one we had met could speak English. Not being able to communicate clearly, we were uneasy in such an envi-



A. L. Franks, Editor



Salve Used in Jerusalem to Treat Editor's Foot Suffering from Gout

ronment. But, as I was getting almost scared and beginning to wonder if I would ever see my June again, we were introduced to the driver's niece -- a young girl who, thankfully, could speak some English.

The sixteen year old girl acted as our interpreter for, what turned out to be, an interesting and informative two hour visit in the home of devout Muslims. As I look back and think about our unnerving visit, I do so with gratitude. Grateful because we were given an opportunity to talk to the Muslim family about our faith in Jesus Christ and to ask questions about their religious beliefs. We were also reminded that hospitality and acts of kindness are not reserved just for those who are Americans or who wear the name of Christ Jesus. (And, of course, I was also able to leave a copy of the MM with our bus driver.)

We came away from that visit with a better understanding of the urgent and pressing need to "preach the gospel" to all the world, like Jesus commanded (Mark 16:15,16). Also, we were made to realize anew that "it takes more than good deeds to go to Heaven."

Inspired Scriptures clearly teach that the *gospel* is God's power to save (Romans 1:16). Jesus Christ is *the* Saviour. He came from Heaven to earth "to save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21). The Son of God, in whom Muslims do NOT believe, said, "I am *the* way, the truth and the life: *no man cometh unto the Father, but by me*" (John 14:6).

I repeat: **Two** things really stand out as I recall that afternoon visit in Jerusalem. (1) *Just being religious and sincere is not enough.* The Muslims, in whose home we visited, were, without a doubt, very religious and very sincere. (2) *Just doing good deeds does not earn eternal salvation with God in Heaven.* The

Muslim family did everything in their power to make brother Lloyd and me to feel welcome in their home. They were extremely hospitable as they offered and provided a variety of food and drink.

When the lady of the house learned that I was suffering with gout, she immediately left the room and soon returned with a tube of salve which she insisted I rub on my foot. I complied with her request (as pictured above) and, I am grateful to say that, by the next day, I was much, much better.

Of course, as you know, practicing Muslims do not believe Jesus Christ was/is the Son of God. They do not trust in Jesus and His plan for eternal salvation. Yet, they can be very kind, very thoughtful and very helpful. And, there is no doubt but that in the home we visited, religious *sincerity* prevailed. "*Good people*". "*Sincere people*." Yet sadly, without God and without the hope which comes only through Jesus.

Remember our Jerusalem visit the next time you hear someone say, "*My aunt Susie was/is such a good person. If she doesn't make it to heaven, there is no need for me to try.*" Goodness is not enough. Sincerity is not enough. Only through Jesus is salvation possible. Submit to Him. Become and be a Christian. []



A Muslim Girl
Our Interpreter

Bible Questions Answered

QUESTIONS

What is our obligation to government we strongly disagree with? (B.C.)

In Romans 13:1-3; 1 Timothy 2:1-3; Titus 3:1,2; and 1 Peter 2:13-17 Paul and Peter seem to say, and most commentators agree, that whoever is in office from Nero to President Obama, as Christians we are to honor them. Others say this is speaking about honoring the office not the man. What is your take? (J.D.)

RESPONSE:

Romans 13:1 tells us that whatever civil authorities exist, whether monarchical despots or democratically elected presidents, are “instituted by God.”

“Instituted By God” Means What?

A question that immediately comes to mind is, “Does this mean that God ordained the principle that governments should exist or does it mean that God chooses and endorses the particular leaders in every jurisdiction?”

Throughout the middle ages, also aptly called “the dark ages,” the doctrine of “the divine right of kings,” derived from the latter of those two interpretations, was widely held, especially by the kings. Many evil and nefarious deeds were perpetrated by kings and others in authority under the guise that whatever they did was God’s will. There have been too many wicked kings and emperors, to say nothing of minor authorities, to believe that God specifically appointed them or authorized their decisions.

On the other hand, God punished Nebuchadnezzar for his cruelty and pride by smiting him with mental illness “until he knew that the Most High God rules the kingdom of mankind and sets over it whom he will” (Daniel 5:21). Through the prophet Isaiah, God called Emperor Cyrus of the Persian Empire “my shepherd” (Isaiah 44:28) and my “anointed” (Isaiah 45:1) and used him to allow the exiled people of Israel to return to their homeland and rebuild their city and temple. When Pilate reminded Jesus that he should answer Pilate’s questions because, “I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you,” Jesus answered him, “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you

from above” (John 19:9-10).

How can we put all of that together to make good biblical sense? It seems to me that God sometimes, in order to accomplish his ultimate will, uses specific actions and decisions of particular rulers. He is in control and he alone decides when he will or will not providentially intervene.

In the Bible we can know by revelation that he has done so in instances where we are told that he did. We learn from Scripture that he does that from time to time, but absent revelation

about specific occasions, we cannot know with any certainty when or where.

A liberal Afro-American preacher to our Democrat president thinks God should damn America for continued discrimination against blacks and the poor. A conservative advisor to the Republican candidate thinks God should damn America for approval of homosexuality and other sexual sins. Let us hope that neither is

Response by Cecil May, Jr.



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right.

Government’s Purpose

God ordained government to protect those who seek to do right and to punish those who attempt to harm the innocent.

Paul explains it this way: “For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he

does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God’s wrath on the wrongdoer” (Romans 13:1-4).

Peter states the same truth: “Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good” (1 Peter 2:13-14).

Some governments are dysfunctional. That is, they do not fulfill the purposes for which God ordained them. Instead they attempt to harm the innocent and protect the wrongdoers.

Some, as those about whom Peter penned his first epistle, persecute the saints for being Christians. In such cases, Christians are to be obedient to whatever the government requires which does not contradict commands of the Lord and, when persecuted for doing right, are to rejoice for being allowed to share Christ’s sufferings (1 Peter 4:13). “But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name” (1 Peter 4:15-16).

Most readers of the *Magnolia Messenger* are blessed to live in a country where government, at least to a great extent, lives up to God’s purpose for ordaining it. The first thought of most law abiding citizens when an emergency occurs is “call 911.” We expect the officers who respond

to our call to handle the emergency and protect us from whatever danger is prevalent.

Wisdom says, “The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion” (Proverbs

28:1). People involved in criminal wrongdoing, or in any mischief for that matter, jump at any unexpected sound. Their hearts race. They are afraid they have been “caught.” People behaving as they ought to behave have no such fear; they do not worry about someone finding out what they are doing.

I used to get tickets for speeding. I did not intend to speed and quickly slowed down whenever I realized I was speeding. But if a Highway Patrol came in sight, I quickly hit the brake and checked my speedometer to see how fast I was going. Then cruise control was invented. I have not gotten a single speeding ticket since I have had it on my car. I set the cruise at what the law allows. When a police car comes in sight, I am not startled. I do not quickly slow down. I know I am not violating the law. It is a comfortable feeling.

It is important that we teach our children that police officers are their friends and protectors; not someone out to get them.

Our Fourfold Obligation

Whoever the legally constituted authorities are, we have four primary responsibilities to them: obey them, pay taxes, pray for them and honor them.

Obey Them

The Apostle Paul, in the part of the Epistle to the Romans which shows how we who have been justified by faith are to live, says, “Let every person be subject to

See **GOVERNMENT** on Page 16

Brand New Book

Bible Questions and Answers

by Cecil May, Jr.

A compilation of brother May’s response to questions asked by MM readers over the past 30 years

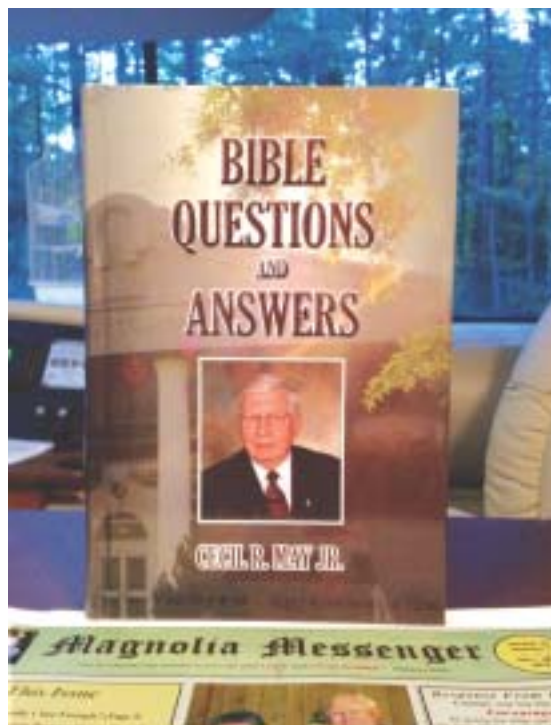
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Another Mississippi
"Midway Church of Christ"
Meeting Place

"The Little White Church on the Hill"

Just a short distance from the Natchez Trace Parkway in SW Mississippi (about 25 miles south of Vicksburg) is located the "home" of the Midway Church of Christ. The congregation with a history of more than sixty years of service, is located northeast of Port Gibson in the rural hill country of Claiborne County, Mississippi.

For about 1/2 of its existence, the Midway church has been served by the same preacher -- **Donnie Cain**. Brother Donnie, age 55, began his ministry with the church more than 30 years ago. Each Lord's day the morning services brings together about 65 to 75 worshippers.

My June and I were privileged to visit this country church on Sunday (July 22, 2012). We were greatly encouraged by our return visit with the friendly church af-

ter an absence of a "good long while."

The Midway congregation continues to be very much involved in mission efforts -- in the local area and in foreign fields. Their work, outside the United States, includes support for missions in Cuba, Guatamala, Zambia and Mexico. Our pleasant visit with the Midway church reminds us that a church can make a difference in the world regardless of location and/or size. We appreciate all the good work being done by our brethren who are

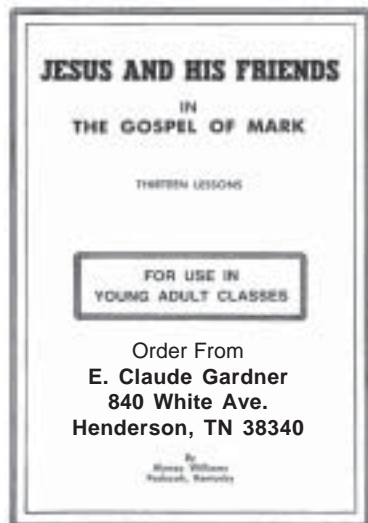


Donnie Cain, Midway's preacher for more than 30 years, pauses to let his point sink in while effectively teaching a Bible class on Sunday morning.

pleased to call "*The little white church on the hill*" their church home. In fact, on the day of our visit, during an afternoon song service, instead of singing about the "*Little Brown Church in the Wildwood*" we sang about the "*Little White Church on the Hill.*" (AI & June Franks)

FREE!

An Excellent Study for Teenage and Young Adult Classes



While E. Claude Gardner was president of FHC, he wrote the forward to one of a series of books entitled "*Jesus and His Friends.*" Concerning the series, he commented, "*The best study book I ever used in teaching teenage and young adult classes.*"

Brother Gardner asked us to inform congregations of the **FREE** availability of the book (to the left). He said, "I have a few hundred copies that I will **GIVE** for a study for a young people's class. **I have enough on hand that I can send several copies.**" He added, "The book was written by Alonzo Williams (now deceased) who was a gospel preacher and lawyer. I think it is good solid material."



Ladies Sunday Morning Bible Class at Midway Church
One of their Projects is to Answer "The Question Box" Each Issue.

(From left to right) Donna Kay Mobley, Betty Dorman, Pat Hartley, Carmen Andreino, Chriss Cornett, Dawn Hartley, Retha Cain, Robin Flower, Tiffany Mobley, Kate Raner and Crystal Johnson

**Midway's Oldest Member
Age 96**

Hamp W. Hutchins



96 Years Old

Physically Born in March, 1916
80 Years in Christ
Spiritually Born Again in 1932

diagnosed with a rare muscle disease that affected his ability to walk and move. Mr. Hamp would load his brother up, carry a wheelchair and then help his brother get into the wheelchair once they arrived at the church building.

This went on for about 8 or 9 years until Mr. Hamp's brother had to be placed in a VA nursing home. Mr. Hamp would drive 50 miles each way to see his brother almost every day. He was there for him until his brother died a number of years ago.

Today Mr. Hamp, at 96 years of age, still attends the morning services and he continues to be friendly and dedicated. He truly is an example of a Christian who walks the faithful Christian life.

Report sent to MM
by **Harold Mobley**,
a member at Midway.
Thanks, brother Mobley!

News Note

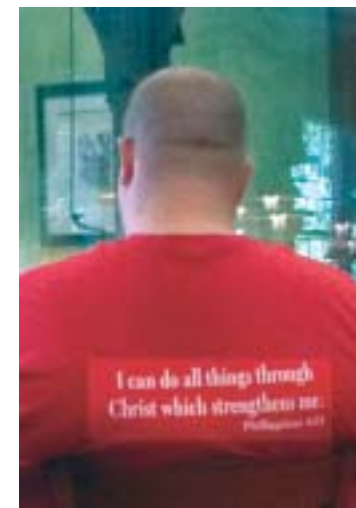
RIDGELAND

It was our privilege to visit and to preach for the Lake Harbour church on Sunday, September 7, 2012. Their long-time minister, **John Pigg**, had planned to be on vacation; however, due to illness he had to postpone plans to be away. It was necessary that a stint be placed in one of his blood vessels just a few days before our visit. Thankful that he was doing fine.

The Lake Harbour church continues to grow. Attendance was **above 250** the morning of our visit; the previous Sunday, **275 were counted**. The congregation is presently served by seven elders. They are **Richard Brooks, Marion Freeman, Trayon George, Morris Houston, L. C. Reese, Dusty Reynolds** and **Bill Underwood**. **Frank Powell** is their Youth Minister. We rejoice to witness the progress being made at Lake Harbour. May God continue to bless all who do His will. (alf)

A Shirt and A Scripture

A Message With Meaning



As Seen in Sevierville, TN

The shirt proclaims the scripture. It is divine assurance. Jesus cares. The inspired scripture declares strengthening words of confidence: "*I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.*" (Philippians 4:13)

A few months ago, in a Tennessee restaurant, my June and I met the man, pictured above, wearing the "scriptural shirt." He told us his name. But, I've forgotten. He also told us about his little boy who was sitting next to him and his mother;

how he was undergoing treatment for cancer. That I do remember.

I shall long remember the encouraging scripture printed on the young father's shirt; a passage which, no doubt, meant much to him and his family as they daily struggled with their little boy's life's threatening illness. Like me, you may forget names; but, may no one ever forget the **truth** that comforts all believers: "*I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.*"

A Good Example



An Abundance of Good Reading Material Made Available to "Whosoever Will." As Seen at the Nile Church in Central MS

Now You Take It From There...

- by -

John Simpson
4073 Stillwood Dr

Memphis, TN 38128-3056
j38128sim@yahoo.com



Hear the Cries of the INNOCENT

Abortion on demand violates all of the Ten Commandments! A political "spin" is; *"I am not pro-abortion, I am pro-choice"*, but what is the difference? To be pro-choice is an attempt to decriminalize the act of murdering the healthy, helpless and innocent in the womb.

Civil government is ordained of God (Romans 13) , but God does not ordain the action of uncivilized agents in government. Who can fathom a God who created the human race, commanding it to "multiply and fill the earth" who would ever sanction legalization of aborting the innocent? An elected official who will waltz around the abortion issue by saying: *"I am not pro-abortion; I am pro-choice"*, is less than honest and is attempting to deceive his/hers constituents .Many legislative, judicial and executive actions in our democratic form of government are good and right; others have much to be desired. Christians are to "pray for kings and all in authority..." (I Tim. 2:2). We believe that God hears the prayers of the righteous (James 5:16) and answers according to His will. Could it be that we are more fervent in prayer for God to restore our economy, than for a return to civility by legislation against murdering innocent babes in the womb? Have you prayed lately for the forces of Heaven to invade the halls of justice, for them to be mingled with mercy so they can hear the cries of the innocent?

Former President Ronald Reagan wrote the following:

"The trouble with our liberal friends is not that they are ignorant; it's just that they know so much that isn't so."

"I have wondered at times about what the Ten Commandments would have looked like if Moses had run them through the U. S. Congress."

Never conclude that speaking out about corruption and evil is just "beating a dead horse"; rather it is being, "steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58).

Now, you take it from there!

TATTOOING: Right or Wrong?

First, one who goes public on either side of the question is wading in dangerous waters from both sides. It may be safer to answer like a seasoned politician who was asked to address a sensitive issue. His answer: "Well, I have many friends who are for it, and many friends who strongly oppose it; and I want you to know that I unequivocally stand solidly with all my friends!" This is evasion and dishonest. That is the kind of person who will work up his gums before election and will gum up the works after election (if elected).

God legislated to ancient Israel on this very question, even before they asked. "You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves: I am the Lord" (Lev. 19:28; NASB). Israel had lived captive for generations among superstition and idolatry, and were headed to conquer Palestine. Customs among excitable races of the East in 2500 B.C. were (1) scratching and cutting to disfigure the face and body in grief, and (2) tattoos on parts of the body honoring different idols. God forbade the Israelites to carry these customs from Egypt into the promised land.

Tattooing has become a "craze" in the 21st century; every teen or young adult is out of "sync" with the "in crowd", if they do not have at least one tattoo to display. Is it good or bad, right or wrong , or indifferent?

The New Testament does not speak specifically, for or against tattooing, but is specific about proper care of the body as the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19). However there are principles to guide our faculties of judgment against excessive abuse of our bodies (Phil. 4:5).

Permanent marks or designs fixed upon the body by inserting indelible color under the skin usually advertise something about attitude, action and achievement. No message that is vulgar or immoral should be worn on a T-shirt or under the skin of a Christian.

Should tattooing be a test of fellowship or a salvation issue? The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) or the "good confession" (I Tim. 6:13) do not restrict a penitent tattooed sinner from being baptized into the Kingdom; neither may we.

Good advice: Young people, never have your "childhood sweetheart's" name or initials tattooed on yourself – you may marry someone else, who will not be overjoyed with the message.

Now, you take it from there!

Every Issue of the MM Hundreds Send in Answers to The Question Box

What you see to the right is the **FIRST RESPONSE** we received from our previous issue of the MM.

Thanks to all who send in Answers to **The Question Box.**



Even When Camping Margaret takes her Messenger



Margaret Googe Reading MM While Camping

Sandra Gordon of Booneville, Mississippi, wrote: *"Thought you might like this photo, and it would be so cute in your paper. Mom (Margaret Googe) is an avid reader of the Magnolia Messenger... even when we go camping... She reads all of the articles out loud to us. We love it!"* Sandra added, *"...My dad does our Sunday School lessons at camp from the MM also. We learn a lot and appreciate all the efforts everyone puts into the MM."*

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HOUSE TO HOUSE HEART TO HEART

"...from house to house ... with gladness and singleness of heart..." (Acts 2:46)

Vol. 1, No. 1, February, 1994

INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE

- About forty men were engaged in the writing of the Bible, during a period of about 1,500 years—that is, from 1500 B.C. to A.D. 100
- The longest verse of the Bible is Esther 8:9; it contains ninety words.
- The longest word in the Bible is found in Isaiah 61
- All the letters of the Alphabet occur in it
- These men wrote as they were moved by

First Published in Mississippi

Volume 1; Number 1 (February, 1994) -- Tiptersville, Mississippi

Jacksonville

"Jacksonville." The name of a city. Where? In what state? The city in north central Florida may come to mind where more than 800,000 souls live. Or, you may think of a Jacksonville in Arkansas (near Little Rock) with its population of about 31,000. But, neither the Florida or the Arkansas city can even come close to matching the spiritual influence of the little city of Jacksonville, Alabama.

Through the leadership of a "not very large" church of Christ in Jacksonville, a **powerful** influence for the Cause of Christ is being felt throughout the nation and the world. With **the blessings** of God and the **assistance** of numerous brethren, this church provides the leadership required in reaching out with a simple printed message of the gospel of Christ more so than any other place known to the editor. Presently their bi-monthly publication "House to House/Heart to Heart," with a circulation upwards to 2 and 3/4 million copies of each issue, goes into homes throughout the nation and the world. **HtoH/HtoH** is, by far, the most widely circulated publication among churches of Christ.

The Jacksonville church has to be considered rather *special*. "Special" -- not because of their size (about 200 in attendance); not because of their vast amount of money and not because of their greater than usual talents. The Jacksonville church is special, in the view of this writer, because of their "faith" and "vision", coupled

with *greater-than-usual* respect for the "Great Commission" and backed up with, what appears to be, a very dedicated, courageous and capable leadership.

Mississippi

"House to House" had its beginning in Mississippi. In February of 1994, in a small community in the north central part of the Magnolia state, known as Tiptersville, a young preacher named **Allen Webster** published the first issue of "HtoH/HtoH." One thousand (1,000) copies of the initial publication were circulated in the local area. Not long afterward, when Allen moved from Mississippi to Alabama to serve as preacher for the Jacksonville church, he moved the publication with him.

For the past seventeen years, the circulation and coverage of "House to House" has continued to increase from that first printing of only 1,000 to more than two million copies. With the continued dedicated editorial efforts of Allen Webster and the addition of other full-time, part-time, and volunteer workers, the circulation has grown and, then, grown some more. Over **1,100 congregations** now participate in the printed mission efforts by paying the costs for the paper to be mailed to residents in their respective communities.

About eight years ago, **Luke Griffin** resigned from his work as a professor at Jacksonville State University to become "Director of Operation" for "HTH" His work keeps him busy directing and helping in the "day-by-day" operations of the demanding publishing endeavor.



Allen Webster
Editor



Luke Griffin
Director of Operations

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DEACONS
Bill Geyman Shawn Hardin
Bob McCafferty Bob McCafferty
Larry Strimons Larry Wallace
Andy Wood

MINISTER
Les Ferguson, Sr. Evangelist

MISSIONARIES
Fernando Arroyo Mexico
Jose Gonzalez Mexico
Marlie Perry Mexico
Raciel Ramirez Mexico
Irene Ramos Mexico
Uel Reyes Mexico

The Restoration Plea has been taught in our land for two centuries now, The restoration plea implies that God had a plan for the church, which He

Kosciusko, MS Church is Just One of Over 1,100 Congregations that Mass Mail HTH

Brother Luke said that the costs to any congregation that would like to mass mail the paper to residents in their local area, had been kept very low -- **only about 30 cents per copy** when mass mailed to every resident on specific routes. (This includes printing and postage.)

"House to House" encourages supporting churches to "personalize" their mailings with information about the local church and a teaching article by their preacher or church leader. Each local church is publicized as the contact for readers who would like more information or to study further.

In addition to Allen Webster as Editor and Luke Griffin as Director of Operations, the work force includes several other skilled and dedicated servants. The elders of the local church provide the required leadership and participation in the energetic mission program. May God continue to bless their good work.

An ever growing number of believers are gaining respect for the Jacksonville church because of their effective leadership in arranging and directing such annual programs as the "Great Smoky Mountain Marriage Retreat" (which brings in **hundreds**) and "Polishing the Pulpit" (which brings in **thousands**). Both of these faith building and edifying programs are conducted each year in the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee (Sevierville-Pigeon Forge-Gatlinburg area). There is no doubt but that the selection of **the mountains** as the location for both events evidences wisdom on the part of the leadership of the Jacksonville church.

We thank God for all mission efforts including "HtoH" which is certainly no little program!
(Report by MM Editor)

Elders of the Jacksonville Church Oversee Massive Publishing Project



Robert Whiten Ralph Harman Homer Smith



Operations Building for "House to House" in Jacksonville, Alabama



Home of the Jacksonville Church of Christ

To mail "House to House" to residents in your area or for more information, please contact the brethren in Jacksonville, Alabama.

Addresses

"House to House"; P. O. Box 520; Jacksonville, AL 36265;
Email: info@HouseToHouse.com; Telephone: 877-338-3397

Are We Supposed To Keep SOME of the TEN Commandments?

- Seth Sullivan -

There is much confusion today about the two covenants found in Scripture. If one were to ask, "Which covenant are we under today?" there would be different responses. Some might contend that both the covenants are kept. Others would argue that portions of the Old Law are to be kept with the New. What about following only the New Law? So what's wrong with the Law of Moses? Why do away with it? Aren't we supposed to keep some of the Ten Commandments? Let's answer these questions with Scripture.



"Written and
Engraven in stones"

remembrance. In other words, how can portions of the Old Law be kept when Inspiration said it was to "vanish away?" By Jesus' Death, Burial, and Resurrection Christians can now enjoy the perfect law of liberty – the Law of the New Testament of Jesus Christ! The Apostle Paul used marriage as an analogy to the Old and New Covenants. He states that one is committing spiritual adultery if they return to the Old Law (Rom. 7:1-6)!

5. Why continue to study the Old Testament if it is not valuable?

First, the Old Testament is extremely valuable! The Old Testament helps

1. There were weaknesses found in the old Law of Moses. One weakness is in the fact that it could NOT take away sins (Heb. 10:1-4). Only Jesus' Blood was able to accomplish this formidable task on our behalf. Paul told the Galatians, "Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator" (Gal. 3:19). From Paul's inspired perspective the Old Law was to serve as a temporary measure until Christ would usher in the better covenant, thus removing this "yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1) which was only to one nation (Eph. 2:14). It is revealed throughout the history of the Israelites that they could not keep the laws of God (Rom. 7:7-15). It is seen numerous times through the Old Testament where the children of Israel abandoned God's law and turned to worldly ambitions. As a result, Jehovah punished Israel for her unfaithfulness.

2. The Law of Moses isn't needed today because Christians today have a better covenant. The inspired Hebrew writer says that the Law of Christ is a better testament as opposed to the Old (Heb. 7:22). How is it better? Along with the New Law of Christ being able to REMOVE sins (Acts 2:38); it is a perfect law which offered hope for all saints to enjoy a home everlasting with God. The Hebrew writer speaks of the "desire for a better country that is heavenly" (Heb. 11:16).

3. What was the purpose of the Law of Moses? The Old Law was to serve as a "knowledge of sin" for Israel. The Apostle Paul made this clear to the Romans about the Old Law's intent when he wrote, "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20). Of course not to withstand the fact that it foreshadowed "good things to come" (Heb. 10:1-4; 7:18, 19) which was the New Testament Law of Christ. This was one of the important functions of the Old Law: to lead people to Jesus (Gal. 3:24, 25).

4. What covenant are Christians commanded to follow today? The inspired Hebrew writer says that Jesus is the "mediator of a covenant" and by His Death at the Cross of Calvary, He "nailed the Old Law of Moses" to it and ushered in the New Testament (Heb. 9:15-18). This "new covenant" has made the "first old" which is ready to "vanish away" (Heb. 8:13). It essentially "blotted it out" (Col. 2:14-17). When something vanishes away there is no

Christians in a host of ways: (1) it provides evidence to the Messianic prophecy which helps point to Jesus and His fulfillment of those some 332+ prophecies, (2) it provides evidence for man's origin and offers incredible insight into the scientific realm, (3) it portrays God's ever enduring love for mankind as He watched over the children of Israel and thus revealing His scheme of redemption, (4) it argues for the existence of God, and (5) it shows mankind's once co-residency with dinosaurs. The Old Testament offers many lessons which Paul said is "written for our learning" (Rom. 15:4). In consideration of the ancients, a child of God can learn how to cope with suffering when observing the life of Job. The Psalmist helps Christians see how God is a refuge and strength when in trouble. How could a child of God neglect such meaningful truths? These examples are written so we can learn from them (I Cor. 10:11). Such lessons as obedience, faith, courage, hope, etc. all are available from study of the Old Testament. Can these stories of faith help build a Christian's faith? Absolutely!

May every child of God rejoice in knowing that the New Law is here! Now we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ! That through His Blood we have atonement with the Father and a reconciled relationship with God and when we sin we can have those sins forgiven through repentance and daily Christian living. Thank God in His wisdom for loving the world so much in sending His Son Jesus to die so that all of mankind who have obeyed the gospel through the washing away of sin in baptism (Mark 16:16) can enjoy a life free of sin!

Seth Sullivan; Associate Preacher;
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SSeth Sullivan

Study
"The Question Box"
The Two Testaments
(See Page 24)



Responders to Magnolia Messenger Includes Many Prisoners

Pictured above is some of the mail that had recently come in while we were out of town for a few days. We are thankful to be reminded of how the MM reaches into numerous prisons and jails throughout the country. Many prisoners had responded to "The Question Box" by sending in their answers to our recent study on "Rich Folks in the Bible."

We are grateful that supporters of the "Messenger" make it possible for us to send the paper to a large number of those who are incarcerated but who are seeking the "freedom" found only in Christ Jesus. May God bless all -- those who send and those who receive **and** those who send in answers to "The Question Box." (Editor)

Churches and Competition for Crowds

Paul's Example:

"I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you..."

"I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

"...I am ready to preach the gospel... the power of God unto salvation..."

"...declaring the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." (Acts 20; Rom. 1; I Cor. 2)

A Denominational Church in Mississippi
Seeking to Draw a Crowd



All is in Vain Unless We "Preach the Word"

Paul's Command to Preachers (2 Tim. 4)

"Preach the Word"; "Reprove, Rebuke and Exhort"

The time has come when many: "...will **not** endure sound doctrine" and will turn away "...from the **truth**...unto **fables**"

The Lord's Church Must Preach the Word (Gospel); ALL the Counsel of God!

What is Seen On Your Wall?

A Tuesday evening "drop-in visit" with a new member of our local congregation, revealed an inspirational "Sermon on the Wall." A beautifully framed poem by an unknown author was skillfully penned on a mat, surrounded by flowers. As you can easily see by this entry into the MM, the "sermon" got my attention to the extent that I decided to share its message with "Messenger" readers. Thank you "Cookie" for your "Sermon on the Wall" and for your kindness in our unexpected visit. (**Question:** *What "sermons" are your wall hangings preaching?* (editor))



Don't Quit

*When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you are trudging seems all uphill;
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh;
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest if you must, but don't you quit!*

*Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As everyone of us sometimes learns;
And many a failure turns about,
When he might have won had he stuck it out;
Don't give up though the pace seems slow,
You may succeed with another blow!*

*Success is failure turned inside out,
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt;
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,
It's when things seem worse, that you must not quit!*
(Author unknown to MM editor)

Greenwood and Jackson Cooperate in Youth Efforts

In July, the youth from the Siwell Road Church of Christ in Jackson and the youth of the West President Church of Christ in Greenwood, joined hands in an effort to

carry out the Great Commission in the Greenwood area. A 5 day VBS was conducted. The work was "an absolute success" according to **Derek Broome** of Siwell Rd.

Discover the TrAnSfOrMaTiOn

October 19 -21, 2012

Mark your calendars now for this great event for the youth in God's kingdom. We will be discussing the **TRANSFORMATION** that occurs when dedicating your life to God.

Discover is Hosted by the Starkville Church of Christ Near Mississippi State University at 613 East Lee Blvd.

Cost will be \$15.00 registration / \$10.00 MSU vs MTSU football ticket.

Registration will open on Aug 1 and close on Oct 1

For more information, go to www.starkvillechurch.org

Booneville Church Hosts "Senior Adult Rally"

A "rally" is defined as a "gathering of people for the purpose of building enthusiasm." Churches have, for many years, employed rallies to benefit young people. They have arranged programs and brought together large groups of young folks to instruct and encourage; thus, building needed enthusiasm.

Not to be left out, in recent years, we have heard of more and more "Senior Adult Rallies." One such rally was recently held in Booneville, Mississippi. (I believe it was their 5th annual rally.)

My June and I have finally come to realize that, for some reason, we seem to "fit in" the "senior" age group. So, we were blessed to attend the rally in NE Mississippi on Saturday, August 25, 2012. Going to the church building of the Booneville congregation on 2nd Street, we were blessed to be among 182 seniors who had come from four states and 22 congregations.

The "Golden Circle" senior age group of the Booneville church provided leadership and the work necessary to make the rally possible. This senior group is led by **Jim Estes** who also serves as one of the elders and an associate minister. They Booneville brethren truly went "out of their way" in making preparation for the special occasion. On behalf of all who visited, we express a great **BIG THANKS** to our beloved brothers and sisters at Booneville.

For those who arrived early, there was special time for refreshments and fellowship. This was followed by an assembly in the auditorium where all were warmly welcomed by Jim Estes. An opening prayer was led by the reporter of these lines, which was followed by the singing of some grand old songs led by **Mike Timbes**, the primary song leader for the Booneville church. What a blessing it was to join in with all who had come from 22 different congregations as we sang such songs as "Just Over in the Gloryland, Hand in Hand with Jesus, Jesus, Pilot Me" and "If We Never Meet Again."

The guest speaker for the rally was **Ben Flatt** of Henderson, Tennessee. Brother Flatt, a "retired" preacher, devotes his time to "meeting work," holding 15 or more Gospel Meetings each year. He stated that he had recently conducted meeting number **708**. According to brother Flatt, in his meetings, he preaches two "sermons" with each lesson only about 20 minutes in length with a song or two in between.

The talented speaker spoke on the topic, "**Over the Hill**" (**The Spills and Thrills on the Way Down**). His two lessons were based on Ecclesiastes 12:1-14. Brother Ben encouraged us to make the most of each day as he explained the process of growing old and dying, described by the writer of Ecclesiastes. His lessons were encouraging and humorous; enabling each attendee to leave the rally feeling uplifted and motivated to make the most of life **below** as we prepare for life **above**. (Alf)



Home of the Booneville Church on North Second Street



Ben Flatt
Rally Speaker



Jim Estes
Rally Director & Church Elder



Some of the 182 attending who enjoyed a delicious meal provided by Booneville's "Golden Circle"

Funeral Preachers:

Preachers or Judges?

**Who is Going to Heaven?
Who is Going to Hell?**

Our Lord Jesus Christ clearly taught the reality of Heaven and Hell. Both are eternal destinations. One is as real as the other. Heaven is eternity in a place of bliss; Hell is eternity in a place of punishment. (Ponder the words of Jesus in Matthew 25:46 - **“And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.”**)

Jesus also pleaded that his hearers “enter in by the narrow gate” that “leads to life.” In contrast to the “broad way” which leads to “DESTRUCTION” which “many” enter, Jesus said that only a “few” find the narrow way leading to “LIFE.” (Matthew 7:13,14). Consider the words, “narrow way”, “few”, and “life.” Think about the warning: “broad way,” “many” and “destruction.” Could words be spoken more clearly?

Heaven is real; Hell is real! Many are going to Hell; few are going to Heaven. Who is going to Heaven? Who is going to Hell? Who or what determines the true answer? It is not man; it is not the word of man. Rather it is God; it is the Word of God. The truth about who is going to heaven or who is going to Hell can only be determined by God and His word.

Preachers are not the ones to decide or proclaim one's eternal destiny. Funeral preachers have no right to “judge.” It is not their job to determine the destiny of the dead. A funeral preacher has no authority to say the deceased as “gone to Heaven” or “gone to Hell.”

A preacher (or anyone else) elevates himself to Judge when he preaches the deceased into heaven. (Of course, based on one's knowledge of a person's life, a faithful teacher can state reasons for the hope of heaven; but, only the Divine Judge can say for sure-- either **“Come, ye blessed of my Father”** or **“Depart from me, ye cursed.”** (See Matthew 25:34,41)

Preachers can and should be a great blessing to our world of sin and sorrow. Their mission is to proclaim the gospel of Christ, the good news of salvation through Jesus and His death at Calvary. The apostle Paul recognized the value of preachers when he quoted the



**THE BIBLE Next to His Chest
His Companion in LIFE and DEATH**

words of the prophet Isaiah who said, “...How beautiful are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of good things.” (Romans 10:15)

While preachers can and should be heralds of glad tidings, “good news” (the gospel), they can do much harm by withholding the truth of God's word as they speak to their dying audience assembled for a funeral service. To preach the dead one “into heaven”, when he/she (while living) refused to evidence his/her faith in Jesus as the Saviour through *obedience* to the gospel, is a grievous disservice to the living who hear and believe his message.

A sincere student of the Holy Scriptures cannot read far or long without coming to realize the need to be “doers” and not just “hearers” of the Word. Jesus, at the close of the “world's greatest sermon” warned, “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven.” He concluded by illustrating the need for doing God's will by talking about two builders -- one was “wise”; the other was “foolish.” What separated the wise from the foolish was their response to the teaching of the Lord -- the wise was obedient; the foolish was not (Matthew 7:21-27).

Earnestly seeking to learn and obey the will of God is required of all who would enter Heaven. Learning God's will builds faith that acts by **doing** what the Father commands. Obedience to the Lord is evidence of our love for him and is

a vital factor which will separate the “sheep” from the “goats” -- the righteous from the unrighteous -- in the day of judgement. How you live helps determine your status with God when you die.

Are you a Christian? Are you a faithful Christian? No words spoken by a preacher at a funeral will change your relationship with the Lord. When you die you are either “in the Lord” or “out of Christ”. You are either living for the Lord or living for self.

Be very cautious about believing every word spoken by every funeral preacher. The Bible teaches that the devil “who fashions himself as an angel of light” has his own ministers who “fashion themselves as angels

of light” (2 Cor. 11:14,15). Far too often, his ministers show up at funerals and speak so as to influence listeners to believe that it really doesn't matter whether you “in Christ” or not and that it is not a matter of concern, whether you are “Christ-like” or not. Beware of funeral preachers. They cannot be trusted as judges. **(Editor)**

More Readers' Response

I wish it were possible for all Christian parents to sit down with their families and carefully read “We Live in a Different World” together (MM, April-June, 2012). The need is so great and the results would be great.

What a wonderful lesson you gave on the Lord and His church in that writing. I pray that much good may come therefrom. Thanks for the blessings that come our way because of the “Magnolia Messenger.” (Delbert Turner; Baldwyn, MS)

Dear brother Franks,

Thank you for sending me the ‘Messenger’ which I appreciate and note all pages. You do an excellent job as editor.

Here are some reasons I like the ‘Messenger.’ It is Biblically sound. It has an attractive appearance. Always you have variety. I like the emphasis on Mississippi. And, I am confident you are helping the church grow in the State. You appeal to all people and you get a large number of persons involved. Your feature of congregations and individuals is wise. The articles are timely and good. I also respect and appreciate the editor and his talented wife. And, he was my student at FHC. (E. Claude Gardner, Henderson, TN)

“When You Make a Feast”

NOTE: Sometime ago, my June and I visited the church in Forest, Mississippi, where we picked up their weekly bulletin. Their preacher (then and now), **James Malone**, had published an article about “Thanksgiving.” With that special holiday coming up pretty soon, I decided to share brother Malone's article with readers of the MM. (alf)

- James Malone -

In Luke 14:12-14, our Lord said to the lawyers and Pharisees, **“When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.”**

How can we make application of the above verses today? One way that we can make application of these verses, is **by helping those who need help and cannot compensate us** for our services. In this regard, Jesus said, **“Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me”** (Matthew 25:40). As a result, we will be richly **“recompensed at the resurrection of the just”** (Luke 14:14). This is the principle of laying up for ourselves **“treasures in heaven...”** (Matthew 6:20).

Our Lord gave us a spiritual application of the above verses (the principle of selfless giving),

when He told the self-righteous Pharisees, **“They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick”** (Matthew 9: 12). He went on to say that His purpose for coming to the earth was not **“to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance”** (Matthew 9: 13).

Our Lord provides not only the physical necessities of life (Matthew 6:25-32), but the spiritual necessities of life as well (John 10:10; Psalm 23; Philippians 4: 19). Since He is our example (I John 2:6; I Peter 2:21), can we, as His followers, do any less for those in need (both physically and spiritually) and still be blessed?

Let's remember how blessed we are. Let's remember to be thankful for everything we have. And let's remember

to share these blessings with those around us who may not be as fortunate.

James Malone

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WARNINGS

The Danger of Riches

Note: In the previous issue of the MM, “The Question Box” called attention to Bible teachings concerning the “love of money.” The following scriptures and their warnings were mentioned. The words in red were left out of the study and each student was asked to locate the verse and write in the missing words. **These are warnings worth repeating.**

1. **“Charge them that are rich in this WORLD, that they be not HIGHMINDED, nor TRUST in uncertain RICHES, but in the LIVING God, who giveth us RICHLY all things to ENJOY.”** (I Tim. 6:17)

2. **“There is that maketh himself RICH, yet hath NOTHING: there is that maketh himself POOR, yet hath great RICHES.”** (Prov. 13:7)

3. **“...It is easier for a CAMEL to go through the EYE of a NEEDLE, than for a RICH man to ENTER into the KINGDOM of HEAVEN.”** (Matt. 19:23)

4. Jesus declared, **“...You CANNOT serve GOD and MAMMON.”** (Matt. 6:24)

How to Increase Your **JOY**

(Philippians 1:1-11)

- **Eddie Lewis** -

“How about coming over to the house for some fellowship?” “The fellowship at the retreat was great!” “What a golf game! Man, did we have some great fellowship!”

The word **fellowship** seems to mean different things to different people. It is defined as “to have in common.” The meaning of Christian fellowship goes much deeper than simply sharing a meal, or even a good golf game. From the Christian viewpoint it means, “to share in common—eternal life or other eternal things.”

Unless a person has become a Christian, he can't share in the fellowship of the spirit (Phil. 2:1). Paul also writes of the fellowship of suffering (Phil. 3:10). When the brethren at Philippi helped him with his finances, he called it fellowship of support (Phil. 4:15). So, real Christian fellowship is much more than having your name on the church roll or being present at the assembly.

One of the sources of Christian joy is the fellowship we have in Christ. Paul has three thoughts to describe true Christian fellowship in verses 1-11.

1. I have you in my mind (vs. 3-6). “I thank God every time I remember you” (v.3).

It is remarkable that Paul was thinking of anyone but himself in his circumstances. In Acts 16 we see all that happened to Paul. Why did he have joy when he remembered them? His joy came through remembering how much they meant to him. Through suffering, he met the jailor who became a Christian. He remembered Lydia and her household and the slave girl who was demon possessed. It was a source of joy for him to remember these friends and many others. You might ask yourself, “When the preacher thinks of me am I a source of joy or hurt?”

Also, it was a source of joy for Paul that they shared in his work (v. 5-6). They helped him financially. He was pleased that God was working through them to help him in his ministry.

2. I have you in my heart (vs. 7-8). “It is right for me to feel this way about all of you” (v.7). This is a deep expression of fellowship. It is possible to have others in your mind without



Eddie Lewis

having them in your heart. One person said, “Today, many of us would have to confess about our relationship that I have you on my nerves.” Paul's love for them was something that he could not hide. Christian love is the “tie that binds” (1 Jo. 3:14).

How did Paul evidence his love for them? He suffered on their behalf. His bonds were proof of his love (Eph. 3:1). Because of his trial, Christians would get a fair hearing before the officials of Rome everywhere.

How can we learn to practice this kind of love? We have to realize it is not something we accomplish ourselves. It is something God does in us (v.8b). God's love was working through Paul (Rom. 5:5). When we allow God to work in us, then we will grow in His love for one another.

How can we know we are growing in His love? First, we are concerned about others (2:25-28). The brethren were concerned about Paul and sent Epaphroditus to minister to Paul. “Let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth” (1 Jo. 3:18).

Second, we are willing to forgive one another (1 Peter 4:8). A radio personality asked a contestant, “Tell us some of the blunders your wife has made over the years.” The man replied, “I can't remember any.” “Oh sure you can, surely something!” the radio personality said. “No, I really can't. I love my wife very much, and I just don't remember things like that.” When we practice Christian love we experience joy.

3. I have you in my prayers (9-11). Look at what he prayed for them. He prayed for an abounding love and a discerning love. Love is not blind and the ability to distinguish the difference between the two is a mark of maturity.

He prayed that they would mature in Christian character (v. 10). The word “sincere” means to be tested by sunlight. The Christian is not afraid to stand in the light of God. The word “blameless” means they don't cause others to stumble. This is a very important part of Christian living. We always consider how our actions affect others.

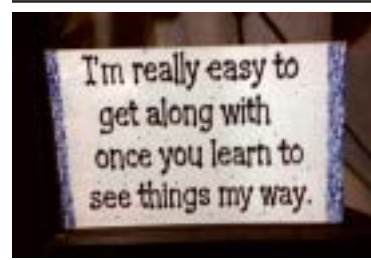
He prayed for their service (v. 11). “Be filled with the fruit of righteousness (service).” He is not interested in “church activities,” but in spiritual fruit that results when Christ is in us (Jo. 15:4). Many Christians try to produce on their own power, instead of allowing Christ to produce in them. That doesn't mean we don't do anything, but that we give ourselves to His will.

True Christian fellowship is having something deep, wonderful, and eternal in common with one another. “I have you in my mind, heart, and prayers.” This is the kind of fellowship that produces true joy.

A few years ago, Judy was in the hospital having surgery. It was the first time we had faced anything like that. The circumstances drew us closer to our fellow Christians in a real type of fellowship. The pain and fear were overcome, because fellow Christians gathered close to show their love and support. It made our joy complete.

— — — — —
Eddie Lewis, Associate Minister, Germantown Church of Christ, Germantown, Tennessee.

Eddie Lewis
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Some of the young folks in attendance for “Monday Night Live”

Retirement Statement:

Eddie Lewis Retiring after 45 years in Ministry

After 45 years of service as a full-time minister for churches of Christ in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee, **Eddie Lewis** will be retiring from full time ministry at the Germantown church of Christ. Most of you know Eddie from his work in Cleveland, Corinth, and Greenville, MS, and his articles that appear regularly in the Magnolia Messenger. Eddie said, “God has truly blessed us with many wonderful years of ministry. It's hard to believe that we have been working for 45 years. We have so many great memories and good Christian friends at each of the churches we have worked with. They have truly blessed our lives.” Judy and Eddie will continue to be members at the Germantown church after his retirement.

Part-time missionary to North Mississippi

The elders at Germantown have asked Eddie to serve as a Part-time missionary to North Mississippi. His responsibilities in this new ministry will be to visit the churches in north Mississippi. He will be available to preach for these churches when their minister is on vacation or is on a mission trip; and serve as an interim minister when a church is looking for a new minister; or preach in meetings or conduct seminars on various subjects. If you have a need for any of these services, please feel free to contact Eddie (662-893-2694) and make an appointment. All appointments will be on a first call basis.

Eddie said, “Mississippi is my home, so I have a great love for the church in Mississippi. Judy and I look forward to visiting with each of the churches in north Mississippi. We hope to develop many new friends and renew old acquaintances in the almost 200 churches in north Mississippi. The Lord has truly blessed us with a wonderful opportunity to continue to serve the church in my retirement. We look forward to visiting with each church.”

Central Mississippi Churches Conclude Summer Youth Series “Monday Night Live”

Several churches of Christ in central Mississippi work together in providing regular meetings for their young people. The churches take turns hosting the event. The last gathering for this summer was held in Kosciusko on Monday night (July 30). The South Huntington Street church served as host congregation for the event.

It was exciting to see more than 100 young people and their adult leaders in attendance from six different congregations. Churches participating in the latest gathering were congregations in **Starkville, Columbus, Maben, Eupora, West Point and Kosciusko.**

A meal consisting of hotdogs, hamburgers and delicious deserts was prepared and served in the spacious multi-purpose facility of the Kosciusko church. After a good meal and meaningful fellowship, all assembled in the auditorium of the South Huntington Street

church where they were warmly welcomed by **Shaun Hardin**, a deacon and youth minister of the local church. This was followed by an extended period of spirited singing, led by **Robby McCafferty** (a local deacon and song leader).

Kosciusko's long time preacher, **Les Ferguson, Sr.**, presented a challenging lesson to the youth on “The Fruit of Self-Control.” He called upon each person to realize the importance of self-control and to allow the Word of God to give spiritual direction in a world of evil influences.

Such area-wide youth meetings serve many good purposes. A large group of young folks coming together in Christian fellowship provides much needed encouragement to the youth of small churches. Such meetings also call attention to the value of sister congregations working together to build up the world's greatest cause. (editor)



**PTP
Provided
Something
For
Everybody**

**DESIGNED
FOR
Preachers
Elders
Deacons
Teachers
Teens
Members
of all ages**

**A Full Size Replica of The Tabernacle Was On Display
The Woman in the Center Was Not Part of Display**

Display Included:

Altar of Burnt Offerings, The Ark of Covenant;
Table of Shewbread; Golden Candlestick; Priests; Lambs



Some of the Many Attending "Polishing the Pulpit" in Sevierville, TN

They Came From 38 States and 3 Countries



Raja Vijaya Kumar.V.
Came from India To Attend
"Polishing the Pulpit"

My June and I broke away from "PtP" and the activities taking place on Sunday evening at the Convention Center in Sevierville, Tennessee so we could worship with the Great Smoky Mountain church of Christ in Pigeon Forge where **Al Behel** serves as the long time preacher.

We were somewhat disappointed to learn that brother Behel was not preaching at the P.M. service; however, we were very thankful to hear a mission report from **Gary Dick**, one of the local members who, along with his grandson, **Chris**, had made a recent mission trip to Costa Rica. In addition

to the mission report, we were informed that the assembly on Sunday evening was blessed with the presence of a gospel preacher from the country of India. The young preacher had come the many thousands of miles in order to attend the week-long program known as "Polishing the Pulpit" held each year in Sevierville, Tennessee.

One of the local families in the Smoky Mountain church had invited the Indian preacher to stay with them while visiting America. The church also decided to take up a special collection to pay the travel expenses of **Raja Vijaya** from and back to his home in India. When the collection was counted, the rather small congregation assembled on Sunday evening had given **over \$3,200** to provide travel and additional support to the gospel preacher from India.

It was exciting to see the generosity of the Smoky Mountain church in providing generous assistance to a gospel preacher who was seeking to spread the borders of Christ's Kingdom in India and who believed that time and money well spent. My June and I agree. (alf)



Gary Dick and his wife, **Priscilla**, live in Gatlinburg, Tenn. They previously lived in Mississippi and worshipped with the Gloster Street church in Tupelo, before they moved to the mountains in 2007.

Brother Gary and his grandson, **Cris Dick**, joined with a group from the 7th & Mueller church in Paragould, Arkansas for the 10 day mission effort involving work on a Bible camp, a V.B.S. and a Gospel Meeting. His report was very informative and encouraging!

Costa Rica Mission Trip Report Given by **Gary Dick**

Please Pray For the MM

"Polishing the Pulpit" Brings Together More Than 2,500!

It all began with an idea. According to information from brethren who direct PTP the following is a brief history of what now takes place each year in Sevierville, Tennessee.

Polishing the Pulpit began with three friends getting together to brainstorm sermon ideas. We soon invited a few other friends and someone said, "This is great! We should tell others."

We did and invited a speaker to discuss sermon preparation and give sample sermons. Interest increased; more speakers were invited. We moved to a hotel conference area. We dreamed big. "Let's invite the best speakers in the brotherhood and see who we can get." They came. Wives wanted in, so we added women's classes. While these great speakers were assembled in one place, we decided to offer classes for elders. They loved it. People began coming from all over the country.

Youth workers and deacons became interested. We added tracts for them. PTP moved to a large event center in the Smoky Mountains. Attendance approached 1,000. Christians from other nations began coming.

"Why don't you have classes for regular members?" we were asked. So we added **Spiritual Renewal Weekend**, as well as tracts for **members, teens and children**. Attendance surpassed 2,000.

My June and I were privileged to attend the latest event which featured 126 speakers, 12 concurrent sessions each hour, 601 separate classes spread over seven days. The attendance goal was set at 2,500. Actual figures were reported as 2,519 persons! PTP, 2012, brought together brethren from 38 states and 3 foreign countries.

This annual event is under the oversight of the Jacksonville church of Christ in Jacksonville, Alabama. Four men serve as directors. They are **David Barker, Eddy Gilpin, Mark Howell and Allen Webster**. Personal observation indicates that the elders, directors and scores of other brethren spend much time in prayer, planning and working to make possible the "spiritual feast" each summer. My June and I were blessed to be in attendance during the most recent event. What a blessing to see so many brothers and sisters and to hear quality lessons on scores of vital topics.

I suggest that you consider the possibility of attending the next PTP

event scheduled for 2013. You can go to the internet and type in PolishingThePulpit.com for up to date information.

If you feel you can't wait until next August to visit the Smoky Mountains, consider attending the "Great Smoky Mountain Marriage Retreat" planned, God willing, for February 13-17, 2013, at the Holiday Inn Conferende Center in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. The scheduled speakers are **Jim Dearman, Sammy Jones and Michael Shepherd**. (Yes, Sammy Jones is the brother in Christ who used to be a part of Magnolia Bible College; now an Instructor at FHU in Henderson.)

PTP: A Great Encouragement

Especially to Christians from Small Congregations.
Worship and Fellowship With Hundreds and Hundreds!

PTP: "For All Ages"

The Foster Family

Brought Their Five Sons

All The Way From Colorado



The Trouble With Nostalgia

- John Gardner -

Nostalgia is really “in” these days. Witness the popularity of reunions, antiques, memorabilia of the 50s, 60s, and 70s, television reruns from those same years, and countless pictures of yesteryear traveling the Internet.

The word nostalgia comes from two Greek words which when combined mean “the pain to return home.” There is the bitter sweet experience of remembering fondly better times and at the same time missing that which will never be again.

Nostalgia can be dangerous in spiritual matters. It can hinder, cause trouble, and produce sin. On the other hand, if carefully handled, it can stir gratitude and further hope.

In their second year away from the bondage of Egypt, Israel complained to the Lord about the daily food He was providing. It was the marvelous, miraculously produced manna, but the people wanted meat. In their cravings they let loose a recital of how good the food was in Egypt. “We remember the fish which we ate freely in Egypt, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions and the garlic; but now our whole being is dried up; there is nothing at all except this manna before our eyes” (Numbers 11: 5,6 New King James Version). One can imagine how they might have sat around their campfires and compared the memories of those meals “back in the day” with one another.

God was not pleased. They wanted meat, and meat they would have. It would come in such abundance and so regularly for a month they would loathe that which they had craved (Numbers 11: 18 – 20, 31, 32). As they fed themselves, God exacted a lethal punishment on those given to such a brazen rebellion against Him (Vv. 33).

Nostalgia fanned the flames of hunger into a sinful rebellion against God. If not held in check, it can also cause great trouble for us today. Here is how:

(1) Nostalgia can distort the past and magnify only certain aspects. Israel remembered the food of Egypt; but what about the beatings, chains, death, and hopelessness? The manna may have tasted better all over again if they had remembered the whole picture of days gone by.

We tend to remember life in the past as simpler, perhaps happier (“Happy Days”?). Many would not disagree. But what about the debilitating and deadly poverty of the Great Depression, or the common diseases that wiped out whole families or the millions worldwide who died in World War II or the gripping fear of nuclear annihilation at the hands of the Soviets? Would we long for those experiences again?

A number of older members in the body of Christ remember when the church was really growing in the 60’s, buildings were expanded, and



John Gardner

ministries multiplied. We remember it as an easier time to set up Bible studies and, using the Bible which more people accepted then, to show our friends the undenominational way to serve Christ. However, overlooked in those memories are hyper-critical attitudes and racism that blighted many churches. We should remember how God used His people “back then,” but not idealize nor idolize those days.

(2) Nostalgia may cause us to murmur or complain because things don’t seem as good now.

Israel rebelled against God’s plan and God’s provisions in the present. They completely discounted the wonder of a miracle every day as God provided manna and preserved stored up manna on the Sabbath each week. The manna became evidence to them that God did not really care that

much or He would satisfy their tastes like He did when they sat by “the fleshpots” in Egypt and ate bread until they wanted no more (Exodus 16: 3 KJV).

In a similar way, looking back can make us “unfit for the kingdom” (Luke 9: 62). Complaining about our lot in these “tough times” can make us unfaithful to do today what God wants done today. He knows what He is doing. Be faithful, and leave the rest to God.

(3) Nostalgia can breed pessimism and take away zeal. It can produce “end of the line” thinking. Since “the good days” have passed, we may reason, we should not expect God to do many wondrous things anymore. Moses was burdened down exceedingly by the weeping and wailing of Israel in their rebellion (Numbers 11: 10 - 15). So are elders and other leaders in the church today often troubled by discouraged members awash in nostalgia.

(4) Nostalgia can nullify the onward march of God’s people. No matter how good or how bad the past was, it remains just that—the past. We must rejoice in the good and learn from the bad, but live our lives in the present moving forward for the Lord. Paul said it: “Brethren, I do

not count myself to have apprehended, but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3: 13, 14). Church anniversaries and reunions can be

great boosts to the cause of Christ if they generate gratitude to God and encourage the present church of the Lord to take on bigger and better service for the Master. But if they only stir up the gloom of nostalgia gone bad, they are trouble.

Fond memories of the past may be savored lightly and serve us well, but allowed to become an obsession, they can dominate the present and ruin our progress in Christ.

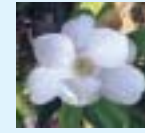
Address:

John Gardner; P. O. Box 251; Brandon, MS 39043; gardner.john43@gmail.com

Nostalgia can be dangerous in spiritual matters. It can hinder, cause trouble, and produce sin. On the other hand, if carefully handled, it can stir gratitude and further hope.

NOSTALGIA

There is the bitter sweet experience of remembering fondly better times and at the same time missing that which will never be again.



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

MAYBELLE MCBRIDE

Thomas McBride
(Ripley, MS)

BETTY DAVIS

Gene & Barbara Persinger
(DeRidder, LA)

ELBERT KEY

RALPH WINSTON
RUTH PRITCHARD
Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

MARVIN J. & BESSIE GIBSON

Hoot Gibson
(Philadelphia, MS)

J. W. DODSON

MARGIE JOHNSON
TONI THOMPSON
Hazel Cook
(Columbus, MS)

HAZEL LEWIS

Ms. Sylvia Hickey
(Mobile, AL)
Kensington Woods
Church of Christ
(Hattiesburg, MS)
Charles & Mary Johnson
(Hattiesburg, MS)

LARRY ECHOLS

Larry & Brenda Summers
(Yazoo City, MS)

LEO TREME

PATTY GRAUL
S M Ladies Bible Class
Enterprise Blvd. church of Christ
(Lake Charles, LA)

Thank You

For Remembering the MM
As You
Remember and/or Honor
Your Loved Ones

DR. L. C. HENSON

MR. T. N. LOLLAR
MRS. JOYCE KING
T. C. Nowell, Jr.
(Starkville, MS)

DAVID W. JOHNSON

Charles & Mary Johnson
(Hattiesburg, MS)

MITCH MILLS

Rayburn & Johnny Blackmon
Carl & Windy Blackmon &
children

MARVIN J. & BESSIE GIBSON

David & Missy Blackmon & boys
(Merryville, LA)

MARVINELL CARNATHAN

ZELMA HOOD
Beulah Davis
(Fulton, MS)

MARY HEATHER SPENCER

Jay & Mary Henley
(Brandon, MS)

In Honor Of

CATHERINE COOPER

Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

ROSEMARY GRACE ADAMS

Bobby & Anna Adams
(Carrollton, AL)

JERRY & ELETA GRIMMETT

50th

Wedding Anniversary

Garnett & Betty Harris
(Brandon, MS)

Please: Send Your Gifts To:

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

Having Fun at Church Services?

(On right) A scene at the 75th Anniversary Celebration in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Looks like J. C. and Cooter have spotted someone they are really glad to see! (Read report on page 17)





**AIN'T
IT
A
MIXED
UP
WORLD!**

Never before, in my lifetime, have I observed so many getting the Lord's plan of salvation mixed up. Jesus and His inspired apostles said that the gospel must be taught, faith must be developed, repentance must take place and baptism must follow before salvation becomes a reality. But in our mixed up world it is far too common to hear that all one needs to do to be saved is to "believe." Other teachers say it is necessary to believe and repent or to repent and believe, then comes salvation. Far too many stop short of baptism. Those who do so are not following the Scriptural order. Yes, it is a *mixed up world*.

Be reminded that God plan as revealed through Jesus, the Saviour is to (1) Hear or be taught the gospel of Christ; (2) Come to faith in Jesus as the Saviour; (3) Repent of sins and (4) Be baptized into Christ for the "remission of sins." Dear reader: Please do not allow anyone to cause you to get these steps mixed up or out of order.

These two points involving marriage and salvation are only two of the many areas in which our world is mixed up. What is needed is a prayerful and serious study of the Word of God with an earnest resolution to accept the authority of the Holy Scriptures, allowing the Lord, through His word, to straighten up/out our "mixed up world". Let it begin with me! You! (A. L. Franks)

- Editor -

Jesus spoke of his generation as a "faithless and **perverse** generation." He then asked, "How long shall I bear with you?" (Matt. 17:17) The apostle Paul wrote about God's children who live in the "midst of a crooked and **perverse** nation" and called upon them (us) to "shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:15). He warned the Ephesian elders, saying, "Also among your own selves shall men arise, speaking **perverse** things to draw away disciples after themselves" (Acts 20:30).

"Pervert" means to "turn away from what is right or good." "Perversion" suggests the idea of "corruption." Perversion takes that which is right and good and changes (corrupts) it into that which is wrong and evil. *Perversion* is another word for sin which means "missing the mark."

Never before, in my lifetime, has perversion been so prevalent. Among many professing Bible believers, things that have always been understood to be wrong, are no longer considered wrong. In the minds of far too many, wrong has become "right" and right has become "wrong." It is truly a *"mixed up world."*

Matter of Marriage

Take for example, the matter of marriage. According to the Bible, *the Word of God*, marriage has always been that which God designed; that is, the union of one man and one woman. (Study Genesis 2:18-25; Matthew 19:1-6 and I Cor. 7:1-5).

In our mixed up world, we now have men "marrying" men and women "marrying" women. A large segment of the population of American clamors for the acceptance and approval of such perversion. Laws are being passed "legalizing" that which God forbids. It is becoming more and more a "mixed up world."

Subject of Salvation

Take, for another example, the subject of salvation. According to

the Bible, Jesus is the only Saviour and His plan is the only way to Heaven. When people asked inspired apostles what to do to be saved, Peter responded, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:37,38). And, when the Saviour gave marching orders to his disciples, under the "Great Commission", He commanded, "Preach the gospel to every creature." He added, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:15,16).

Answer -- "The Question Box" -- This Issue -- Page 24

MARRIAGE

"A Gift of/from God"

**ONE
Wife
(woman)
(for life)**



**ONE
Husband
(man)
(for life)**

"...male and female made he them."

(Genesis 1:27)

Scripture Saith: (Matt. 19:5,6; Rom. 1:26,27)

"... they twain [two] shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are NO MORE TWAIN, BUT ONE FLESH."

"... What therefore GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER, let not man put asunder."

"For this cause God gave them up unto VILE AFFECTIONS: for even their women did change the NATURAL USE into that which is AGAINST NATURE:

"And likewise also the men, leaving the NATURAL use of the woman, burned in their LUST one toward another; MEN WITH MEN worketh that which is UNSEEMLY, and receiving in themselves that RECOMPENSE OF THEIR ERROR which was meet."

"Let marriage be had in honor among all, and the bed undefiled: for FORNICATORS AND ADULTERERS GOD WILL JUDGE." (Heb. 13:4) -- (Words capitalized by editor for emphasis.)

Siwell Road Church in Jackson, Mississippi Welcomes New Pulpit Minister

Gary Hampton

Following several years of capable service as Director of the East Tennessee School of Preaching in Karns, TN, Gary Hampton accepted the challenge of working with the Siwell Road congregation in Jackson, Mississippi. He and his wife, **Teresa**, began their work on July 15, 2012.

Brother Gary follows **Mark Ray**, who moved from the Siwell church in May of this year to preach for the church in Benton, Kentucky. In this recent change, a good preacher took the place of another good preacher. We pray God's blessings upon both preachers and their families and the congregations they serve.

The Siwell Road church of Christ assembles in their beautiful facilities on the SW side of Jackson. This energetic congregation is overseen by five elders. They are: **Bob Allen, Chris Bates, Andy DuLaney, Dale Ledbetter and Paul Leggett.**



Gary Hampton
New Preacher at Siwell Road

The church, which brings together about 300 each Lord's day and has a weekly budget of about \$8,000.00, is served by 17 deacons and a Youth Minister (**Derek Broome**) and a Deaf Minister (**George Myers**.) The church also enjoys the capable secretarial services of **Mary Clemons and Patty Polk.**

Powerful Points About Prayer

Made by Gary Hampton

Editor's Note: While at "Polishing the Pulpit" (see feature on page 11), we were blessed to hear several very capable and talented gospel preachers. The very first lesson heard, on the first of the seven day event, was on prayer presented by **Gary Hampton**, new preacher for the Siwell Road church in Jackson. I am pleased to share with you seven Powerful Points made by the Preacher; then three of his memorable comments.

Powerful Points

1. Take Time to Pray (Plan a time)
2. Pray to the "Father". (We are His children!)
3. Pray in Private (Not all time; but often -- as Jesus did.)
4. Pray Believing He Will Answer (Eph. 3:20-21-- "...above all we ask or think.")
5. Pray with Intensity ("effectual, fervent prayer"- James 5:16)
6. Put Away Sin. ("He heareth the prayer of the righteous." Prov.15:29)
7. Forgive Before Asking (Mark 11:25,26)

Comments to Consider

Brother Gary made the following observations which I noted as he delivered his lesson.

(a) *"When you are on 'top of the world', get down to the ground on your knees."*

(b) *"We need to quit worrying so much about the 'commander-in-chief' in Washington; rather put our trust in the 'Commander-in-chief' in Heaven."*

(c) *"Make prayer a daily practice, for at least 21 days, to establish a habit."*

A Memorable Scene at "Franks' Family Reunion" on July 4, 2012



MM Editor's Four Surviving Uncles and One Aunt. **FAMILY IS PRECIOUS!**

Ackerman Church Conducts Gospel Meeting With Evangelist Chad Ramsey

The dates of July 29th through August 1, 2012 were very special for the Lord's church in Ackerman, Mississippi. Beginning on Sunday morning and going through Wednesday night the church hosted a gospel meeting with **Chad Ramsey**, preacher for the Gloster Street congregation in Tupelo, Mississippi.



Chad Ramsey

We were privileged to be in attendance on Tuesday night and to hear an excellent sermon on "**The Unity of God's Truth**." Using Ephesians 4:1-6 as his text, brother Chad presented three powerful points using "Power Point". He very effectively showed from scripture that "**Unity Begins With Behavior**". This requires that all who truly desire unity exhibit such characteristics as lowliness, gentleness, longsuffering and love.

The gifted preacher further stressed that "**Unity Requires Desire**". Chad noted that it is needful to know the *source* of unity; that is, walking "by the

same rule" and minding "the same thing" (Phil. 3:16).

His third point called attention to the fact that "**Unity Requires a Foundation**." Very clearly and scripturally, the long time preacher for the Gloster Street church stressed the seven "ones" on which unity is founded (Ephesians 4). He reminded us of the plain teaching of Holy Scripture declaring that there is but **one body, spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism and God**. It was a good sermon, good service and an enjoyable visit with our brethren at Ackerman, Mississippi.

The Ackerman church which brings together 80 to 100 each Lord's day, is overseen by elders **Charlie Hunt, Coyt Hunt and Warren Hunt**. In addition to **Jeff, Rayburn and Therrel**, who are **all Hunts**, four additional men -- **Craig Clark, Reagan Ford, Rob Logan and Daniel Vowell** bring the number of deacons to seven.

As of just a few weeks ago, **Guyton Montgomery** and his family moved to Ackerman to become a part of the work where he serves ably as their full-time preacher. May God bless all those who wear His name and serve His Cause in Ackerman.



Guyton Montgomery

Few Words Great Encouragement!

At & June,

Keep up the good work. Love,
(**Ray Hyatt**, DeQuincy, LA)

Dear Magnolia Messenger:

How are you? I pray that all is well. As for me me, I have really been enjoying the Magnolia Messenger. I was surprised to see the note in which I had written to receive a copy!! (in the April-June Messenger) Please tell Bro. **Bob and Ben** (the ones who have service at Attala Co. Jail) that I said hello and God bless...

My time here is nearing an end; praise God, and the Magnolia Messenger has helped me exceedingly and abundantly beyond what words can express. I am very thankful!! Thanks for your time and patience. (Keep me and my family on your prayer list.) And I in turn will do the same... Amen. Respectfully, (**Shawanda Elliott**, Flowood, MS)



Meeting Place for the Church of Christ in Red Bay, Alabama



Dennis Doughty

The Last Journey

In 33 A.D. the road from Jericho to Jerusalem was a difficult one. The rocky, uphill passage went from 600 feet below sea level to 2500 feet above sea level. It was a steep, dangerous, robber haunted, seventeen-mile accent that took strong men a good six hours to travel. The deep canyons gave hiding places to robbers, a fact which Jesus alluded to when he told his parable of a man who fell among, thieves along this road (Luke 10).

It was this steep, difficult uphill walk that was to be Jesus' last journey. And he knew it. He told his disciples just days before they were going "up to Jerusalem," that there he would be mocked and scourged and killed (Luke 18:31-33). Yet he walked on, up the rocky path toward Zion.

What goes through a man's head as he walks toward certain death? How can you still put one foot in front of the other? It was the *desire to do his Father's will AND a shepherd's love of his sheep* that moved him forward.

Can we ever thank him enough for having the strength to make that last journey for us?

Dennis Doughty
Tunica Church of Christ ;
"Crossroads of the Delta"
1777 Hwy 61 North;
P.O. Box 155
Tunica, MS 38676 ;
Phone (662) 363-2829
dennis1848@bellsouth.net

Bay Springs Church Hosts Ladies' Day and Gospel Meeting



A Beautiful Church Building Used by a Loving Congregation Bay Springs, Mississippi

Bay Springs is another of the beautiful small towns in Mississippi. While less than 2,000 live in the city, another 15,000 live in the county (Jasper).

The small congregation of about 20 members decided to host a Gospel Meeting, along with a special program for the ladies. The dates chosen were August 4 - 7, 2012. My June and I were asked to assist in their efforts. On Saturday, August 4, June spoke to the ladies who had diligently prepared for the occasion. As a result of their efforts, visitors came from Columbia, Newton, East Laurel, Kensington Woods, Quitman and Heidelberg and had "a wonderful time."

I was privileged to preach Sunday through Tuesday night. The local members were faithful to attend each service and worked diligently to make the

efforts successful. Several visitors came from the community and from area churches.

We are very thankful for the encouragement received and for the loving spirit of the Bay Springs church which is capably served by Charles Jones -- long time preacher.



Charles Jones

Crossing Over The Line Mississippi into Alabama

Wednesday evening, August 14, 2012, found my June and me in the western edge of Alabama. We were camped at Tiffin Motorhome RV Park, where we had some repairs done on our motorhome.

Although we were out of our home state (by only a mile or so), we were thankful for the opportunity given to visit with our brethren who make up the Red Bay church of Christ.

Arriving a little before 7:00 P.M., we were blessed to meet a very friendly, loving group of folks. It was a pleasure to meet many of their members, including their elders, **Robert Akers** and **Herbert Trulove**, and their preacher, **Scott Webster**.

Scott, who is new to the church (since July 1, 2012), taught the adult auditorium Bible class and did an excellent job. We learned that he and his family (wife, **Myra**; son, **Mason** and daughter, **Abby**) had recently moved from Moulton,

Alabama where he had preached for the Fairfield church.

I really appreciated the invitation to speak to the congregation about our work of the *Magnolia Messenger*. Over 20 requested that they be added to our mailing list.

In a printed brochure, the Red Bay church listed three of their priorities. They are **(1) Loving God (2) Standing Firm** and **(3) Reaching Out**. Sounds good!

Truly, we were blessed to have

crossed over the state line from Mississippi into Alabama and "drop in" on our brothers and sisters of the Red Bay church. (alf)



Scott Webster

Mt. Gilead Church Conducts Gospel Meeting

I find it both interesting and encouraging to see many Mississippi communities wearing "Bible names." We have larger towns such as **Sardis**, **Philadelphia** and **Corinth** with Bible names. Out in the country, it is very common to run across smaller communities and/or local churches that include, in their identification, such Bible words as "Bethel", "Jerusalem", "Ephesus", "Mt. Zion", "Mt. Olive", "Bethlehem", "Ebenezar", and "Sarepta".

Up in the northeast corner of Mississippi, near Fulton, there is a country road called the "Mt. Gilead Road." And, on that road is a church building which is home to Christians known as the "Mt. Gilead Church of Christ."

"Mt. Gilead" is another Bible name. Serious students of the Scriptures are aware that in the old country of Israel there is a "picturesque mountainous region" on the east of the Jordan River called "Gilead"; sometimes, known simply as "Mt. Gilead." (Judges 7:3)

On August 14, 2012, my June and I traveled a few miles southwest from Red Bay, Alabama, where we were camping in our RV, over into Mississippi and found the road called "Mt. Gilead Road." Traveling west a short distance down the road, we topped a hill ("mountain") and there, to our right, was a building with a sign out front which read, "Mt. Gilead Church of Christ."

We knew we were at the right place. According to an ad we had seen in a newspaper (*Belmont Journal*), a gospel meeting was in progress and the time for the evening service was drawing nigh. Several very friendly folks had already arrived; thus, we were blessed to meet and greet several brothers and sisters who had come to be a part of the "Revival Meeting." In addition to Mt. Gilead church members, visitors had come from **Red Bay**, **Pine Grove**, **Zion's Rest**, **Ozark** and other nearby communities.

When services began at 7:00 P.M., **Wayne Mitchell**, long time preacher for the country church, warmly welcomed everyone. Afterwards, **Roger Crane**, a local member, ably led congregational singing. We started out singing a prayerful request, asking the Lord to "Revive us Again." This was followed by, "How Beautiful Heaven Must Be" -- a song and a thought I never tire of singing and contemplating.

Billy Lambert of Summerdale, Alabama, was the guest evangelist. He quoted several



verses from Ezekial 37 and announced his sermon topic as, "The Valley of Dry Bones." Brother Lambert stated that the "dry bones" of Ezekial 37 represented the nation of Israel and that God was ready to give life to "the dead." Lambert compared Israel's condition to our present world which, for the most part, is spiritually dead and "lieth in wickedness" (I John 5:19).

The well known preacher from Alabama (*not to be confused with Bill Lambert from Mississippi, who was for many years associated with Magnolia Bible College in Kosciusko*) called upon us to realize that, as a church, our mission is to take the gospel to a dead world in hopes that those "dead in sin" may "live" in Christ Jesus. As brother Lambert presented the Bible plan (way) for eternal life through Jesus Christ, he said, "I don't know of any other than the Bible way."

The
Mitchells

**Katherine
&
Wayne,**

Preacher
for the
Mt. Gilead
Church
of
Christ



Meet Boxwood's "First Family"

Doug, Laura and Tori Brackbill



In SW Louisiana is a special community wherein is located a very special church known as the "Boxwood Church." Here, the MM editor was blessed to "grow up." On July 4, we attended a family reunion and, among other things, got acquainted with Boxwood's "new" preacher. (*More later, including some of his writings, God willing.*)

The skilled preacher also stated that the "Valley of Dry Bones" could very well represent the need that God's people in the present time have for "revival" or "living again." He said, "We are not as well off as we may think we are." He mentioned, for an example, the church in Sardis who thought and said they were alive, but Jesus declared they were "dead" (Rev. 3:1).

Brother Lambert spoke of the pressing need for Christians to "wake up" -- to be *alive* and *active* in the work of the Lord. He called upon all to get back into serious Bible Study, to make daily Bible reading a habit and to fall in love with the author of "The Book." He further stressed the need for the Lord's church to "get back into soul-winning" and realize such is the "work of the church." He noted that "going to Hell" is serious; "It's not a vacation; it's eternal destruction!" (Matt. 10:28).

The sermon ended with a plea to respond to Christ. The service was concluded. After much time spent in visiting, it was finally time to make our way down the little hill and travel Mt. Gilead Road to Highway 23 and then back to Red Bay, Alabama. Here, we were to spend the night before continuing our journey on to Sevierville, Tennessee so we could attend "Polishing the Pulpit", along with about 2,500 other brethren. (*Report by editor*)

"The Gospel Meeting"

Some say the Gospel Meeting
Is old fashion and dead.
"People won't come anymore,"
Is what I've heard said.

Yet it is the hearts of men
That have grown hard and cold;
It is Satan and this world
Who has ruined their souls.

The message is as effective
As it has ever been,
It remains God's chosen way
To save a soul from sin.

It is strong gospel preaching
That this world needs;
We cannot give up, or
Stop spreading the seed.

If there is hope for finding
A single lost soul;
We must find them and share
The gospel of old.

We need to preach the Word
Morning, noon, and night.
It was during a Gospel Meeting,
Many of us first saw the light!

So let us open our Church doors
Each night at sunset;
At least people passing will know
That we're not dead yet!

- Dennis Doughty -
1439 Park Alley
Robinsonville, MS 38664
dennis1848@bellsouth.net

Gospel Meeting

Clinton, Mississippi
October 14 - 17, 2012
Sunday: 9:00; 10:00 & 6:00s
Monday - Wednesday: 7:00
Chris Steele, Evangelist
(New Port Richey, FL)
Theme: "The Gospel"
Clinton Church of Christ
155 Broadway St
Clinton, Mississippi 39056
601-924-5300

(Our special thanks to Glenn Newell for the invitation)

BENTLEY, LA

The Bentley church is planning a "Ladies' Day" and a Gospel Meeting. The Ladies' Day, with **June Franks** speaking, is scheduled for Saturday, October 20. The Gospel Meeting begins on Sunday (October 21) and goes through Wednesday. The visiting evangelist is to be **Al Franks**, editor of MM. All who live in the central Louisiana area are cordially invited to attend. (*For more information, please contact Bill Nettles, preacher, at 318-452-2477.*)

Fayette Church Schedules Gospel Meeting

All are invited to attend the annual Fall Gospel Meeting in Fayette, Mississippi. It is planned for October 6-9, 2012 with guest evangelist **Curtis W. Pittman**, preacher for the Hanging Moss congregation in Jackson, Mississippi. Sunday services are at 10:00, 11:00 and 3:15. A fellowship meal is in between morning and afternoon services. Monday and Tuesday evening services are at 7: **Archie Bennett** is the local evangelist at Fayette.

GOVERNMENT

(Continued from page 3)

the governing authorities” (Romans 13:10). “Every person” is to heed these words and be subject to whatever civic rulers are in power.

At the time these words were penned, Nero was emperor of Rome. This was prior to his persecution of Christians, but he was already an egomaniacal despot who had killed several of his own family and who openly engaged in deviant sexual practices. It is obvious that the command to submit to governmental authorities is not predicated on the virtue or goodness of the authority.

However, the command to obey rulers is not unconditional. In the early days of the church, the Council, the Jewish Sanhedrin, charged the apostles “not to teach or preach at all in the name of Jesus” (Acts 4:18). Jesus, of course, had commanded them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Thus a direct command of Jesus is countermanded by governmental authority. “But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men’” (Acts 5:29). Thus by an apostolically approved example, we learn we are not to obey government when its requirements directly contradict God’s commands.

Otherwise, we are “to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work” (Titus 3:1-20).

We are not allowed to speed on the highway, but we are to preach against specific sins even if penalized by the government for doing so.

Pay Taxes

Paying taxes to the Romans was highly unpopular among most of the Jews, including the Pharisees, although the Herodian party had accepted the *status quo* and were opposed to challenging it. Herodians and Pharisees were enemies but worked together in their opposition to Jesus. They thought they would trap Jesus into taking sides on a volatile issue. “Then the Pharisees went and plotted how to entangle him in his talk. And they sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, ‘Teacher, we know that you are true and teach

the way of God truthfully, and you do not care about anyone’s opinion, for you are not swayed by appearances. Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?’”

Jesus responded in a way that took away the basis of their objection. “But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, ‘Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin for the tax.’ And they

brought him a denarius. And Jesus said to them, ‘Whose likeness and inscription is this?’ They

said, ‘Caesar’s.’ Then he said to them, ‘Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.’ When they heard it, they marveled. And they left him and went away” (Matthew 22:18-22, parallels in Mark 12 and Luke 20).

Paul notes this obligation as well: “Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God’s wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed” (Romans 13:5-7).

We are to pay taxes “for the same reason” we are in subjection, that is “for conscience sake,” by which Paul means “because it is the right thing to do.” The similarity in wording indicates Paul knew Jesus’ saying about taxes.

Most of us probably do not like at least some of the ways our tax money is used, but that does not allow us to escape paying them.

This stated obligation to pay our taxes as due, along with what Scripture says elsewhere about honesty, integrity and not stealing, requires that we file our tax returns accurately, reporting all income and taking only legitimate deductions.

Pray for Them

Since “the Most High God rules the kingdom of mankind and sets over it whom he will” (Daniel 5:21), it does not seem strange that prayer for those who rule over us may be effective. To that add that Scripture commands that we pray for our rulers. “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way” (Titus 2:1-2).

It is certainly appropriate to pray that those in power have the wisdom to govern well and the disposition to fulfill the purposes for which they are ordained: to encourage and protect those who do right and to punish evil doers. If they govern to that end, that will enable Christians to “lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way.”

Honor Them

Peter, after saying submit to “the emperor as supreme or to the governor as sent by him,” adds, “Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor” (1 Peter 2:17).

Our questioner suggests a distinction, “honoring the office not the man.” But a man holds the office and one cannot dishonor the man without dishonoring the office, and *vice versa*. That is not to say that one cannot express disagreement with those holding office. We may be certain that neither Paul nor Peter

agreed with all of the decrees or actions of Nero. But it is possible to disagree respectfully, just as it is recognizable when one disagrees disrespectfully.

Paul tells Titus, “Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people” (Titus 3:1-2). Note, “to speak evil of no one,” and, “show perfect courtesy toward all people.” The “of no one” and

“toward all people” would include “the rulers and authorities” and, significantly, they are part of a context speaking of submission to rulers.

The Old Testament commanded, “You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people” (Exodus 22:28). Peter reminds us about Jesus, that “when he was reviled, he did not revile in return” (1 Peter 2:23). By that he left us an example to follow (1 Peter 2:21).

Paul spoke harshly to the Jewish High Priest, calling him a “white washed wall,” because the high priest had unlawfully commanded Paul to be struck in the mouth. When bystanders asked, “Would you revile God’s high priest?,”

Paul said, “I did not know, brothers, that he was the high priest, for it is written, ‘You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people’” (Acts 23:4-5).

Both Peter and Jude in their re-

spective epistles write about certain false teachers who speak reviling words against those in authority with whom they disagree, some think angels, some think church leaders, perhaps apostles or elders. They “indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction” (2 Peter 2:10-12).

Jude, writing evidently of the same false teachers, says, “Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones. But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you.’ But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively” (Jude 8-10). According to Jude, even Michael, though an arch angel, would not revile the devil.”

All of that seems clearly to say that in our disagreements with anyone, especially with people who hold authoritative offices, we should show constraint in our words.

That harmonizes with what we are told elsewhere about gentleness and humility as we deal with our brothers and sisters who may be in error. “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted” (Galatians 6:1).

Really harsh, insulting, reviling words are inappropriate for Christians to use in reference to anyone, especially those in places of legitimate authority or, for that matter, even if it is the devil.

Dear Magnolia Messenger,

My name is Rodney Barnes. I greet you in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus. I’m a brother in Christ who is from Northwest Louisiana. I must say that I’m thrilled to know that the Magnolia Messenger exist! Therefore I’m proud to ask that I be granted the opportunity to receive a copy with thanks. Sincerely, (Rodney Barnes, Natchitoches, LA)

Really harsh, insulting, reviling words are inappropriate for Christians to use in reference to anyone, especially those in places of legitimate authority or, for that matter, even if it is the devil.

Then cruise control was invented. I have not gotten a single speeding ticket since I have had it on my car. I set the cruise at what the law allows. When a police car comes in sight, I am not startled. I do not quickly slow down. I know I am not violating the law. It is a comfortable feeling.

Nile Church (Central Mississippi) Conducts Gospel Meeting (July 15 - 18, 2012)

Evangelist **James A. Horton** of Ripley, Mississippi, was guest speaker during the summer meeting at Nile. He used as his theme “*Sermons for Saints and Sinners*.” **Jim Mordecai** serves as the local preacher for the Nile church, located a few miles south of Kosciusko. My June and I were blessed to be in attendance on Sunday evening and hear his challenging lesson on giving to the Lord “*All That You Have*.”



James Horton
(Visiting After Services)

Gimme That Ole Time Religion

-Jim Howard-

Do you remember what things used to be like in the old days? The church was not only the religious but the social center of the community. Gospel meetings (not Revivals) lasted 2 weeks and the sermons lasted



Jim Howard

Preachers use better grammar and apply better formal education to the explication of various scriptures. Church programs are a lot better organized and often operated by professionals. There's a lot more money in the church's bank account. Gospel meetings (often called seminars, workshops, or lectureships) go Friday evening through Sunday. Much more is available in terms of professionally produced curriculum materials for Bible school. For the most part our singing sounds better.

Yet, sometimes I wonder if we're that much better off. Yes, there was some legalism that needed to be exchanged for grace, but little did we know how much of that grace would be of the cheap variety. We don't debate the denominations much anymore, but I sometimes wonder if it matters much to some of us what a person believes.

Have the last 50 years made us more evangelistic or more benevolent? Are we more conscious of inner sin? Do we study the word more? Do we pray with greater fervency? Do they more commonly know us by our love? Are we being transformed more completely into the likeness of our Lord? Do we grieve for the plight of a lost world? Just maybe the cult of the "new and different" is overrated. Just maybe there might be something of value to be learned from "that ole time religion." "Stand by the roads, and look and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it...." (Jeremiah 6:16).

Jim Howard preaches for the Madison congregation in Madison, Mississippi. His address: P. O. Box 1845; Madison, MS 39130

**Do You Have
Friends or Relatives
You would like to receive
the
Magnolia Messenger?
franksmm@aol.com**

Yes, things have changed some since that era. We've moved to the better side of the tracks and are used to 20-minute sermons.

Maw Was There

2 Timothy 1:5

"When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy GRANDMOTHER Lois...."

- Delbert Turner, Jr. -

Thanksgiving Day, November 24, 2011, Mary Ann and I, along with our children, their husbands, our grandchildren were blessed by gathering with Blanche and Marvin and most of their family, and with Sarah and Paul and their family in the activities building of the Sherrod Avenue Church of Christ in Florence, Alabama. What a wonderful day we had together.

After much visiting and a most delicious lunch, most of us assembled in a classroom for us to see a film concerning the work in Zambia that Greg, Mary and daughters are involved in, and will be moving to in the near future.

Near the end of that wonderful session, prayers were offered, Jeremy was leading a few beautiful songs, and some discussion followed. Someone made the point about how most of us were Christians, baptized into Christ, into His church, had Christian parents, Christian mates, and how that came about.

As the discussion progressed "Precious Memories that have lingered for ages began to flood my soul." I stood and attempted to relate some of what was on my heart, but emotionally I was not able to do so. Therefore, I am putting this in writing.

When I was born, September 26, 1929, my "Maw Turner was there." When Blanche was born October 13, 1931, our "Maw Turner was there." When time came for Sarah to be born March 31, 1943, our "Maw Turner was there." (Dad got a neighbor to carry me to get Maw. I found her in an evening Bible class at the Skyline Church of Christ. But we got back in time for "Maw to be there.")

As important as those events were, those were not the most important times for "Maw to be there." May 13, Mothers Day 1945, was a day on which my life was changed forever. I was fifteen years old, and for quite sometimes, my beloved grandmother, Maw Turner (Minnie), had asked me to visit the Gloster Street Church of Christ in Tupelo with her. I would say "Maw, I attend church almost every Sunday." But "Maw kept being there."

She kept asking, so out of respect for my grandmother, I decided to visit Maw that Mother's Day weekend. I lived 16 miles away and had no transportation.



"Paw and Maw" Turner

My only way was to get a ride on the milk truck to Tupelo on Saturday, and that I did. I stayed that night with Maw and Paw, and visited the Gloster Street church with her on Sunday, and I have always been so thankful to my Heavenly Father that I was permitted to do so. The Bible Study lesson was about the new birth, John 3:3-5. That, along with the sermon and what I already knew, caused me to want to obey the Lord in baptism that day. And so I did. As we rode back from the assembly to Maw's house with J.R. and Katie Lee Kingsley, I remember telling Maw that I was going to be faithful.

I well remember a plaque that hung on the wall in Maw's kitchen until her death in November, 1957. The Plaque read, "Only what's done for Christ will last." How fortunate I am that "Maw was there" to care for my soul.

Not long after I was baptized, my sister, Blanche, began at-

tending with me when we could go. In the Spring of 1947, Dad bought a 1931 Model A Ford in real good condition. Blanche and I began attending more regularly and in a short while, she was baptized. "Maw was there."

Not long thereafter, we learned of the church in Fulton and we began attending there. That was about half the distance to Tupelo, and we loved the congregation there, too. Dad, Mom and Sarah began to attend some with us. Mom was baptized during a Gospel Meeting at the Eggsville congregation in about 1949. Sarah was baptized at Fulton during a Gospel Meeting in the mid 50's and Dad was restored a few years later.

My wife was not a member of the Lord's church when we married January 8, 1954. But she faithfully attended the Gloster Street congregation with me. She witnessed "Maw being there" -- even though she was suffering with leukemia. Mary Ann was baptized in June, 1957. Maw died in November, 1957.

We have large family gatherings still. Seldom are many of accountable age present who have not been baptized into Christ. How blessed we are. From whence did all this for us begin? "**Maw was there.**"

Written by Delbert L. Turner, Jr. on December 3, 2011. Brother Delbert, who has faithfully served the Lord through many years, can be reached by addressing:

Delbert Turner
225 S 3rd St
Baldwyn, MS 38824

Lake Charles Church Celebrates 75 years of Service

The dates of June 30 and July 1, 2012 were very special to hundreds associated with the Boulevard Church of Christ in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Brethren gathered from many places to help the local church celebrate 75 years of service in the work of the Lord since the congregation had its beginning in 1937. On Sunday morning, **nearly 500** were present to participate in the worship and celebration.

My June and I were blessed to be among those who rejoiced together and thanked God for the spiritual influence the church has had in the local area and many other parts of the earth. The elders are **Loren Elkins, Louis Estes, Glen Franks and Steve Griffin.**

We are thankful that our oldest son and his family are a part of the church for which Paul has preached the past nine years. May God continue to bless. (editor)



God Help Us

To Live On This Side of The Resurrection

Editor's Note: The following article, written by Fenter Northern, who served many years as Instructor and Academic Dean for MBC, included a request that we pray for **Sue** -- his beloved wife.

Since the article was written, Sue has died. She passed away on Wednesday, September 12. Fenter wrote, "At about 6:02 this evening the angels came for Sue."

Out of his own personal struggles with life's difficulties brother Fenter has written to encourage himself and others as we all face the problems of earthly life. (Alf)



Fenter and Sue Northern

(Sue Is Now Deceased; She Died 9-12-12)

the problem: *wrong side of the resurrection.*

Ahhh, we may have read about the resurrection somewhere, or heard about it, but it has not yet sunk into the reality region of our hearts—the reality that suddenly jolts one with that Damascene light, lifting the soul from the pits of agonizing despondency of defeat (like those two were walking back home to Emmaus) and giving them a sense of quiet joy of a felt victory in the midst of their torturing tragedy.

God help us to really, really let it sink in far below the intellectual ascent to the deep emotional level that God has actually broken into history and has once for all spoken, bringing light to those morose spirits still grouping in the darkness on the other side of the resurrection—but for the transformed spirit, we must accept what is true.

This is the only absolute balm for the contagious sickness of melancholy about us and the only

power to sustain us Christians in the critical downturns that crush down upon us.

That was the discovery that began the church and made the saints sing on their way to the hungry lions. Can you possibly imagine that? By grasping the real truth of the resurrection, and knowing that Jesus after the great deed was endured had the last electrifying word: "Let not your hearts be

troubled." But the key when he said that was: "You believe in God, believe also in me" —not superficially, superstitiously, bombastically, formally or ritualistically, but having that gut feeling come over you that God actually did that thing. That makes all seemingly senseless things meaningful and begin to fall in place—things which will one day stand when the world is judged in righteousness.

This faith does not leave it all up to us singing "in the sweet by and by," but heartwarmingly transforms tragedy into victory right here and now. Christians console each other by sharing these thoughts. God help us to live our religion on this side of the resurrection.

Pray for Sue——me too! God bless.

Fenter D. Northern
6213 Bell Grove Pl
Montgomery, AL 36117

Email: fnorthern@charter.net

May God Richly Bless!

LA/Texas RV Rally Planned for October 24-28, 2012

Salmon Lake Park; Grapeland, Texas
Ray Franks, Director, 337-786-3095; 337-515-0866

Lesson topics for "**Making the Right Choice**" will cover how different choices we make in our lives affect us and others. We will have different speakers Wednesday through Friday night. I am sure that we will all take something special away from each lesson as always. As an added treat, the town of Palestine is having the "**Hot Pepper**" Festival in town for us to attend Saturday, culminating with Dan Manuel's "**Autumn Country**" **Dogwood Jamboree Show** on Saturday night at the Palestine Civic Center.

...**Food & Entertainment:** For our "early birds", there will be the traditional Tuesday night seafood dinner. Pot luck Wednesday & Thursday with our special Friday night **FISH FRY**. As you well know—**Nobody** goes hungry around here!! We will have gospel singing throughout the rally and entertainment at night including live music/ skits/ & comedy.

...RV reservations are not needed. However, if you would like to **rent a cabin**, please call Salmon Lake Park—936-687-2594.

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 one or two times unless a specific request for extension is received from the congregation looking for a preacher. There is no charge for this service. Thank you for asking!
Editor

Yazoo City, MS Seeks Full time Minister

Immediate Opening

Attendance: About 60
Very Nice Facilities
(Located on Highway 49)
Auditorium Seats 300
10 Classrooms
Large Activity Room
3 BR House Furnished

"Free of Debt"

Yazoo City Church of Christ
Yazoo City, MS 39194

Seeking

Mature, Experienced Person
With Supportive Family
Call 662-571-4323 or
662-571-0899

Forward or fax Resume to

Church of Christ
1230 E. Broadway
Yazoo City, MS 39194
(662-746-2579)

Attention:
Preacher Committee
Fax: 662-673-1128

Louisville, MS Searching for Minister

Attendance: 20-25
House Provided
(3 BR; 2 Bath)
City Population: 6600

contact

Burgess Jackson
662-773-3069
Vernal Lampley
662-803-4552

Brandon, Mississippi (Associate Minister)

The North Brandon Church of Christ in Brandon, Mississippi, is looking for an associate minister to work with our youth and younger adult families and singles. He must be able to teach and preach as needed. He must be married and be scripturally sound. Please send a resume to:

The Elders
North Brandon
Church of Christ
P. O. Box 251
Brandon, MS 39042

Remember the
Magnolia Messenger
in your prayers.

Reform, Alabama (North Pickens)

The North Pickens Church of Christ in Reform, Alabama, is seeking a sound, dedicated gospel preacher to serve an area where the church has existed for many years, but needs to grow in faith and number. The congregation will be able to provide a residence located on church property and a small salary. Please send resume and references to

Jerry Sparks
P. O. Box 181
Millport, AL 35576
or contact by phone at
205-662-4256
(Date: 3-12)

(61 South) Natchez Preacher Needed

Attendance: 25-30
House Provided
Utilities & Salary

Contact
John Seyfarth, Jr.
139 Upper Kingston Rd
Naatchez, MS 39120
601-442-6503

This church is seeking a man with some experience, who loves the Lord and His Word, who truly cares for others and is ready to "speak the truth in love."

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

Where Can I Find The Strength?

- Ken Joines -

If you have never asked this question, just stick around. Life has a way of presenting us with situations we never dreamed we would face. And when the thunder rolls and the storm strikes, you may find yourself asking, "How in the world can I possibly get through this?" David asked that question long ago in Psalm 121:1 "...From where does my help come?", he wanted to know. Where do you turn for strength? Where can I turn for some extra strength beyond anything I can muster? There is no shortage of over-the-counter help: Five Hour Energy, Jolt Cola and Red Bull, to name a few. People need extra strength and energy and some will try anything. Athletes get caught at it.

But for that part of your life that calls for real strength, you need not look to Walgreen. Don't we wish there were some kind of pill we could swallow and all of a sudden be able to face life's most difficult challenge? Or a pill, perhaps, that would empower us to go next door and share our faith, or give more generously, or be more patient and kind, or produce more of the fruits of the Spirit. But alas, there is no pill or potion, soda or supplement that can give us that kind of strength. Where, then, do I find it?

Read carefully John 15:1-10. Jesus says here, "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." (vs.5, ESV). Jesus knows the challenges we will face and the strength we will need. Here are a couple areas where we simply have to have help beyond ourselves.

HELP TO GET THROUGH WHAT WE CANNOT GET THROUGH UNDER OUR OWN POWER. There will be some things happen in your life that you just never imagined would take place. It may have to do with your family. Cancer. Alzheimers. A fatal disease in your spouse. The loss of a child. The breakdown of your own health. Your child rejects you. The divorce goes through against your will. On and on the list goes. Really hard things. And you are left wondering, "Now where do I turn.....how can I ever handle this.....this is a mountain I just cannot climb." It is your darkest



Ken Joines

hour and it seems all the lights have gone out. Who can help me?

HELP TO NOT DO WHAT WE KNOW WE SHOULD NOT DO. We are constantly being tempted with sin and it takes so much strength to overcome, to resist unholy urges. Our heart is right. We want to do the right thing. We're not out looking for something evil to do. But without help we stumble and fall; we simply can't do it on our own. Sooner or later, we learn that Satan is a formidable power. He is alive. And he works his schemes right into our very soul.

HELP TO DO WHAT WE KNOW WE SHOULD DO. We have this picture of what we want to be. And it looks so easy when we just sit there and think about it—be more patient with those we love, more generous to those in need, consistent in my church attendance and prayer habits, kinder to my mate. But what happens? A critical look at self reveals we are failing miserably in some or maybe all of these

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areas. So where do we find the strength needed to do the good things, to live the good life?

Look now at John 15:1-10. Jesus and his followers are walking along the way. He knows they will soon be facing persecution. Even death. He does not want them to be blindsided by these things. So what can he say to prepare them for these things? They walk past these ancient vineyards of Olive trees. He stops and breaks the silence, then gestures toward a plant and points out that there is the main vine and that vine has branches. Then he says, "I am the true vine. You are the branches." He wants them to know just who they are and who he is. He is setting the stage for some vital teaching. He wants them to see that if this branch does not stay connected to the vine, it will die. But if the branch stays connected, then power or life will flow from the vine into and through the branch.

He is saying that I should just acknowledge my weakness. The power is not in the branch, but in the vine. When we thus acknowledge our weakness we are in perfect position to receive strength from God. The call here is not to make yourself weak; you are already weak. You are just a branch. That's all you are. He is the vine. In another place, the Lord says, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up." (James 4:10 NKJV).

He is the vine. We are just branches. And the power—life—comes from the vine. The life is in the vine, not the branch. But life will flow into the branch if the branch just stays connected to the vine. We get into trouble when we try to make ourselves the vine. Your friends, the TV talk shows and a thousand self-help books will all tell you, "YOU can get through this.....YOU have the inner strength to do it.....if YOU just dig deep enough, YOU can climb this mountain.....there is no limit to what the HUMAN BEING can accomplish....." Simply stated, this is not so!

Do you remember when Moses was out there on the back side of nowhere doing his shepherd thing and he saw the bush on fire? God told Moses he wanted him to go and talk to the most powerful man on earth and tell him to release these 2-3 million slaves and let them go free. This had to sound like a joke to Moses

and he said to God, "I can't do that." And what does God say to Moses? Does God say, "Oh, Moses! Moses, you have underestimated your own strength, my good man! You can do this! You are such a gifted person, Moses. That's why I chose you. Your parents instilled this can-do spirit deep inside you. Moses, you have the talent." Did God say anything even closely akin to that? No. God said none of that. Well, what DOES God say? He said, "Moses, I will be with you." The call was not for Moses to find strength from within; the call was to find strength from above. God is saying, "Moses, you just be the branch. Let me be the vine. And you stay connected to me—the vine—and my strength will flow to you and through you to Pharaoh." And it did.

Jesus has a really crucial word here for you and me. From vs. 4-7 he uses the term "abide" seven times. Seven times in four verses!!! What do you do when you abide? You sit still and wait on the Lord. God said, "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles;

they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint." (Isa. 40:31 KJV). "Be still and know that I am God," he said in Psalm 46:10 (ESV). But it is contrary to human nature for us to wait. We want to DO something. For us, it is production that counts. But in this passage Jesus is telling us that it is not production, but connection. Remember he said, "Abide in me—stay connected to me." And connection comes before production. We first connect to the vine and stay connected, and then we can produce.

So where does my strength come from? Not from my genes. Not from my family heritage, nor a strong will, nor an independent spirit, nor an "inner strength". Make no mistake about it: "My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth." (Psalm 121:2 ESV) Be a good branch. Be a living branch.....a powerful branch by staying connected to the True Vine, Jesus Christ.

Ken Joines

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Larry Echols, Yazoo City Preacher Died at the Age of 65

About one year ago, we were pleased to run a feature story in the MM about the *spiritual restoration* of Larry Echols, a former preacher of the Gospel. At the time of his restoration, Larry had been away from the Lord and "out of the pulpit" for almost thirty years.

Thankfully, on April 26, 2008, Larry, along with his wife, Janie, came back to the Lord and his church. Their restoration, followed by "works meet for repentance,"

eventually, led to an opportunity for Larry to serve as preacher for the Yazoo City Church of Christ.

Concerning all those years he had "wasted," Larry was heard to say, "I'm thankful the Lord did not give up on me and that he spared my life."

The Lord did spare his life; however, only for a little more than four years. On Friday, June 29, 2012, Larry passed into eternity following a few days of illness.

During those "spared years," Larry and Janie faithfully served the Lord. The latter half of the period Larry counted his blessings every day to once again be back in the pulpit, serving as the full time preacher for the Yazoo City church.

Funeral services for brother Larry were held on Sunday, July 1, 2012. A long time friend and former ministerial school mate, **Ronnie Cosby**, conducting the service.

We express our heartfelt sympathy to his wife, Janie, and to their families. Our prayers are with the Yazoo City church as they make adjustments and search for a replacement preacher. **(See ad on Page 18)**



Larry Echols
Behind the Pulpit in Yazoo City



Somewhere in Mississippi

Madison Church Hires Youth Minister



Nathan Pirtle
And His Wife, Lauren

The Pirtles moved from McMinnville, Tennessee about three months ago so Nathan could work full-time with the fairly new congregation (4 or 5 years old) in Madison, Mississippi.

Nathan is from "West Tennessee" and Lauren is from Belmont, Mississippi. After four years, **Jim Howard** continues to capably serve as "Pulpit Preacher" for the church that brings together about 100, more or less, each Lord's day. The church is blessed to have two elders to provide leadership and to "shepherd the flock." They are **Bob Brown** and **Kyle Smith**. Deacons are **Corey Cofer**, **David Dees**, **Brad Harriman**, **Bill Richard** and **Rob Salley**.

MM Invites Your Suggestions

Beautiful Butterfly (Lessons to Learn)



1. It is amazing what changes take place in the life span of a butterfly. (From an ugly worm to a beautiful creature)
2. It is amazing how God can change an ugly, sinful life into a beautiful creation through the power of His Word!

Don't Judge the Final by the Present

Sad, But Encouraging!

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Franks,
Please take my mother's name off your mailing list, due to her passing away 6-25-12. Her name is Elizabeth Huddleston.

She was a faithful Christian who loved your paper. Often we would compare answers to the Question Box and have a Bible study together. What fun we had studying God's Word together and enjoying each others company. Her legacy to her child, grandchildren, great grandchildren was her faith, love of God and family and all she taught us of the two.

I enjoy your paper, all the articles and the Question Box which makes me dig a little harder, but is very helpful to me. May God bless you both and your good works... Please pray for me and my family. Thank you. Love in Christ, (Linda Hogue, Ripley, MS)

Do You Have Family & Friends You Would Like To Receive the MM?

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Response to

"Getting To Know Your Bible"

David Howell reported, "We are aware of about **160 baptisms** all over the USA last year, plus hundreds of Bible questions were answered... We are receiving **14,000 calls per year** from people requesting Bible lessons that brother Lambert offers and the great majority of these people are not Christians...."

After relating an instance of where a soul was reached and saved through the TV program, brother Howell said, "This is why we do this, not only on TV, but in the Lord's church... to save souls and give glory to the Lord." (For more information: **251-989-7748**)

"Pray For Our President"

Brought Criticism to MM Editor

Editor's Note: In the most recent issue of the MM, we taught, as does the Bible, that homosexuality is sinful. We also carried a companion article (on same page) entitled "Homosexuality Is Not The Only Sexual Sin." This article called for repentance of all who choose to "live together" before marriage.

We also included a request for readers to pray for our president Obama. One of the specific requests was that the president "may come to realize that his approval of 'gay marriages' is in stark contrast with God's disapproval of such sinful conduct." (The president had publicly announced on May 9, 2012, that gay marriages had his approval.)

As MM readers might expect, from our present "**evil and adulterous generation**", not all response has been positive.

One reader who identified himself as "An humble servant" wrote the following.

It is mandatory that I write this letter... I inferred from the author that he ranked gay marriage (which I believe is a sin) above other sins. My reading of the Bible state that sin is sin... the first sin that God hates is a proud look. Will the writer place an article in the next paper that state that we should pray that a person who walk around with his nose in the air, patting himself on his back, need to repent because he is misguided?... The president may be misguided and so is the writer of the article... I am sure my letter will not make the next paper but someone has to stand up for injustice. I will not sign my name since the writer did not sign his. The Bible state: he who is within sin cast the first stone."

Editor's Response. I am thankful that our "humble servant"

believes that gay marriage is sinful. So do I. So teaches the Bible! We are agreed.

The reader said that he believed that "sin is sin." So do I. On the very same page of the article being criticized by our reader, we printed in larger print, "**Homosexuality is not the only sexual sin.**" In even larger type spread across two columns appeared the statement, "**SIN IS STILL SIN.**"

The reader indicated that some "misguided" person was walking around with his "nose in the air and patting himself on the back" and added that such a person needs to repent. I guess he was talking about me. I really don't know why. He also stated that Christians "should be careful when we criticize others." I agree. However, the reader did not seem to hesitate to criticize me and, it feels like he was casting a stone in my direction. And, if the **unknown** reader will go back to the articles on page 19 of the previous issue of the MM, he will find at the bottom of the page, in the first column, the word "**Editor**" identifying me, A. L. Franks, as the writer of the article being questioned.

We do not normally respond to anonymous letters; however, we trust that our "humble servant, who seems sincere, may reevaluate his comments and realize that he has **written** his understanding of the Bible which, for the most part, **agrees** with what I **wrote** in the article. He said the president may be "misguided." I agree. He said that "gay marriage" was sinful and that "Sin is Sin." I agree. He said that we should pray that a person with a "proud look" would repent. I agree. We again ask that you "**Please Pray for our President,**" and our critic and the MM editor. (A. L. Franks)

Watch **DIRECTV**

"Getting To Know Your Bible"

Monday - Friday
DIRECTV Channel 377
9:30 p.m. CT
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Billy Lambert
Speaker



Miracle Made Mothers

SARAH

“And Abram and Nahor took them wives; the name of Abram’s wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor’s wife, Milca, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milca, and the father of Iscah. *But Sarai was barren; she had no child*” (Gen. 11 :29, 30).

To me, this scripture has great significance. Let us note that when we are first introduced to Sarai we learn that she was barren. In our modern language, she was sterile; incapable of producing offspring. “Now Sarai, Abram’s wife bore him no children; and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar. And Sarai said unto Abram, behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing; I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened unto the voice of Sarai” (Gen. 16:1,2).

When Abraham was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to him and told him that he would bless Sarai and give him a son of her and that she would be the mother of nations; that kings of people would come of her (Gen. 17: 16). “Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken of age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women” (Gen. 18:11).

Also, as earlier stated, she was barren. Considering all of these factors, it was impossible for her to have a child without God’s intervention. The Lord said, “Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah will have a son” (Gen. 18:14). “And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him” (Gen 21: 1 ,2). Sarah said, “Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? F or I have born him a son in his old age” (Gen. 21:7).

It greatly demonstrates the marvelous power of God to allow a barren, over ninety-year-old woman to become a mother! (Gen. 17:17). We can imagine how very happy she must have been to have finally given birth to her own child. I only regret she did not live long enough to have been a grandmother. She was nearing ninety-one when Isaac

by
- Avis Porter -



was born. She died at one hundred twenty-seven. Hence she lived until he was thirty-six. Isaac did not marry until he was forty. She died four years before he married Rebecca.

ELISABETH

“There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia; and his wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because they were both now well stricken in years” (Luke I :5-7).

“While Zacharias was in the temple, Gabriel, an angel, appeared unto him. He told him that his wife Elisabeth would bear a son and they were to call him John” (Luke 1:13). “And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord; and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy spirit, even from his mother’s womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1: 14-17).

But unlike Abraham, Zacharias did not believe and was struck dumb; unable to speak. For with God nothing shall be impossible (Luke 1 :36, 37). Zacharias said, “And thou child, shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways” (Luke 1:76). This child was John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus (Matt. 3: 1-17).

Have you considered the

similarity between these two couples? Sarah and Elisabeth were both barren. When God did allow them to become parents they were both old and well stricken in years. As was stated about Sarah, without God’s help, Elisabeth would never have become a mother.

MARY

Mary was the greatest miracle-made mother of all! Unlike Abraham and Zacharias, Joseph will have no part in this begetting. This birth will be without the human agency of man.

Gabriel, the angel that appeared to Elisabeth, Mary’s cousin, now visits her. He said, “Hail, thou art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest; And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever. And of His kingdom there shall be no end.

Then said Mary unto the angel, “How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?” And the angel answered and said unto her, “The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the son of God.” And Mary said, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord: Be it unto me according to thy word.” And the angel departed from her (Luke 1:26-35,38).

In all three cases the message was revealed from heaven and all three of the children were named by God.

Sarah was the mother of Isaac, through whom Christ descended. Elisabeth was the mother of the forerunner of Christ. Her son also baptized him. Mary was the mother of Christ, God’s only begotten Son.

God helped these women to become mothers and they helped God in presenting the Savior to the world.

Avis Porter
9803 Highway 336
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Bible Teaching Articles
are Welcomed by the
MM.

Toni Thompson Departed Earthly Life June 22, 2012

COLUMBUS: Along about the middle of July, Joe Thompson of Columbus, Mississippi, wrote to inform us of the departure of his beloved wife, Toni. He said that he and Toni had been married to each other for “46 good years.”

Concerning Toni, brother Joe said, “She was a very spiritual lady and touched a lot of lives. She was quiet and never stern but very effective....”

He added, “Toni always enjoyed the paper [MM] and the things ya’ll write. She shared it with other people and her friends in the neighborhood. She also enjoyed the RV Rallies... I want to thank you again for all the things you do.”

Funeral services were held for sister Thompson on June 25, 2012, following her death three days earlier. **Billy Ferguson**, preacher for the 7th Street church in Columbus officiated. Concerning the 70 year old Toni, brother Billy said, “*Toni did many things well. Friend. Faithful wife. Loving mother. Proud grandmother. Sister. Student of the Bible. She disliked the term ‘Bible scholar’, but that is what she became. Joe asked what was to become of her Bible, the one that was all marked up and worn out. The reply was,*



Ruth Davis
Enjoys The MM
Age: 95

Born: September 8, 1917
(Jacinto Church, Booneville, MS)

Martha Milam of Tupelo, Mississippi, recently wrote to us about her beloved mother. She said, “I’d love for you to print a small picture of her in your paper. She will be 95 years of age on September 8, 2012. She has been a member of the Jacinto church of Christ for over 70 years. She loves reading her Bible. She has seven children (all living). She was widowed in 1995 after 56 years of marriage to Clyde Davis.”

The daughter, Martha, also stated that her mother had been wanting her to send her name to us and tell us how much she enjoyed reading the Magnolia Messenger. We are grateful and encouraged. Thanks, Martha! (Editor)



Toni Thompson

“which one?”

Billy added, “*Toni looked me in the eye more than once and said, ‘Billy, you know I love you and I want you to preach my funeral. And you better not say anything mean about me or I’ll come back and get you.’*”

Toni and her husband, Joe, were members of the Highway 69 church in Columbus. Memorials can be made to **Operation Ukraine; P. O. Box 411; Columbus, MS 39703**

Magnolia Messenger

Welcomes Your
Comments and Suggestions

THANK YOU FOR
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the
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Messenger

RULEVILLE

If all went as planned, the Ruleville church of Christ (North Delmar Ave) conducted their annual **Ladies’ Day** on September 15th. The theme for the special day was “*Cleansing the Inside to Shine on the Outside.*” Thanks to **Lestine Rogers**, Publicity Committee Chairperson, for sending this announcement to the MM. **Billy C. Moore** serves as the long time preacher for the delta congregation in Ruleville, MS.

“Our First Ladies’ Day”

Saturday,
September 22, 2012

Beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Speaker

Joyce Maranto

(Rolling Fork, MS)

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“Looking Forward to Seeing You There”

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

Prepare To Meet Thy God Here Comes Isaac!

- June Franks -

Most eyes were focused on Hurricane Isaac during the last week of August, 2012, especially those who live along the Gulf Coast.

Hurricane Isaac finally made landfall on August 29, 2012. It has been overwhelming to see the destruction that Isaac caused; and, according to reports, there have been four deaths as a direct result of Isaac.

Hurricane Isaac came ashore exactly seven years to the date of Hurricane Katrina. Katrina came on to land with a fury that caused extensive destruction to New Orleans and all along the Gulf coast, especially the coast of Mississippi. According to reports, at least 1,836 lost their lives in Katrina and the subsequent flooding.

We have all been touched by the devastation and the deaths of those who were in the paths of the hurricanes. Our heartfelt sympathy and prayers goes out on behalf of each one who has been affected.

The Hurricane season is from June through November. Weather forecasters try to keep us informed as to the category of a hurricane and to the path it may take. Those who live in the projected paths of hurricanes are advised to make preparation. People are advised to board up their homes or businesses.

Often there is a mandatory evacuation for those in the hurricane path. Others are told to have plenty of water, food and other necessities in case of a power outage.

One of the statements that weather forecasters keep repeating on television is for those in the path of the hurricane to "make preparation." The repeated statement *to be prepared* keeps resonating in my mind, especially after seeing all the videos showing damage caused by previous hurricanes.

We do need to follow orders of those who are in the know. It so important to make preparations. Some who didn't make adequate preparations had to suffer the consequences. Some had to be rescued; others lost their lives. It seems the only way to escape the wrath of some hurricanes is to just leave one's home and seek higher ground.

Thinking about hurricanes and the need for preparation should remind each of us of the need to prepare for the destiny of our souls.



June Franks

We know that eternity is staring us in the face, whether it is when we stand before God on Judgement Day or when we leave this world by death.

The Bible says, "Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (Amos 4:12). *Prepare to meet thy God* is a phrase that has been placed on signs and billboards throughout the country. It is certainly an important statement and one that we need to take seriously.

The definition of **prepare** is to *make ready beforehand for a specific purpose as for an event or occasion.*

In Matthew 25, the parable of the ten virgins, we have the example of those who had made proper preparation and those who failed to make the needed preparation.

The Bible says, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise and five were foolish.

"They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them; But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

"And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

"But the wise answered, saying Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went on with him to the marriage and the door was shut.

"Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know nei-

ther the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." (Matthew 25: 1-13)

"*I know you not*" are four of the saddest words to be spoken. These words were spoken to the *foolish virgins* because they were *not prepared*. They had made some preparation but not enough.

If we knew this was to be our last day on earth, what would we do? The most important thing that we could do would be to make sure we are in the right relationship with God.

Are you a Christian? Are you prepared?

The Bible records the words of Jesus, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:15-16)

On the day of Pentecost, Peter preached, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38)

Have you obeyed these commands?

We all sin and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23). But if we are walking in the light the blood of Jesus Christ continually cleanses us from all our sins. (I John 1:4)

Also, if you knew that today was your last day on earth, you might want to mend some fences. You might begin by saying "I'm sorry" to someone that you may have offended.

Since we do not know when our last day may be or even the last day for a loved one, we should tell our loved ones every day that we love them. There have been instances, where one departed this life, with family members not even speaking to each other. How sad!

Remember the words that the prophet Isaiah spoke to Hezekiah when he was sick unto death, "Thus saith the Lord, *Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die*, and not live." (II Kings 20:1)

Let us realize how important it is to be prepared by making sure that, to be best of our ability, we keep our house "set in order."

Mrs. A. L. Franks
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....Thank you for your Magnolia Messenger, a Christian paper. Your articles are wonderful and helpful. (Ken & Terry Kiel, Sparta, WI)

POEMS

By

Barbara

Barbara Cagle Ray

bcagleray@comcast.net



The Bountiful Harvest (Farmers and God)

*I watch the farmers work their plots of land,
Then reap the harvest of well-worked sod.
Some sing hymns and whistle as they toil;
They must feel a kinship with their God.*

*They know the simple things of life so well;
I find my knowledge seems quite small.
They find sweet contentment in daily work
Where so many folks find none at all.*

*Any worries they have seem to wash away,
When they feel droplets of long-awaited rain.
Plants which shriveled in the noonday sun
Quickly revive and flourish once again.*

*Their life's work to me seems so fulfilling,
And it's obviously very rewarding to them.
They thank God for the bountiful harvest—
For it was done in partnership with Him!*

"Church Of Tomorrow"

Church of tomorrow, where are you?
It's so heartbreaking not seeing you stirring on your pew.
You might think it doesn't matter -- "I'm just one",
But if we all think that way; soon there are none!

Jesus died a horrible death on the cross;
To Him, seeing a congregation die is a terrible loss.
If you truly give God your heart,
You will not only be willing, but anxious to do your part.

In so many aspects of our lives we set goals,
But neglect the most important -- saving precious souls.
A lot of us are getting old, our hair is turning gray,
It won't be long before we'll be passing away.

We need the comfort before we go,
That the congregation that we love,
Will not cease to exist,
But continue to grow.

Pat Hartley; 144 Singing Hills Rd; Vicksburg, MS 39180

Need a Preacher?
Run an Ad. -- No Charge
See Page 18

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(See Question Box)

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(Turn to Page 24)

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6. Tommy J. Muirhead
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55. Linda T. Shirley
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78. Manuel Cotton
79. Gloria Cotton
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81. Kayla Cotton
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426. Carolyn Traha
427. Shelia Williams
428. Billie Boyd
429. Hattie Johnson
430. Betty Chattman
431. Ann Kelley
432. Judy Julian
433. Bobbie Holder
434. YOUR NAME.. next time?

NOTE: All answers received through 9-13-12 are included. Answers received afterwards will be noted in our next issue, God willing. Thanks for answering "The Question Box".

More Encouragement
...a small token of our appreciation for receiving the Magnolia Messenger. We look forward to its arrival and appreciate the stand for the truth which its portrays. (Travis & Joyce Foster; Fort Deposit, AL)

answers: last issue
Rich Folks in the Bible

THE ANSWERS: Below are listed 13 "rich people" mentioned in the Bible. In parentheses, following each person, you find the book and chapter (s) where each is identified. Please **match** the number by each person's name with the appropriate phrase that follows in the next section. **NOTE: In some cases, more than one phrase will match the same person.**

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adam (Gen. 2, 3) 2. Shunammite (2 Kings 4) 3. Zacchaeus (Luke 19) 4. Job (Job 1, 42) 5. Abram (Gen. 13) 6. Solomon (I Kings 3,10) 7. Rich man of Luke 16 8. Rich Young ruler (Lk. 18) 9. Boaz (Ruth 2,4) 10. Rich man of 2 Sam. 12 11. Rich Farmer (Luke 12) 12. Jesus (2 Cor. 8) 13. Joseph (Matt. 27; Luke 23; John 19) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4 He was the "greatest of all men of the east" 4 He was "perfect and upright" (Job 1:1) 13 A rich man said to be "a good man" (Lk 23:50) 8 He was "very sorrowful" and "very rich" 9 He was "a mighty man of wealth" 1 He was the richest man in the whole world 6 He was richer than any other king of his time 7 He "fared sumptuously every day" 5 He was "very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold." 3 He "gave half of his goods to the poor" 10 He took a lamb from a poor man 1 He lived in a paradise with a perfect wife 9 He married a Moabitess 11 The Lord called this man a "fool" 12 He was rich but, for you/me, he became poor. 4 He was rich; but lost it all; then regained double! 13 A secret disciple of Jesus who gave up his tomb 3 A short, tree climbing man in Jericho 13 He was assisted by Nicodemus in burying Jesus 9 He was the great grandfather of King David 6 In his reign, silver became as common as stones 7 He was rich in life; poor in death 2 "A great woman" who added a small room to her house for the prophet Elisha.
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Use **KJV** For
Wording & Spelling

The Question Box

Use **KJV** For
Wording & Spelling

The Two Testaments (Old & New)

Paul commanded Timothy to “study” or “give diligence” and to “rightly divide” or “handle aright” the word of truth. Bible students still face the same challenge. An often neglected area of study has to do with the “Two Testaments.” A failure to “rightly divide” and/or “handle aright” the testaments -- **understanding and respecting their differences** -- has resulted in many religious errors.

The purpose of this month’s study is to remind us of scriptural reasons why it is appropriate to speak of the first testament as “old” and the second as “new.” This study also is to emphasize that, as Christians, we are not bound by Old Testament laws, rather we are to be obedient to the

teachings of the New Testament as made known through Jesus and His inspired disciples.

Prayerfully study each of the sections in this lesson. After completing, *if you will*, please send your answers to us. By so doing, you will encourage others (*see page 23*) and you may be selected as our new Bible winner. (*Each issue, by random selection, we choose and award a beautiful new Study Bible to one student who sends in answers to “The Question Box.” YOU just may be the winner for this issue.*) Thank you for your interest in studying the “World’s Greatest Book” and for sending in your answers to the “Question Box”. (*af, editor and author of the “QB”*)

The Old Testament Superseded by the New Testament

Where does the Bible teach? (Match the reference in the scripture block (on right, below) with the scriptural teaching which shows that Old Testament laws are not binding on Christians.)

___ 1. Christians are “dead to the law” and “married to another (Christ).”

___ 2. “Believing Pharisees” were *wrongly* teaching that Gentile converts must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses.

___ 3. The Old Testament law, spoken of as the “ministration of death, written and engraven in stones”, was said to be “done away” and/or “abolished.” **NOTE:** “*Engraven in stones*” refers to the Ten Commandments!

___ 4. The Mosaic law was a “schoolmaster [tutor] to bring us unto Christ.” However, after Christ came, his followers are “no longer under a schoolmaster.”

___ 5. Christians are not to be entangled again with the old covenant, described as “the yoke of bondage” which including the requirement of circumcision. Those who would seek to be “justified by the law” are said to be “fallen from grace.”

___ 6. Jesus, at and in His death, broke down the “middle wall of partition” and “abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances.”

___ 7. God changed the Levitical priesthood to the priesthood of Christ and His disciples. The Bible says, “For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law.” God also promised, “I will make a new covenant”, then the inspired writer declared: “A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.”

- 1. Gal. 3:15-29
- 2. Acts 15:1-5
- 3. Ephesians 2:11-22
- 4. Hebrews 8:1-13
- 5. Gal. 5:1-6
- 6. 2 Cor. 3:1-18
- 7. Romans 7:1-4

What About THE Ten Commandments?

The New Covenant or Testament *includes* many commandments. In fact, every one of the ten commandments “engraven in stones” as given to the nation of Israel, **except** the “Sabbath law”, is *included* in the New Covenant. Some of the original ten commandments are even more encompassing and demanding in New Testament teachings. (See Matthew 5:21-30). Consider the **Old Testament** commandments found in *Exodus chapter 20 (below)* and **match the New Testament** reference (in block, on right) where each command is included or made a part of the New Covenant.

- ___ I Cor. 6:9,10
- ___ I John 5:21
- ___ Eph 6:2
- ___ Eph. 4:28
- ___ 2 Peter 2:14

- 1. “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”
- 2. “Honor thy father and thy mother...”
- 3. “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”
- 4. “Thou shalt not steal.”
- 5. “Thou shalt not covet...”

Many Old Testament Regulations Are Not Included in the New Testament.

(Study OT guidelines found in Deuteronomy 21-24. Write in the reference where each is found)

- 1. When a man takes a new wife: “...He shall be free at home one year and cheer up his wife...” (Deut. ___:___)
- 2. Under the OT a man was permitted to have more than one wife at a time. (Deut. ___:___)
- 3. OT law directed that an unrepentant and rebellious son be stoned to death (Deut. ___:___)

Study Old Testament Teachings in Contrast to New Testament Teachings

- 1. OT: A Limited Priesthood: (only the tribe of Levi). NT: All Christians are priests (I Peter 2:5)
- 2. OT: The use of instrumental music in worship. NT: Only singing is authorized (Eph. 5:19)
- 3. OT: Offering of animal sacrifices. NT: Jesus is our sacrifice -- “once for all” (Heb. 7:26,27)
- 4. OT: Burning of incense in worship. NT: Prayers rise constantly unto God (Phil. 4:6,7)
- 5. OT: A building considered sacred (temple). NT: God dwells in Christians (I Cor. 3:16,17)
- 6. OT: Required to keep the 7th day holy (“Sabbath”). NT: Lord’s day is special (Acts 20:7)

Please Send Your Answers To Us

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State _____
 Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Notice: Each person who sends in answers will be recognized in the next issue of the “MM” (see page 23). 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

Future Home for the Madison Church of Christ Madison, Mississippi

(Now under construction. Completion date? “Before the holidays”)



Encouragement

Dear MM,

My name is Linda Caillouet. My friend, for over 40 years, put me on the MM list and I am so happy she did. We even work together to get the answers over the phone. I get so much out of Bible reading since MM. I would like to put two people I know on the list. (Linda Caillouet, Gretna, LA)

Just a quick note to say thank you for the newsletter. I really enjoy it and also the Bible Study on the back. I ask that you all please keep my family and I in your prayers as I will do the same. God bless each and every one of you. Sincerely, (Michael Deaton, Wiggins, MS)

Dear Al & June,

I got excited to see mentions of my parents and uncle in the Magnolia Messenger this month... God bless you in the work that you do. I'm so busy with my work and our 3 sons that I have little meaningful time for Bible Study. Also Bible Studies based off a single assigned passage just aren't very challenging.

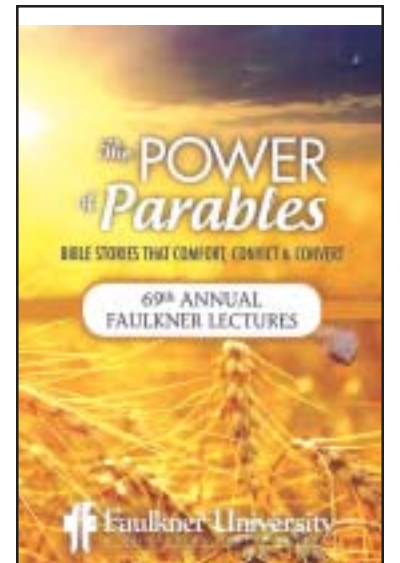
I love The Question Box because it challenges me to read and re-read multiple passages. Once again, thank you for all you do, both individually and corporately. Love in Christ. (Amy (Gallaher) Miles, Saegertown, PA)

The Franks Say Thanks!



Corinth, Mississippi
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 Preaching at 7:00
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Dan Winkler
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Study the Bible
 Encourage Others
 Answer
 “The Question Box”



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March 4-7, 2013

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Doris Carroll
 (Rayville, LA)
Congratulations!

14th Annual
LA/TEXAS RV RALLY
 “Making
 The Right Choice”
 Salmon Lake Park;
 Grapeland, Texas
October 24-28, 2012
 (Details on Page 18)

Mark Your Calendar
April 23-26, 2013
 15th Annual
 MS MM RV Rally
 Lake Tiak-O'Khata
 Louisville, MS
 More Information
 - next issue -