

MAGNOLIA Messenger

"Mississippi's GOOD NEWS Newspaper"

Serving Mississippi, Louisiana and Adjoining States

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

**The flowers appear on the earth;
The time of singing has come...**

Song of Solomon 2:12

HELP TEACH
AMERICA ABOUT

BAPTISM

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By John Gardner

an educator, gospel preacher and an elder of the church in Brandon, Mississippi.
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Godly Leaders

By Tim West

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**What is the
CHURCH
OF CHRIST ?**

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Billy Graham 1918-2018

Editor's Note: The world took notice when the death of Billy Graham was announced. The publicity given to his passing came as no surprise. Without any doubt, Mr. Graham was the most famous preacher in the world during the 20th century. Billy was born November 7, 1918, seventeen days after the birth of my mother. (She was born October 21, 1918 and died February 28, 2002. Memories. Precious!) But, back to Mr. Graham. He died on February 21, 2018, only a few months short of his 100th birthday.

Like many millions throughout the world, I also took notice of the death and life of Billy Graham. I thought seriously about writing an article entitled "Graham's Gospel"; however, after reading a blog by Neal Pollard, I decided to have brother Pollard say, through the pages of the Messenger, what he so adequately wrote in his blog published the day of Mr. Graham's death. Following are the observations of Neal Pollard, a widely known and respected minister of the gospel who lives in/near Denver, Colorado. (ALF, editor)



A.L. FRANKS
Editor

"It's never a matter of 'who's right,' but 'what's right.'" Something is never right because I say it, some other preacher, or even the most famous preacher of the 20th Century, says it. Something is right because Jesus and His apostles and prophets said it.



Church of Christ - Kosciusko, MS

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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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Truth Is Truth, No Matter WHO Disagrees With It

By Neal Pollard

Today, one of the most famous preachers of modern times died just short of his 100th birthday. Not only did he achieve longevity, his name was almost synonymous with American religion in the 20th Century. He reached hundreds of millions of people through live crusades, radio, and television. He was regularly listed as one of the "Ten Most Admired Men in the World." His website claimed that he preached to more people in live audiences than anyone else in history (info via FoxNews.com). His influence on society is unmistakable.

However, this much loved and now much lamented man used the weight of his name and influence to oppose something which Scripture seems very clearly to teach. In the answer section of his website, he addresses the question, "Is baptism necessary for salvation?" While answering that he believed it to be important and that he had done it himself, he also said, "If baptism were a requirement for salvation, we would certainly say that." His answer makes clear that one becomes a saved convert before baptism, the thief on the cross being used as proof of that claim. Many of those who left comments under his answer shows how deeply influential and popular his teaching on this was.

I believe in the vitality of the saying, "It's never a matter of 'who's right,' but 'what's right.'" Something is never right because I say it, some other preacher, or even the most famous preacher of the 20th Century says it. Something is right because Jesus and His apostles and prophets said it. Here is what they said:

"He that believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Jesus)

"Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Peter)

"Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name" (Ananias)

"Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Paul)

"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Paul)

"Corresponding to that (Noah and family brought safely through the water, 20, NP), baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (Peter)

I feel the loss of this renowned preacher is sad and tragic. I appreciate his vast influence and the way he tried to use that for good in so many regards. Yet, if the Bereans found it necessary to compare the great apostle Paul's preaching and teaching with Scripture, any of us who preach and teach today should want people to do the same. That's the only way we will be able to determine what's right!

(Brother Pollard can be reached at 2707 S. Lamar St.; Denver, CO 80227)



The Recent Shooting At Parkland High School in Florida. WHY?

By Doug Smith

The shooting at Parkland High School in Florida left 17 dead and changed the lives of many forever. This kind of behavior is very shocking and sad, leaving many folks wondering why these evil actions are happening more and more in our society. Get ready folks, these kinds of actions will continue and be more and more commonplace. That is reality.

The seed for all this evil was planted in 1962, when it was decided that we no longer needed God or the Bible in our public schools. Children were taught that they evolved from animals and when people believe they came from animals they will act like it. Without God, His Word, and prayer there is no moral compass and no standard of right and wrong. What we are seeing today on our society should come as no surprise whatsoever.

For almost six decades our country has been headed down a moral path which leads to devastating results. In the news we hear about sex scandals and corruption in politics and high places. We have murdered millions of babies and legitimized same sex marriage in our culture. There are no programs or policies that can correct what is happening. Trying to do so is simply a waste of money and time.

I have the solution if folks would just listen. It is simple. It takes work but it will not cost any money. We must put God and His Word back into our homes, our schools and in the policies of our government. The principles therein will lead to peace, high moral standards among our youth and provide a future that is bright and full of hope. Imagine a world where people treat one another like they would like to be treated, a world where people have a high regard for human life, for purity and a great respect for one another. The answer is found in God and only in God and His Word. That is a fact.

(Doug Smith, is the pulpit preacher for the Dalraida church of Christ in Montgomery, AL.)

My June read Doug's article on Facebook and requested permission from him to publish in the MM. Thank you, brother Doug! alf)



BIBLE

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

"CROSSES?" - RESPONSE

Opposition to any representation of a cross on or in a church building or as jewelry probably springs from what is, in my opinion, a misapplication of the third of the ten commandments, "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God" (Exodus 20:4-5).

The Old Testament has great value as a "guardian" to show us our need for Christ (Galatians 3:24-25). It "was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Romans 15:4). The events recorded in the first Testament "took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did" (1 Corinthians 10:6). They reveal truths about faith and unbelief, obedience and disobedience, and the mercy and wrath of God. It is impossible to correctly understand and apply the New Testament without a knowledge of the Old. As Jesus told the Pharisees, "If you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.

If a cross is worshipped instead of the Christ who died on it, it would be sin, but that is not usually what takes place when a cross is chiseled onto a church building, inside or out, or worn as jewelry. It is, like a bumper sticker, a symbol telling something we want others to know about ourselves.

But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?" (John 5:46-47).

However, its instructions about worship are different from the worship we are to offer (John 4:23-24). Its laws do not apply to us, not even the ten commandments. They have been "fulfilled" (Matthew 5:17) and "abolished" (Ephesians 2:15), nailed to the cross (Colossians 2:14). If that were not so, it would be sin to cut our yards or wash our cars or play golf on Saturday (Exodus 20:6-11).

If a cross is worshipped instead of the Christ who died on it, it would be sin, but that is not usually what takes place when a cross is chiseled onto a church building, inside or out, or worn as jewelry. It is, like a bumper sticker, a symbol telling something we want others to know about ourselves. The early church needed such a symbol that Christians recognized but that the persecuting authorities did not; so they used a fish. Their word for fish (ixthus)

Wearing and Using Crosses? & The "Holy Kiss"?

(CROSSES) *What do you think of having a cross in or on the church building? Also, I see lots of people wearing crosses as a neck piece, some small gold ones, some larger, more ostentatious. Is that a good thing to do? (L.W.) Is it O.K. to have a cross on top of a steeple on a church building? Our church has just had a big fuss about this. (G.F.)*

("HOLY KISS") *The Bible says, "Greet one another with a holy kiss:" (Romans 16:16). We profess to "speak where the Bible speaks." Why don't we do that? (V.B.T.)*

is formed from the first letters of the phrase, Jesus (iesous), Christ (xristos), God (theos), Savior (soter). For us, a cross identifies a person or people desiring to be known as related to Christ; contrasted with a Star of David, for example, which identifies Judaism, and a Star and Crescent which identifies Islam.

Be aware! If you wear a cross that is prominently displayed, be sure your actions and language comport with the teachings of Jesus. Many people are attracted to the person and teachings of Jesus but repelled by the action of those who profess to be His followers. Perhaps you have heard of the woman who was stopped by a policeman, asked to step out of her car, and was handcuffed; then the policeman starting questioning her. She indignantly inquired why she, a good law-abiding citizen, even a Christian, had been treated like a common criminal. He replied that he had taken notice of her bumper stickers that read, "I Stand Up for God," that declared "I Love Jesus," and demanded God, prayer and Bible reading be put back in public schools. He also said he had seen her angrily cut off another car; then yell curses at the driver and give him the "one finger salute." He said, "I thought surely you had stolen that car."

Wearing a cross is, or will be taken to be, a profession of faith. When our conduct and language does not match our profession, it creates misunderstanding and trouble all around. Your conduct all the time should be "worthy of the calling to which you have been called" (Ephesians 4:1), lest we cause the name of Christ to be blasphemed. All the more so when we are wearing that which identifies us with Him!

"Far be it from me to boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Galatians 6:14).

"HOLY KISS" - RESPONSE

First, yes, the holy kiss is in the Bible, more than once. It frequently occurs at the end of epistles where the

apostle is sending personal words of greeting to the church and often to individuals in that church, as in the Romans passage and in the 1st and 2nd Corinthian epistle and in 1st Thessalonians. "All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss" (1 Corinthians 16:20). "Greet one another with a holy kiss" (2 Corinthians 13:12). "Greet all the brothers with a holy

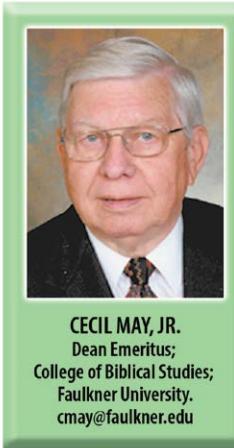
kiss" (1 Thessalonians 5:26). And Peter, with slightly different wording, "Greet one another with the kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ" (1 Peter 5:14).

The Romans citation occurs in one of "our" favorite passages: "Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you."

We understand that the New Testament epistles were written more than 2000 years ago, from and to different churches and people in different cities, in different countries, which speak a different language and have different cultures. Middle Eastern culture from Bible times until now dictates a kiss as a joyous greeting, generally between men, to assure a brotherly, peaceful meeting. Paul's command requires the "kiss" to be "holy" rather than sensual. Peter's "kiss of love (agape)" requires that the kiss convey true Christian love.

Our culture calls for a handshake or, more recently, a brotherly or sisterly hug. The passages in the New Testament which call for a kiss as greeting do not seem to be requiring everyone to adopt that custom. Rather it seems to regulate their custom to ensure the kiss will be holy and genuine.

Obviously we are not authorized to go through the Bible and pick any practice or command we happen not to prefer and declare it merely cultural and not binding, though some seem to appropriate that liberty. Three crite-



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ria can help determine whether a practice is merely cultural and, therefore, not universally binding: 1). Does it have doctrinal or gospel significance? 2). Does the apostle root it in something more significant than local culture? 3.) Does the practice convey the same message it did at the time it was commanded? 4). What does Christian

Continued on page 7

Godly Leaders

By Tim West

After Moses died, God selected Joshua as the new leader of Israel.

As Joshua prepared to lead the people into the promised land,

God told him what he needed to do to be a godly leader and find success.

We find these instructions in Joshua 1:6-9.

First, God instructed Joshua to *be strong and courageous*, “Be strong and of good courage, for to this people you shall divide as an inheritance the land which I swore to their fathers to give them” (Josh. 1:6). God wanted Joshua to be bold and confident as he led the people to their new home. There was no place for fear and indecision. That would only insure failure. However, by being strong and courageous, Joshua, and the people, would find success. God wants the same thing for us today. He still wants leaders who will follow His commands and lead His people to be successful in the work of God. The world is a sinful, depraved place and God’s leaders must not shrink back in fear. They must be strong and courageous.

Second, God instructed Joshua to *obey the laws that were given to him*, “Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go” (Josh. 1:7). God wanted Joshua to know that He expected him to be obedient to all the laws which had been handed down to Moses. It was Joshua’s responsibility to be sure that he and the people rendered faithful obedience to God’s commands. That meant following God’s commands as He had given them. Joshua had no power or authority to change the commands of God in any way. Today,

we must follow the same principle. God wants us to be obedient to the law of Christ, the perfect law of liberty (James. 1:25). That means following His commands as He has given them to us. We have no power or authority to change God’s commands to suit our wants and wishes. We must obey them as He has commanded them.

Third, God instructed Joshua to *meditate on the Book of the Law*, “This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success” (Josh. 1:8). God wanted Joshua to spend time thinking about the word and the lessons and principles it contained. Those words would guide Joshua and give him wisdom. Several hundred years later, David would write that meditating on the words of God would help him to avoid sinning, “Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You” (Ps. 119:11).

"We should also meditate on God's word, "Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine... Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all."
(1 Tim. 4:13,15).

The same holds true for us today. We should also meditate on God’s word, “Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine... Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.” (1 Tim. 4:13,15). If we will also meditate on God’s word and allow it to live in our hearts, it will help us to avoid sin in our lives.

Fourth, God instructed Joshua to *remember that He would be with him*, “Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go” (Josh. 1:9). The fact of God’s presence would certainly help Joshua to be able to obey the first command. God’s presence helps us to be strong and courageous. By remembering that God was always with him, Joshua would be able to accomplish the task that God had set before him. In like manner, we need to remember that the Lord has promised to always be with us, “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen” (Mt. 28:20). There is great strength and comfort in knowing that God is with us.

As Joshua obeyed these principles of godly leadership, he would be blessed with success in all that he did. God promised two times in these four verses to bring prosperity and success to Joshua if he did as he was commanded. An examination of Joshua’s life will show that he did obey these leadership principles and God did bless him with success, “Behold, this day I am going the way of all the earth. And you know in all your hearts and in all your souls that not one thing has failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spoke concerning you. All have come to pass for you; not one word of them has failed” (Josh. 23:14). As we strive to be godly leaders today, in the church and in the home, we should make sure that we are also following God’s principles of leadership. If we do this, we will also find success in the tasks that God has put before us. To God be the glory!

**Tim serves as a preacher with/for the North Brandon church of Christ in Brandon, Mississippi.
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As Joshua obeyed these principles of godly leadership, he would be blessed with success in all that he did.

*the facilities of what was
Magnolia Bible College
are now the facilities of what is*

Magnolia Bible Center

(Thank God & His Children)

Plans/Prayers For the use of MBC facilities

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Workshops for Church Leaders

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Plus Your Suggestions

Please HOPE, PRAY and PLAN with/for us!

May God's Will be Done!

May MBC Facilities be Used to His Glory!

MAGNOLIA BIBLE CENTER

A Mission Work

(Under the oversight of the elders of the Kosciusko church)

Immediate Assistance is Requested

(Christians and Congregations)

Our Goal

\$50,000.00 by September 1, 2018

Can you...Will you... Give or pledge?

Please Pray About Being One Of:

10 Christians/Congregations to give/pledge \$5,000.00

100 Christians/Congregations to give/pledge \$500.00

1,000 Christians/Congregations to give/pledge \$50.00

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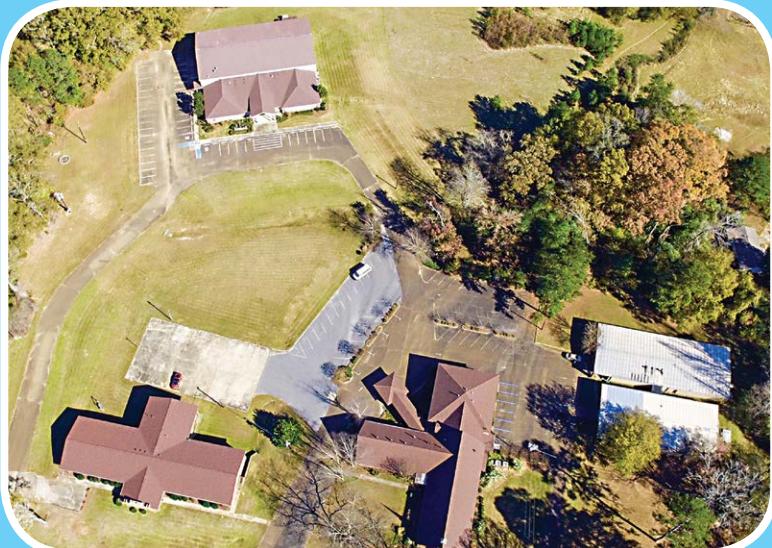
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MAGNOLIA BIBLE CENTER
P. O. Box 763 • Kosciusko, Mississippi 39090

MBC FACILITIES



New "MBC" -- Magnolia Bible Center

(Includes Huntington Street Church Building)

MBC Facilities include (a) dormitory, (b) library, (c) multi-purpose and (d) academic buildings. (e) Church building also available as needed



MBC Dormitory (Accommodates up to 40 guests)

(Ideal for retreats, conferences and workshops)



MBC Multipurpose Building

(Offices, kitchen, gym with room to seat hundreds!)



MBC Library (partial view) -- 35,000 Volumes

3rd Annual Preachers' Retreat

Brought Together More Than 40 Students of the Word

The Third Annual Preachers' retreat was "a great success." More than 40 men participated in an intensive study of the book of Hebrews. There were 22 class hours, starting Sunday evening and going through Wednesday night with the Kosciusko church serving as host.

We were pleased and thankful to use the old facilities of Magnolia Bible College, now known as Magnolia Bible Center. Dan Winkler, Kirk Brothers, Jody Apple, Gary Hampton and Michael Whitworth were the gifted and capable instructors. The teaching, food and fellowship were all outstanding.

We hope that you will make plans to attend this very enjoyable and edifying event next year. You don't have to be a preacher to attend. All male church leaders are encouraged to be a part of our 4th annual "Preachers' Retreat" scheduled for March, 2019. Next year's theme, Lord willing, will be "The Power of Prayer."



Hill's Chapel Church Has A New Preacher

A few weeks ago, January 28, 2018, my June and I were blessed to enjoy a late Sunday afternoon "Drop-in Visit" with the Hills Chapel church, located a few miles east of Booneville, Mississippi. In addition to visiting with several dear brothers and sisters we have known for several years, we were grateful to meet



their new preacher and his family.

Craig Chandler, who has lived in the Booneville area for a long time, recently accepted the challenge of preaching regularly for the Prentiss county congregation. His sermon, the night of our visit, was entitled, "Never Man Spake Like This Man." A very good presentation. Not a long sermon, but very meaningful! Caused me to appreciate Jesus even more.

According to records posted, about 50 worshippers attend Sunday services. Through the years, in our contacts with the Hill's Chapel church, we have found them to be a friendly, loving and caring group of folks who evidence their love for the Lord and His cause in many ways. A pleasure always to visit with brothers and sisters at Hill's Chapel. Our thanks to them for the opportunity to speak and for their fellowship in the MM ministry. (Editor)



Craig Chandler

House to House Heart to Heart

HELP TEACH AMERICA ABOUT BAPTISM

In July 2018, more than 1000 churches of Christ have committed to send *House to House/Heart to Heart* to their communities. The issue will feature an article on baptism based on Mark 16:16.

We hope to put this issue into the hands of 3,300,000 American families (the biggest HTH issue ever printed). An average American household has 2.58 people, so we could reach 8.5 million citizens.

We will need the help of 400 more congregations to reach this many citizens. Will you help us?

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THE KING OF Glory

By John Gardner

Depending on the version, most English Bibles use various forms of “glory” around 500 times in translating the Hebrew and Greek. Glory, glorify, glorifying, glorified, and glorious occur throughout the Bible. Although the meaning of the word glory varies in different contexts, it retains a basic theme that pervades Scripture.

Another observation is that Christians are fascinated by the word and the concept it conveys, at least where our singing is concerned. A quick scan of words that make up the stanzas of the songs that fill brotherhood hymn books show glory was on the minds of the song writers and the song book editors. Some hymns like “To God Be The Glory” or “O That Will Be Glory” or “The Gloryland Way” make it obvious that glory is a key thought. But in other songs, glory may be equally important, if not as obvious. “Blessed Assurance” with its “foretaste of glory divine” or “Beyond the Sunset” extolling “where golden glories ever shine” or “Face to face in all His glory” in the chorus of “Face to Face” are examples. A challenge is out there for someone to take a popular songbook and note how many times glory occurs in all of the songs. Over and over as we sing, we utter the word glory as part of our worship.

To properly study glory as it occurs in the Bible, one must begin with God. After all, He is the King of glory (Psalm 24: 7 – 10). “Who is the King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory (V.10 NKJV). He is worthy to be welcomed and worshipped by all creation. God’s glory is often associated with his magnificence, honor, power, and might (Revelation 5:13; 7: 12). He is the Majestic Glory (2 Peter 1:17) that gives glory to his Son. That Son shares the Father’s glory (John 1:14) and is the Lord of glory (1 Corinthians 2:8). God’s glory is above the heavens (Psalm 113:4) which declare that glory to all who will see (Psalm 19:1). The earth is full of His glory (Isaiah 6:3). Our God rules over a glorious, majestic, everlasting kingdom (Psalm 145:10–13). All about God is glorious indeed.

All men and women, on the other hand, consistently “fall short of the glory of God” because of sin (Romans 3:23). Because of disobedience, no one adequately reflects that perfection of God known as his glory. Human sin dishonors God, detracts from his glory, and hinders mankind from fully appreciating the Creator and Lord.



JOHN GARDNER

Those who live and die in sin will be banished forever from the presence of God and from “the glory of his power” (2 Thessalonians 1:9).

But the King of glory has a wondrous message for his fallen creatures! It is a glorious good news message that God saves sinful man through his Son and takes them to be with him in glory (2 Corinthians 4:3–6)! Christ is the key. He took on himself the penalty for man’s sin so that unworthy man might become righteous in the sight of the glorious God (2 Corinthians 5:14–21) and share in his glory (John 17:22).

Although God is perfect in his glory, he calls upon those whom he saves to live lives that glorify him. That is, the transformed lives of his saints should cause the lost world and the rest of creation to offer God praise and honor and thanksgiving (Matthew 5:16). Every aspect of the Christian’s life should be lived for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31). Bearing much spiritual fruit glorifies God (John 15:8) because it shows the work of God in his people.

As in every other matter, Jesus himself is our example of faithfully glorifying God. In John’s Gospel the word “glorify” is used 23 times. Most of the occurrences have to do with the glory of Christ and his relationship with the Father. In particular, the Son’s commitment to glorify the Father through his death on the cross is clearly set forth. Jesus said to the disciples in the Upper Room, after Judas had left them on the night of the betrayal, “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately” (John 13:3,32).

In the garden prayer to the Father, the Son said, “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may also glorify You...I have glorified You on the earth. I finished the work You have given Me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory I had with You before the world was” (John 17:1,4,5). Fully obeying God in all that he asks of us glorifies God, nothing else.

What a joy to bear spiritual fruit and glorify the King of glory! What a blessing to claim Christ in us and “the hope of glory” (Colossians 1:27). Since we daily “rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:1), how focused and fulfilling our lives should be. So let us sing the songs of Zion, and of the King we shall see, and live as if our next step might usher us into his glorious presence. “O that will be glory for me.”

(John Gardner is an educator, gospel preacher and an elder of the church in Brandon, Mississippi. Email: gardner.john43@gmail.com)

Questions & Answers

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literature written just after the age of inspiration suggest about the accuracy of our treatment of the practice?

1. Does it have doctrinal or gospel significance?

None has been suggested that would bear on why a kiss would be required rather than a handshake or a vocal greeting or a hug.

In contrast, taking the Lord’s supper on the Lord’s day and only on the Lord’s day has the doctrinal significance of the Lord’s day, the first day of the week, being the day on which Christ was raised from the dead. The Living Bible paraphrase, recognizing the cultural equivalent of the kiss in the first century and the handshake today, paraphrases the first part of Romans 16:16 as, “greet everyone with a warm handshake.” An obvious problem, however, is that, while “handshake” is an acceptable cultural paraphrase for “kiss,” “warm” is not equivalent to “holy.”

2. Does the apostle root the commandment in something more significant than local culture?

No. In contrast, male spiritual leadership is said to be rooted in creation and the first sin (1 Tim. 2:12–14).

3.) What does Christian literature coming from just after the age of inspiration suggest about the accuracy of our treatment of the practice?

This is not suggesting that this non-inspired literature has any inherent authority. It contains too many errors that began to be practiced early on for that to be so. This literature can be helpful, however, in checking our interpretations, to see if they were carried through the early centuries following the end of inspiration.

Clement of Alexandria, around A. D. 195, wrote about why the practice of the holy kiss had ceased to be practiced by his time. He said, “Love is judged not in a kiss but in good will. Some do nothing but fill the Churches with noise of kissing.... There is another—an impure—kiss full of venom pretending to holiness” (Paed. 3:301 P.). Because of such, in the so called Apostolic Constitutions (2:57, 12) the practice was regulated to men kiss men only. From then, “the practice gradually dwindled.” (W. Robertson Nicoll, The Expositor’s Greek Testament, Volume 5, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, n.d.).

In contrast, post-biblical literature about the Lord’s supper shows that the weekly eating of the Lord’s supper was a regular and universal practice.

Several years ago, I received a telephone call from a man who was concerned that another man in his congregation was greeting people with, he said, “sloppy kisses.” Some of the recipients complained, and he responded, “I have to do it; the Bible commands it in Romans 16:16.”

I discussed with the caller some of the principles noted above, and, in the course of the conversation, asked, “Does he kiss everyone, or just the ladies.”

He responded, “Primarily the young ladies.”

So I said, “That seems, then, not to be what the passage commands. That suggests something other than a ‘holy’ kiss.”

Our “take away” from the passages, then, about kissing as a greeting, should be not that we have to greet with a kiss; rather, however we greet, it should be holy and convey genuine Christian love.

Are We Baptizing Children Too Soon?

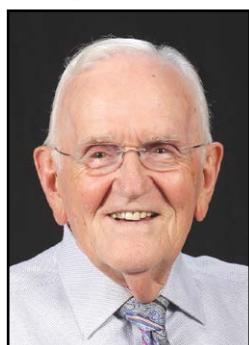
By Ken Joines

Few things bring as much joy to Christian parents as when their child decides to follow Jesus. A baby is born into your family and you begin very early teaching the fundamentals of the faith. Babies are innocent; not guilty of any sin. But you know the day will come when that child will be tempted and will yield to the temptation to sin. This is rightly called the “age of accountability”.

Just when that level of maturity is reached is *not always easy to know*. Even men’s systems of criminal justice wrestle with this. We know that children under a certain age are not arrested and charged with crimes simply because they don’t yet understand the consequences of their acts—they’re just not yet morally accountable.

When an 8 or 10-year-old tells a lie, steals something, gets drunk or even kills someone he is not criminally charged because he is not a criminal until he is mature enough to understand the consequences of his action. Innocent children and mentally deficient adults are not guilty of sin because they are not able to comprehend what sin is. Scripture is clear in saying that baptism into Christ is for the forgiveness of sin (Romans 6:3-4; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; I Peter 3:21). And since a non-accountable child has no sin to forgive, this makes such baptisms a virtual mockery of the real thing!

Children who are brought up in a Christian home and have attended Sunday



school will sometimes at a very early age express a strong desire to be baptized, sometimes even begging their parents to allow it. They may be enrolled at a parochial school under the auspices of a denomination that practices early childhood or even infant baptism. Your child’s classmates may talk often of how they “got saved” and were baptized, and even this slight peer pressure causes your child to plead with you to let him or her be baptized, too. It is at this point that a mother and dad face a real dilemma.

Do they try to convince them that this is really an adult decision, or do they go ahead and allow them baptism and excuse it with, “Well, he can always be baptized again when he’s older if he feels like he was too young.” I believe this can have serious implications later in life. Baptized too young, one tends to get the feeling that he has long ago gone through a process that took care of spiritual matters without any deep, moving, life-changing commitment on his part, where membership in the body of Christ is more corporate and less personal.

I have become increasingly disturbed by what I feel is at best a *questionable practice* among us. It was some years ago that I read an article by a writer in a Baptist journal titled something like, “Are Southern Baptists Practicing Infant Baptism?” Specifically, that writer mentioned the widespread practice in his denomination of baptizing 5-8-year-olds, saying these children were absolutely too young to have even the vaguest notion of what it means to commit sin. It was a good article.

Having said that I have, for some time, wanted to address this problem because I am seeing this same practice become increasingly prevalent among us. I know this is a sensitive subject but someone must speak up and I am willing to start the conversation. It should disturb church leaders that so little teaching and preaching is done to address what is clearly a Biblical matter. It is at such a point that the responsibility of “feeding the flock” should come into play and elders should either lead some studies or instruct their preachers to address this issue.

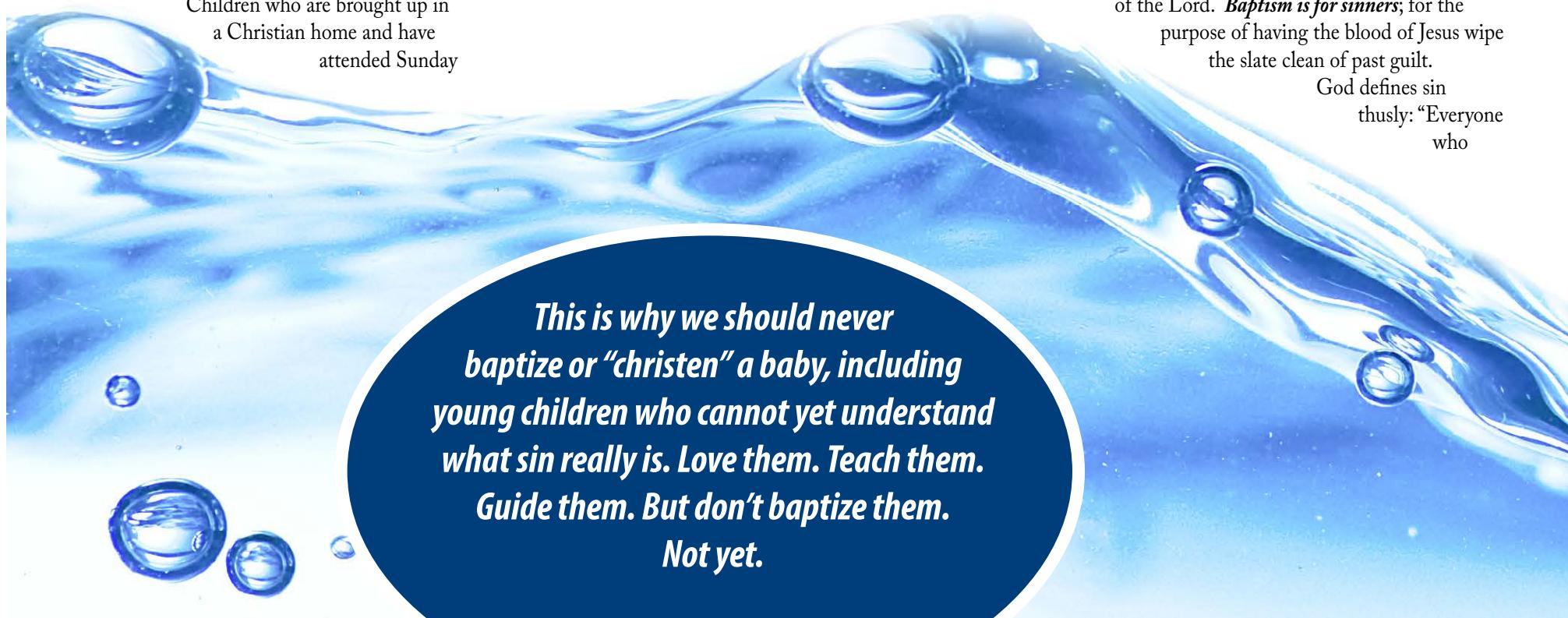
Where did the practice of baptizing babies and small children originate? Well, it wasn’t from holy scripture. Rather, it was men such as John Calvin who taught that a child actually inherits the guilt of Adam’s sin and thus, when born, the child was depraved; they believed that if an unbaptized infant died he or she would go to hell. So parents were advised to have the child “christened” (usually just *sprinkling* or *dabbing water* on the forehead and calling it baptism). Although this Calvinist doctrine may no longer be held, the practice remains.

Few, if any, parents would say that their innocent baby is clothed in sin and bound for perdition, but many still want him “christened.” Why? “It is so sweet.....he was so cute there all dressed up for his baptism.” And in the case of the very young child, “when we asked him if he wanted Jesus to come into his heart, he said, ‘Yes!’” But let’s be brutally honest here. What child is there who would answer “no” to that question? This is purely an emotional approach to a question that must be answered, not just with our emotions

but with solid reasoning that comes from the word of the Lord. **Baptism is for sinners;** for the purpose of having the blood of Jesus wipe the slate clean of past guilt.

God defines sin thusly: “Everyone who

This is why we should never baptize or “christen” a baby, including young children who cannot yet understand what sin really is. Love them. Teach them. Guide them. But don’t baptize them. Not yet.



sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness." (I John 3:4 NIV) I doubt that any of us is ready to say that the very young child, for example, fits the profile of "lawless". Sassy, disobedient, a "holy terror"? Perhaps, in which case the parents are arguably more delinquent than the child! I am not contending that children never do wrong acts. Do children lie, cheat and steal? Of course they do. Are they disobedient to parents? Certainly! Are they sometimes selfish and unsharing? Definitely! But because they lack sufficient moral capacity, they are not accountable.

One of my favorite authors in this field is F. LaGard Smith at whose feet I have sat for hours listening to his rich lectures on this topic and discussing these things with him. A former District Attorney and law school professor, several years ago LaGard wrote an interesting book

Please don't cause a very young child to feel that he or she is a sinner headed for hell because he has told a lie or disobeyed you.

Another thing: just because your child can flawlessly recite the "plan of salvation" or the "steps to obedience", and comes begging, does not mean he or she is ready to be baptized.

titled: "Baptism: The Believer's Wedding Ceremony". It is arguably the most thorough treatment among us of the implications of early childhood baptism. Smith writes: "We recognize immature moral capacity in our own legal system. That's why the juvenile justice system is completely separate from adult criminal courts. Moral immaturity is the reason that, under common law, there exists a conclusive presumption that a child under the age of seven cannot be guilty of a crime; and that a child between the ages of 7 and 14 is presumed to be incapable of criminal guilt. This does not mean that a child is incapable of doing a wrongful act, such as stealing, nor that he doesn't know what he is doing. It means that the child is of such immature moral capacity that he cannot fully appreciate the moral consequences of what he knows he is doing." (p. 132)

This author cites statistics that pinpoint some long-term negative effects of adolescent baptisms, even linking it to the problem of nominal Christianity saying: "Early youth baptisms result in high percentages of church drop-outs. In a 1979 study by Dr. Flavil R. Yeakley, Jr (Why Churches Grow, Christian Communications, Inc) only 10% of those who were baptized before the age of twelve remained faithful or were satisfied with their original baptism. Even for those who were baptized at the age of twelve, only 44% remained 'faithful church members'... Given such questionable results with personally-chosen

early youth baptism, and drastically more disastrous results with parent-chosen infant baptism, it is little wonder that, for centuries, the church has suffered drastically at the hands of nominal Christianity. For too long, 'baptized but unconverted' has been the death knell of the church.... Whatever else it may be, baptism ought to be part of a conscious, well-considered conversion experience. Anything less than that permits a person to claim false security in an act that, in Scripture, is tied to informed participation and deep personal commitment. Anything less than that fills the church with those who wear the right label, but don't appreciate what it means to become a new person in Jesus Christ."

Much more troubling, Smith goes on to cite statistics that pinpoint some long-term negative effects of adolescent baptisms, even linking it to the troubling problem of nominal Christianity. No one can question that our church rolls are filled with names of people who show no real evidence that they have been saved. These nominal, or in-name-only Christians present a real challenge to any church serious about our mission. And no one can question that for years we've been seeing an alarming percentage of young people leave the church by the time they are twenty; that only a small percentage stayed the course. But until I read Smith's book I had never thought to connect this with early adolescent baptisms.

Through the years I have heard numerous parents say, "My child wants to be baptized and I'm not going to tell him he cannot. I'm afraid this will turn him off to the church forever. And besides, what harm does it do? If later on he decides he was too young, he can always be baptized again, so what harm does it do?" Precisely this: When a person goes through the motion of being immersed without ever being convicted of his own sin, then that person is in danger of beginning a journey with an empty spiritual fuel tank. He may quickly tell his or her friends that he has been baptized or that he is a "member of the church" but in the absence of a deep personal commitment his Christianity began on a shaky foundation. He was robbed at an early age of something that could have been a deeply genuine relationship with the Savior.

How many people are there who were baptized too early, going through life with an empty feeling about their salvation? They hear us preach and sing that we should feel a burden lifted and feel released from the bondage of sin and yet they have no such feeling. This results in serious questions about one's standing with God. When they were "converted" there was no bondage to sin from which to be released!!! They were baptized long before they became sinners.

Consider if you will the fact that when you read the book of conversions (Acts) there is not a single case of even adolescent baptism, much less of an infant! The nearest thing you'll find is the conversion of the jailer at Philippi (ch.16). The record says, "he was baptized, he and all his family." But did he have children? And if so, were they

young children? Not as far as we know. The truth is that one must assume far too much to find authority for infant or adolescent baptism in Acts 16.

Then consider this: Read the account of Paul's defense before Felix recorded in Acts 24. Luke says Paul stood before this Roman official and, "reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgement." Felix was alarmed. Question: How much reasoning can be done with a little child about righteousness, self-control and the judgement? Very young children cannot possibly comprehend these things and in my opinion, are not candidates for the baptism described in the Scriptures.

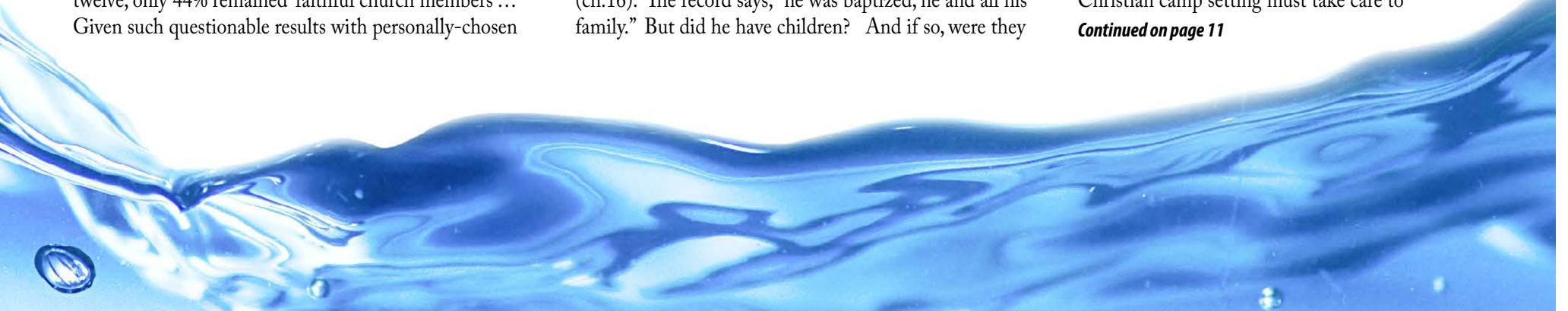
Then, what can be done to help us here? There are two groups of people who can help to correct this dangerous trend: **Parents and Bible school teachers.** First,

For too long, 'baptized but unconverted' has been the death knell of the church.... Whatever else it may be, baptism ought to be part of a conscious, well-considered conversion experience. Anything less than that permits a person to claim false security in an act that, in Scripture, is tied to informed participation and deep personal commitment. Anything less than that fills the church with those who wear the right label, but don't appreciate what it means to become a new person in Jesus Christ."

parents must keep the lines of communication open with their children with regards to the matter of sin and salvation. Please don't cause a very young child to feel that he or she is a sinner headed for hell because he has told a lie or disobeyed you. Another thing: just because your child can flawlessly recite the "plan of salvation" or the "steps to obedience", and comes begging, does not mean he or she is ready to be baptized. Similarly, many young children are fully knowledgeable and capable of driving a car, but we don't even think about licensing them because they are not mature enough to understand the responsibilities and consequences of driving. And just because a young person has passed puberty does not mean he is ready for marriage. He is too young to know what it means to make a commitment and to take on the responsibilities of being a husband or wife.

Second, Bible school teachers should help their young students to realize that they may need to wait before considering baptism. Those who teach children in a Christian camp setting must take care to

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What Is the Church of Christ

Mark Lindley

One of the most outstanding statements of the Bible is recorded in Matthew 16: 18. On that occasion, Jesus promised, "Upon this rock I will build my church." Having promised to build his church, the Lord kept his promise and established his church in the city of Jerusalem as recorded in Acts chapter 2. The church began in that day when about 3,000 obeyed the Gospel and were added to the Lord's church (Acts 2:41,47).

As the apostles and early Christians continued preaching God's Word, Jesus' church grew rapidly and congregations were established in various places (Acts chapters 2-28). These congregations were all part of the same church, the church belonging to Christ. In fact, in that day, there was only one church. Jesus had promised to build his church, and he built it.

The thousands of denominations of our day did not exist in the first century when Jesus built his church. This is why there is no mention of denominations in the New Testament. Rather, we read of "the church" (Acts 8:3), "the body of Christ" (I Corinthians 12:27), and "the church of God" (I Corinthians 1:2). All of these terms refer to the one church of the New Testament.

Denominations were not started until long after Jesus had built his church. Churches of Christ today believe and teach that it is possible to be members of Jesus' church, without being part of any denomination. We do not identify ourselves as members of a denomination, but rather as Christians who are members of Jesus' church. We use the term "church of Christ" in the same way it is used in the New Testament: "*churches of Christ salute you*" (Romans 16:16). It is our conviction that if we believe, teach, and practice what was believed, taught, and practiced in the first century, we can be today what they were back then: members of the church of Christ. We cordially invite you to attend any of our services.

(Mark serves as preacher for the Chapman church, near Ripley. His article is copied from a leaflet prepared to welcome visitors to the services of the church in north Mississippi.)

"Upon this rock I will build my church."

Matthew 16: 18.



A Recent Sunday Visit With Two Churches

(Booneville and Dennis, Mississippi)

Music: "A Cappella."

(Without instrumental accompaniment)

My June and I were blessed, on January 28, 2018, to visit the Booneville church of Christ on Sunday morning and, later during the afternoon, to assemble with brothers and sisters from more than twenty churches of Christ at the Liberty church building in Dennis, Mississippi. Services in both places emphasized music in worship. And, in accord with New Testament teachings, which includes the example of the early first century church, the music for both recent gatherings was vocal, a cappella, just singing. Nothing more. No instruments.

At Booneville, with about 350 worshipers, we were instructed, taught and admonished by the music. The experience was the same at Liberty with about 150 singers. Our spirits were lifted; our hearts were encouraged; our faith was strengthened. The singing was "just beautiful" as hundreds of male and female voices harmoniously blended together in praising God and admonishing each other.

As I write these lines, two days after the Sunday of our visits, I am thinking about the vital place of music in our worship. Considering the power of music to teach and admonish, I am so grateful that my June and I were blessed to be a part of both services at the two churches. Reflecting on the day, encourages me ask, "Why should followers of Jesus Christ add another kind of music to the worship of God?" It certainly is not needed. It is not authorized in the New Testament.

One final point. I want to encourage each Christian reading this little article to never be intimidated or embarrassed, as a member of Christ's body, when you seek to speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent. Never hesitate to do Bible things in Bible ways. And, may we always seek to "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4:11). Worship, according to the New Testament, is designed to please God and edify man! True and acceptable worship is to be in "spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

This is my plea: Brethren, let's sing! Let's put our hearts into it. Always remember: There is Bible authority for Christians to SING in worship. But, not to PLAY! Worship is not designed to entertain. It is designed to glorify God and to edify man. In singing, we can teach and admonish. Let's do it! With all our hearts. (ALF, editor)

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INTERNATIONAL GOSPEL HOUR

Extending His Arm

By Dennis Doughty

"Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

(Hebrews 12:2)

As I try to imagine the scene at any crucifixion back in the Roman world, I would think that most criminals fought the process with all their strength. As the Roman soldiers tried to force the man onto the cross, most would have resisted. As they attempted to place the man's arm upon the cross-beam, there would have been a strong struggle as the man jerked his arm back and away until several soldiers held the arm tight against

the wooden beam so the nail could be placed and struck. It would have been an unpleasant event as men yelled in pain and cursed their executors.

It is likely that the two thieves crucified that day at Golgotha, that they too, were uncooperative. They cursed the soldiers, and likely struggled throughout the process. I am sure it was something Roman soldiers had learned to deal with, and expect, on a regular basis.

So imagine the centurion's amazement as he saw Jesus of Nazareth willingly comply with the soldier's commands and efforts to end his life. Jesus' lack of resistance must have made an impression upon the centurion and his band of soldiers.

Isaiah spoke of Jesus' compliant nature in death when he wrote; *"Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth"* (Isaiah 53: 7).

Imagine the soldier's amazement as Jesus willingly stretched out his arm and held it steady as the hammer blows drove the nail through his hand and deep into the wood. Yes, like a lamb, the "**Lamb of God**".

Why would one be so compliant, why would anyone not fight for his life? Because, as Jesus stared into the face of these soldiers standing over him, he did not see the face of battle hardened executioners, but rather saw the face of you and me, and for us he willingly stretched forth his arm, and held his hand steady as the nail was pounded into the tree.

No wonder the centurion remarked at the end of it all, "**Truly this was the son of God**" (Mark 15:39).

As the scriptures said, "*For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross.*" What joy? "*Despising the shame?*" Why did he accept such a shameful death? His joy was that he was doing the Father's will, completing the plan to save all mankind. He endured the shame because He knew His death would destroy the sin that separated you and me from God.

"He poured out Himself to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He himself bore the sin of many and interceded for the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12).

When your faith is wavering, when you are struggling to resist some temptation, when you are thinking of not worshiping on some Sunday morning, just remember that arm which was willingly, and lovingly, stretched out for you upon that wooden beam.

*(Dennis serves as preacher with/for Tunica, Mississippi Church of Christ;
Email: dennis1848@bellsouth.net)*

Baptizing Children Too Soon?

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response. Don't be afraid to use such analogies as driving a car or getting married. Your child can understand this. One of the things to watch for is that when the parents of one of your students allows a baptism at very young age, there is apt to be a wave of "me too", or "Billy or Suzie did, so why can't I be baptized, too?" This can only result in large numbers of people who will later have serious and disturbing questions about their standing with God.

We teachers can relate to our students the story told in Mark 10. The children came to Jesus. He put his hand on them and blessed them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." He did not baptize them because they were not candidates for baptism. These little ones simply needed to be received, accepted, blessed and reassured that they were okay with our Lord. They were not yet sinners, so they were not lost. Children need to be reassured that if they should die this day they would be received into the arms of Jesus. This removes any dread of the Lord's return and can even mitigate the fear of death itself.

Mention was made earlier that we have too many who were baptized but not converted. These people grow up with no real sense of a new birth, or real change. We are robbing our children of a tremendous blessing, that of knowing that they have been saved and forgiven of all their sins; that they have been... **SAVED!** Indeed, if we baptize a child who is not yet morally capable of sin, we need to ask, "Converted? Converted from WHAT"???

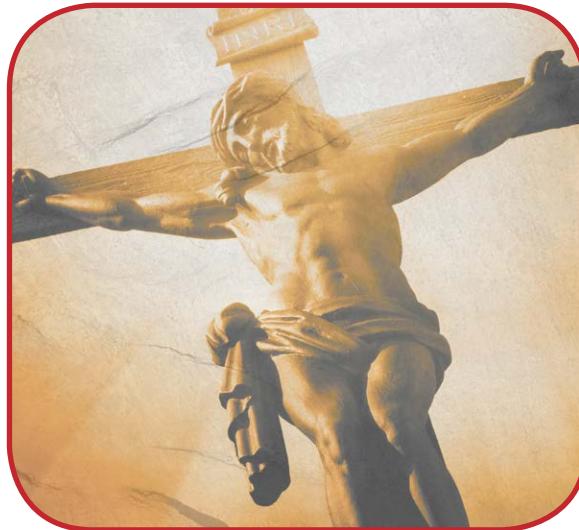
So without question, baptized-but-not-converted is a real problem that we ourselves have created. And our very conversation shows that we can see this problem. Today, for instance, one is far more apt to hear someone say, "when I became a member" than "when I was saved". Young children are baptized and this gives them "membership status". At this age these children are more apt to think in terms of "I'm a member of the church" than they are "I have been saved." Such young boys now used to help serve communion and in other ways because "he's a member", much like one who goes to the YMCA and shows his membership card, thus enabling him to use the facilities.

Even a casual look at us, as a church, will force us to realize that church rolls are filled with the baptized-but-unconverted. It is likely that all of us would be alarmed and shocked if we could know the percentage of our people who fall into this category. But it is huge. And it has weakened the church at every level. Listen, Satan is smart, sly and cunning. He will do anything he can do to dilute and weaken us. It may take him centuries but he will so deceive us that what was once such a vibrant movement that it could shake the Roman Empire can be turned into something more akin to a country club. Look around you today. There are far more congregations shrinking than growing. I have never been a pessimist, but if we don't do something to reverse this trend, I fear for the future of the church in America.

The Bible teaches that salvation is a process. When I come into a state of being accountable and it occurs to me that I'm living apart from God with the guilt of my sin hanging over me, and when I learn that there is One who is willing and able to cancel, delete, erase and completely forgive my past, and when that faith causes me to change my way of living (repentance), and confess his divine Sonship and then be buried by baptism into His death so that His blood can cleanse my guilty soul, then---THEN!, and only then have I been saved and set free .

This is why we should never baptize or "christen" a baby, including young children who cannot yet understand what sin really is. Love them. Teach them. Guide them. But don't baptize them. Not yet.

Ken Joines
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the JOURNEYS of PAUL

Death Happens

Glenda and I have been to several funerals lately. We went to Bogalusa, LA where we attended funeral services for Nancy Price. Nancy was the wife of Mike Price, a great friend and fellow preacher. Nancy, who had been battling cancer, was 68 when she died. Charlie Buckley, from the Bay St. Louis congregation, did the eulogy.

We went to Lottie Frank's funeral in Brookhaven. Doug Kimble, the preacher for the Johnson Grove congregation, did a great job with this funeral. Gary and Lottie Frank lived in Kosciusko for several years where we enjoyed getting to know them. Jeff and Shari Frank also lived in Kosciusko during the time Jeff attended MBC. Jeff presently works in the insurance business in McComb and attends the Johnson Grove church of Christ. His mother, Lottie, lived to be 69.

We drove over to Laurel to visit with the family of Tommy Wall. Tommy and Carrie were our next-door neighbors when we lived in Kosciusko. Tommy was truly a Christian gentleman. Arnold Kelley is the preacher for the Laurel church of Christ where Tommy

and Carrie attended. Tommy lived to be 90 years old.

Homer and Neva Myers were a couple that attended the Mendenhall church of Christ when Glenda and I were first married and I was the preacher for the Mendenhall congregation. We thought they were old at the time, but we were 19 and 17. He lived to be 91. Homer died on February 24, 2018. He attended the church of Christ in Florence, MS. This couple was so encouraging to us when we lived in Mendenhall. They had us in their home often and made us feel a part of their family.

We just learned that W. T. Allison died last night (February 28, 2018). He was 79. He was an outstanding preacher who loved the church and also loved Maywood Christian Camp near Hamilton, Alabama.

(Paul Franks)



Homer Myers lived to be 91



Lottie Frank, after long battle with cancer, departed a few weeks ago.



Nancy Price (68), wife of Mike Price (preacher at Bogalusa, LA) recently died



Tommy Wall, shown with his beloved wife Carrie, left us at age 90



Yazoo City, MS (50 Years Later)

Fifty years ago, Al Franks presided over Ricky and Sue Fisher's wedding in Yazoo City. A few weeks ago, the Fishers celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. My parents, Al and June Franks, went with my wife and me to



*Fishers Celebrate Fifty Years of Marriage.
Al Franks with Ricky and Sue Fisher*

that party. You usually don't have the preacher who presided over your wedding come to your 50th anniversary party! We enjoyed the celebration, especially the food, and seeing so many we have known and loved over the years.

Canton, MS

Glenda and I visited, a few weeks ago, with the Liberty Street church of Christ in Canton where our good friends, Roger and Karen Hines, have been serving for several years. Roger is their preacher. At the close of the service I asked Patrick Freeman, Roger Hines and Charles Parkman to let me take their picture. They agreed. Here it is. We really enjoyed our visit in Canton -- the worship services followed by a meaningful time of fellowship. We were truly blessed.



Among Church Leaders in Canton (North Liberty) Patrick Freeman, Roger Hines, and Charles Parkman



"Somewhere in Mississippi"
A meeting house for another church of Christ

McComb, MS.

Not long ago, on a Sunday evening, we were blessed to visit the McComb church of Christ. We were privileged to hear Dennis Jones, retired president of Heritage University in Florence, Alabama, present an outstanding message. We were pleased to learn that the church in McComb has recently selected Chuck Barnes, Kirby Fleming, Ken Jackson and Charlie Newlon as their elders. I also understand they are presently looking for a full-time preacher. If interested, you may contact Kirby Fleming at 601-248-6931.

Lake Charles, LA

Glenda and I always enjoy going back to Lake Charles where we spent almost 10 years of our lives. We arrived on Wednesday, providing an opportunity for me to make a



James & Kimberly Malone Family (New Preacher's family for Lake Charles)

power point presentation about our recent mission work in Uganda, Africa.

During the later part of the week we were blessed to visit with various folks. Then on Sunday I was privileged to preach for this great church which has recently hired a new preacher. James and Kimberly Malone, along with their four children, are scheduled to move at the end of May and start their work in June of 2018. James has been preaching for a church in Jonesboro, Arkansas. We are excited about the Malone family moving to Lake Charles and believe that great things will be taking place in a congregation that is dear to our hearts.

A Great Church in Ruston, LA

"Involved and Evangelistic"

Glenda and I were headed back home from seeing our grandchildren in the Dallas area when we stopped to camp at Lincoln Parish Park near Ruston, LA. Our plans were also to visit the Ruston Church of Christ where I had been invited to speak on Sunday night concerning our work with the Magnolia Messenger.

That Sunday morning we went to church services and were greeted very warmly. We were pleased to meet Jim Davis and Jonathan Long, two preachers for the congregation.

We enjoyed meeting the elders, George Johnson, Edwin Davis and Ray Mathewes. Ken Hale did a great job leading the singing. Jim Davis preached on "Accountability," using Acts 16:25-34, which was a wonderful lesson encouraging all who heard. He asked, "What is the age of accountability?" He stopped short of giving an exact number for the age; however, stated that different people become accountable at different ages.

After services we enjoyed eating with the elders and their wives. We missed George's wife, Joyce. She had been sick and was unable to attend that day. I also got to visit with Kenny Jackson who is the third session director for Sardis Lake Christian Camp in Mississippi.

Jonathan Long works with the local Christian Student Center where they have had thousands of young people, from around the world, visit and receive encouragement to live like Christ.

The elders gave us a copy of their church directory and encouraged us to put their members on our mailing list to receive the Magnolia Messenger. We are hoping and asking that other churches in Louisiana do the same. In fact, may we encourage you to ask your elders



Jim Davis & Jonathan Long

or the leadership of your congregation to send to us your church directory (or listing of members and addresses) so we can add their names to our growing mailing list of almost 30,000.

The Ruston church is also hosting, on April 21, 2018, a seminar concerning "The Truth about Pre-Millennialism." (Look for the advertisement on page 15 about the upcoming event in this issue of the MM.) Glenda and I really enjoyed visiting and worshipping with the many friendly and loving brethren at Ruston in north central Louisiana. We look forward to going back soon for another visit with this great church! (Report by Paul Franks)



Home of the Ruston Church of Christ



Ruston Elders: George Johnson, Edwin Davis, Ray Mathewes

Booneville Church Hosts Faith Building Series



Brad Harrub



The last weekend in January (2018) was very special in Booneville, MS. The Booneville church hosted a series of faith building lessons on "Creation vs. Evolution" capably taught by Brad Harrub.

My June and I were blessed to hear 3 of his powerful lessons, re-enforcing our faith in the God of the Bible. Brother Brad is eminently qualified and is, in my judgement, a "man prepared for a winning battle" against the modern forces of confusion and doubt. (alf)

Thank God...

...For A Recent Visit in Tishomingo

Where A Serious Bible Study Was Interrupted

Traveling on a Sunday in northeast Mississippi, about 3:45 in the afternoon, my June and I entered the city of Tishomingo. We drove by the building where Christ's church assembles, thinking that someone just might be there.

Upon arriving, we saw three cars on the parking lot even though their

evening services, according to their sign, were not to begin until 5:00 P.M. The front door of the church building, being unlocked, I entered and was pleased to meet a lady and her daughter working in their class room. The kind and thoughtful mother informed me that their preacher was nearby, in another part of the building, conducting a Bible study.

Following her directions, I soon found two men seated at a table with an open Bible, indicating they were involved in a serious study of the Holy Scriptures. One of the men was David Lambert, preacher for the Tishomingo congregation; the other was Jacob Moore, not yet a member of the church, but who was very interested in learning about the Lord Jesus and His plan for salvation.

It was a pleasure to meet and visit briefly with both David and Jacob and to witness, first hand, their desire to learn and to share the good news of God's plan for saving souls, through Christ and His church. After-all, isn't this what the church is all about; and, the reason why there is a "Tishomingo church of Christ"?

Our prayers go out for the church in Tishomingo in their efforts both to do and teach the Word of God. Thank you again, David and Jacob, for allowing me to briefly interrupt your study. Your example of "Searching the Scriptures" on a Sunday afternoon was an encouragement to me and, I hope, to others who read this report. What better way could a Sunday afternoon be spent? After-all, is not Sunday the "Lord's day?" (ALF, editor)



Jacob Moore (left, student) and David Lambert (teacher) Found Studying the Scriptures on Sunday Afternoon



The American Flag and The Gospel Plan

The Christian Man and His Gospel Table

(More than a "Conversation Piece")

Like Jesus, Lloyd Beard of Booneville, Mississippi, could be called a "carpenter." Like Jesus, Lloyd Beard "seeks to save the lost." And, because of his love for the Savior and his concern for lost souls, he recently used his carpenter skills to build a very special table.

Brother Beard's "Gospel Table" is painted with the American flag and the Bible plan of salvation. For those who sit around the table, enjoying the hospitality of the Beard house, the table serves as a "conversation piece" in hopes that the table and its scriptural message will help lead a soul to Christ.

Brother Lloyd is known by fellow-Christians as a "Soul Winner." He is evangelistic in his community; he is ready to go on campaigns, whether they be in America or in foreign countries. By the grace of God and through the power of the Gospel, brother Beard has had a part in leading hundreds of people to Christ. His "Gospel Table" is just another effort to "preach the gospel to every creature."

We commend our brother for his desire to be like Jesus and to use his talents to the glory of God and His Son, Jesus our Savior. (alf)

Elderly Saints = Great Examples

Mildred Shackelford (94) & Ola Wade (95)

These two women are members of the Chapman Church of Christ. During our visit with the congregation, located a few miles east of Ripley, Mississippi, we were pleased to become acquainted with these ladies, described by elder Barrett Chapman as "Very faithful."

Their faithfulness to the Lord and His church serve as a good example to others, especially the younger. Among their "accomplishments in life" is providing leadership for the Chapman church. Sister Shackelford is the mother of Jarvene Shackelford and sister Wade is the mother of Tommy Wade. Both men serve as elders.

It was truly a blessing to get acquainted with the **two oldest members** of the Tippah county church called "Chapman." Thank you, sister Mildred and Sister Ola, for letting me take your picture and sharing your worthy example with MM readers. (alf)

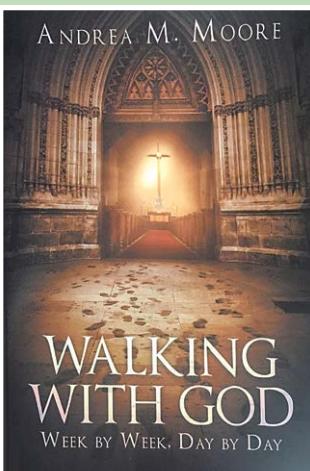


Mildred Shackelford (94) and Ola Wade (95)

Walking with God

Andrea Moore has written a book entitled "Walking with God: Week by Week, Day by Day." Andrea is a member of the Northwest Church of Christ in Southaven, Mississippi.

"In the hustle and bustle of life, it is important to find time to devote to God and His Kingdom." This book will help you do that. You can order this book by writing *Andrea M. Moore; 5477 Sweetwater Lane; Bartlett, TN 38135 or call 901-239-6058.*



TWO SIGNS - TWO MESSAGES

"Conflict or Harmony?"

One sign says, "Church of Christ, at Nile". The other sign says, "... by grace are ye saved through faith... NOT OF WORKS." I can't help but wonder. Did the same person (church) who put up the tall sign also place the other sign? Probably not! I do not know. I have not asked.

I do know, however, that loyal members of Christ's church accept and earnestly seek to teach all of God's Word. True Christians reject no inspired passage or refuse to teach any part of God's message to man. God's people, His church, the church of Jesus Christ, believes and teaches Ephesians 2:8,9.

Faithful followers of Christ have always accepted, believed and taught what the inspired apostle wrote, "*For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works. lest any man should boast.*" (Eph. 2:8,9). Christians understand and appreciate the fact that no man is able to save himself -- no matter how good he is or how many good works he may do! Salvation is by the grace of God; it is His gift! No one can earn eternal salvation. No one is, within himself or by himself, worthy of eternal life. Salvation is a gift from the Father, through His Son -- Jesus.

Saved by grace. Yes. No doubt about it; however, consider also Titus 2:11 which plainly states that God's grace has "appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11). To "all men." But, why are not all people saved? Why are multitudes yet lost in sin? The simple Bible answer is found in the passage quoted on the sign pictured. The scripture in Ephesians chapter two says that salvation is by grace *through faith*. Grace is God's part. But man has a part. His part is "faith." A lost soul must have faith; he must believe; a faith that is centered in Jesus Christ. The lost person *responds in/by faith* to God's offer of salvation through Christ. A lost soul must accept God's offer. The offer of salvation through grace is for everyone; however, only those who believe and accept the offer will enjoy the blessing of salvation. The sinner must respond to God gracious offer. And, according to the Bible, faith without response (action) is dead. Read James 2:14-26.

To illustrate. Suppose... just suppose we offered to you, as a reader of this article, \$10,000! Suppose we were to say, "*Send us your name and address and we will send you \$10,000.00.*" Now, if you believed us and sent in your name and address, do you think you would be earning the money? Would it not still be a gift? Yet, to receive the gift it is required that you show your faith by responding to our offer. So it is with God's offer of grace through Jesus Christ. It is needful to believe in Him and respond to Him by doing what He requires. However, salvation remains

a gift; it is "*not of works, lest any man should boast.*" Please remember that our offer of money is not real, but God's gracious offer of salvation is real!

A careful study of God's grace, as taught in Titus chapter two, shows that the grace of God not only saves; it also *teaches*. (Read verse twelve.) God, through His grace, teaches believers to "*deny ungodliness and worldly lusts*" and to "*live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world*" and to "*look for that blessed hope*" through our Saviour Jesus Christ. Please answer, "What if one rejects and/or refuses to obey the teaching of grace?" Think about it!

Consider how grace (God's part) and faith (man's part) came together in the examples of conversion recorded in the New Testament. For instance, the apostle Peter preached a grace filled sermon on Pentecost; however, when lost souls cried out, "What shall we do?" Peter challenged them to show, to evidence, their faith. "Repent ye and be baptized for the remission of your sins..." (Acts 2:38). Remission of sins is promised to those who repent and are baptized.

Also consider Mark 16:15,16. When Jesus gave the great commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel of God's grace, He clearly stated, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Faith is emphasized in the words of Christ who added, "He that *believeth not* shall be damned." (Mark 16:15,16). Jesus did not say, "Saved by grace only", nor

did He say "Saved by faith only." Rather he promised salvation to those who "believe and are baptized." As evidence of faith, baptism is required by the Saviour, to "be saved." Belief/faith in the Grace Giver and responding to His commands, as evidence of faith, brings the gift of His grace that saves souls.

"Saved by grace" does not exclude faith; it includes faith. Ephesians 2:8 and 9. Faith is not genuine (real) unless and until it produces response. Yes, every sinful soul is saved by grace, but not grace alone; rather, as the Bible says, "*grace through faith*". No person can ever boast that he has or can save himself by his goodness and/or his good works. We are saved by the Good Lord! Saved by His grace? Yes. But only those who evidence their faith through their loving response to the Saviour and His teachings.

Back to the signs. Who put them up? What was the intent? Only God knows for sure. But, on the authority of God's word, we can know that the church of Jesus Christ believes, teaches and practices Ephesians 2:8,9. There is no conflict. There is harmony. (ALF)



UP COMING EVENTS:

MAGNOLIA
MM
MESSENDER

SEMINAR AT RUSTON

THE TRUTH ABOUT PRE-MILLENNIALISM April 21, 2018

- 9:30-10:00** -- Coffee and donuts; get acquainted.
- 10:00-10:20** -- The Truth About The 1000 Year Reign
DON DELUKIE
- 10:20-10:30 Break**
- 10:30-10:50** --The Truth About The Rapture
TRAVIS BOOKOUT
- 10:50-11:00 Break**
- 11:00-11:20** --The Truth About The Battle of Armageddon
FLOYD JOHNSON
- 11:20-11:30 Break**
- 11:30-11:50** -- The Truth About The A.D. 70 Theory
ADAM MILLER
- 11:50-12:50 Lunch**
- 1:00-1:20** -- The Truth About the 2nd Coming of Christ
TRAVIS ARRANT
- 1:20-1:30 Break**
- 1:30-1:50** -- The Truth About the Final Judgment
JIM DAVIS
- 1:50-2:00** -- Concluding Remarks and Prayer

Ruston Church of Christ
2300 Woodward Ave. • Ruston, LA 71270

GOSPEL MEETING

April 22 - 25, 2018

SUNDAY:

9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m.
and 6:00 p.m.

MONDAY - WEDNESDAY
at 7:00 p.m.

Church of Christ

155 Broadway Street
Clinton, Mississippi



Speaker Willie Nettle
(Vicksburg, MS)

East Laurel Church of Christ

In Laurel, MS announces

Ladies' Day

June 16, 2018, Saturday

8:30-9:30 -- Breakfast and Registration

9:30 -- Program

"Our program will not be complete without all ladies and girls' presence."

Information:

Marilyn Graham (601-433-5228)

Scriptural Response

To A Sermon In Favor Of Using Instrumental Music in Worship

EDITOR'S NOTE: Nearly 30,000 copies of each issue of the MM are mailed all over the nation. We believe that most of our readers are sincere Christians who truly love the Lord and His word and have respect for the authority of His Holy Scriptures. We thank God daily for everyone who receives and reads the MM.

In this issue we begin a series of articles in which Cecil May responds kindly and Biblically to a sermon preached by one who is "for" the use of instrumental music in Christian worship. His response is longer than usual; yet, because of the subject's timely and vital importance, we believe it is worth the space for us to publish and the time required for you to study. The first of 4 installments begins with this issue. Please read with prayer. And, may we all seek to please the Lord in everything we do. (alf)

May's Response - Part One

I listened carefully and made notes on a sermon by a man whom I consider a friend and brother stating that a capella music is his preference, but arguing there is nothing in the Bible that forbids the use of instrumental music in worship to God.

This is not new for him. He has stated this often before, and I have responded to him and publicly in writing before. This is the first time of which I am knowledgeable that he has stated reasons for believing as he does. Here are my reasons, scriptural, reasonable and historical, for differing with him.

I am sorry we have not had the opportunity, or have not taken the opportunity, to sit face to face and discuss this issue in mutual love of each other, of God and of the Scriptures. He professes "a rock-solid commitment to Scripture" and to a belief that the most important thing to ask in determining a course of action is "What does the Bible say?"

A Salvation Issue?

A first question being asked in these days is, "Is instrumental music a 'salvation issue'?" What does the question mean? Is it a way of saying, "I do not believe God cares one way or another about musical instruments"? If so, I beg to differ, as I will show.

Or does it mean, "Would God condemn a person to hell just for singing praises to Him with organ accompaniment?" In that sense, the question presupposes a person who is right and sinless in everything else, except that he worships with instrumental music. Would that keep him from being saved? There is, of course, no such person.

While it is our prerogative to judge whether a person's teachings are true or false (Matthew 7:15-16) and whether a particular action is right or wrong (Galatians 5:21), it is not our prerogative to decide who is and who is not saved (Romans 14:4).

The question, "Is it a salvation issue?" may misunderstand the nature of salvation. Lost people are not lost because of one particular sin they commit or one particular duty they fail to do. Men and women are saved, first of all, because they are in Christ, and then because they are "walking in the light" (1 John 1:7), because "they are walking not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1, 4), because they are "faithful" (Romans 4:12). Walking in the light does not mean never sinning (1 John 1:7). God will judge Christians, not by one individual action, but by our overall faithfulness, our life style, our mind set (Colossians 3:1-2). God alone can make that judgment. We cannot.

I like the way G. C. Brewer expressed it:

"We do not use instrumental music in worship because there is no authority for it in the New Testament. This is the position we take and this is the issue between us and those who use the instruments. Anything else that may be brought into the discussion is irrelevant and confusing. This is the issue."

"It is not a question of who will be damned or who will not be damned. It is not a question of how good and sincere some people are who use instrumental music in worship--good and sincere people by the millions sprinkle babies, confess to the priest and count beads in prayer, etc. It is not a question of how far wrong a man may be and still be saved, or of how many things that we may do that God has not authorized and still be Christians. It is a question of what the New Testament authorizes us to do in worship and what it does not authorize.

"When we obey God's word we have God's promises--including eternal salvation. When we refuse or fail or fall short of God's will, God will judge us. We are told not to judge one another."

(A Medley on the Music Question or a Potpourri of Philology, Gospel Advocate Company, 1948, pp. 12-13).

Some say, "If God did not want instrumental music in the church's worship, He certainly knew how to say so." Rather, the Bible clearly shows that, when God wanted instrumental music used in worship, He knew how to ask for it, and He did.

Instruments are a required act of Old Testament worship, like burning incense, offering animal sacrifices and dancing. They are not, therefore, just an aid to singing and it is not a correct hermeneutical principle to pick one Old Testament means of worship to use and leave the others unused.

The frequent call to sing, combined with the absolute silence of the New Testament on instrumental praise, indicate God intentionally omitted instrumental music from the authorized praise and worship in the New Testament. The apostles often contrast the carnal aspects of Old Testament worship with the spiritual worship of the New. "For we are the real circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh" (Philippians 3:3). Fleshy circumcision is contrasted with spiritual circumcision, which is the cutting off of the practice of sin (Colossians 2:18). The writer of Hebrews

contrasts the assault on the fleshly senses that strikes one entering the temple with the simplicity of spiritual worship. "Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God (Hebrews 13:15-16). *We are to teach and admonish one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.* I can do that with my voice. I cannot do that with a piano, a guitar or a drum-set.

■ "Instruments Are Commanded and Approved in the Old Testament"

Our preacher's first appeal is to what the Old Testament says about instrumental music. Use of instruments of music is clearly commanded as part of temple worship. God told the Levites to use them, what instruments to use, and where to use them (2 Chron. 5:11-14; 7:6; 29:25-28). Note that they were used in the temple in close connection to burnt offerings and sin offerings. Psalm 150 calls for praise with a full orchestra.

Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens!

Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness!

Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp!

Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe!

Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord!

The Psalm calls for the instruments to be played in the temple (sanctuary, v. 1), as the references in Chronicles also do, and it includes praising the Lord with dance, another Old Testament act of praise and worship.

There is a strong emphasis throughout the New Testament on the change of covenants. The change of covenants results particularly in changes related to worship. Jesus Christ is our High Priest and every Christian is a priest (Rev. 1:6). We have no need for a Levitical or Aaronic priesthood as a go-between; we ourselves approach God boldly and with confidence through Jesus Christ (Heb. 4:16). Jesus Christ is our sacrifice; we have no need to sacrifice clean animals. Jesus "has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace" (Eph. 2:14-15). Christ wiped out the requirements of the law, took it away and nailed it to His cross. As a result we are not to be judged by a festival, a new moon or a Sabbath (Colossians 2:14-17).

Old Testament worship is often called fleshly or carnal, while New Testament worship is spiritual (Phil. 3:2-6). Temple worship was a performance designed to stimulate the senses. There were the smells of incense, burning flesh and flowing blood. The glitter of gold, silver and brass

Continued on Page 22

Kosciusko, Mississippi

"Two Shall Become One"

Tipton & Huntington Street Churches

On December 31, 2017, the entire "Tipton Street Church of Christ" was welcomed into the membership of the "Huntington Street Church of Christ" in Kosciusko, Mississippi. The move followed about a year of planning, prayer and preparation in order that the transition would go smoothly and in accord with the will of God.

The two churches, both located in Kosciusko for more than fifty years, had been worshiping less than a mile from each other. Each congregation had about 70 "active" members. Will Anderson served as preacher for the integrated, yet, predominately "white" Huntington Street church. Don Woods preached for the "black" Tipton Street congregation.

**WE ARE
1**

On the day of the official "union", Willie Nettle and Dean Caldwell were invited as guest speakers. Brother Nettle serves as the pulpit preacher and one of the elders of the Bypass Church of Christ in Vicksburg. Brother Caldwell also serves the Bypass church as a teacher and an elder. Dean taught the auditorium Bible class and Willie preached the morning sermon.

After the A.M. services, the united church enjoyed a special fellowship meal for the first time as one church of Christ in Kosciusko.

We ask that you join with us in prayer that the united church will grow and prosper in harmony with the will of God and that all may work together to build up the world's greatest institution, the church of Jesus Christ. (*Report by Paul Franks*)



Participants and Church Leaders in the "Welcoming Service" Held in Kosciusko, MS

From Left: Dewey Lawrence, Al Franks (elders); Leroy Watson (song leader); Les Ferguson, Sr. (elder); Willie Nettle, Dean Caldwell (preacher and elders, Bypass church) Don Woods & Will Anderson (preachers)



Kosciusko Church Selects New Elder, Andy Wood

The Wood family consists of Andy's wife, Donna, and their three children, Ethan, Laura Beth and Paul. On behalf of the other elders (Les Ferguson, Sr., A. L. Franks and Dewey Lawrence) and the entire congregation, we welcome our brother Andy as a fellow shepherd and servant of the Lord's church in Kosciusko, Mississippi. (alf)



Area Wide Singing

At Liberty in Dennis, MS • 01/28/18

The privilege of traveling about the state and visiting brethren, especially during their scheduled services, is a delightful experience and a wonderful blessing. Such was certainly the case when we "dropped by" for an afternoon singing service held in Dennis, Mississippi, in which more than twenty song leaders from several area churches of Christ participated.

Our very special thanks to David Conley, preacher for the Dennis church, who provided the following names of song leaders and the congregation each represented. My June and I were grateful to be just two of the 150 (estimated) worshippers who joined hearts and voices in praising the Heavenly Father and "teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" (Col. 3:16). It would be difficult to find a better way to spend part of a Sunday afternoon. (ALF, editor)

Names of Song Leaders & Congregations Represented

*A Special Thanks To David Conley
(Preacher for the Liberty church who provided the following information)*

Homer Wilson;

Gum (Fulton, MS)

Casey Rogers;

Eastwood (Florence, AL)

Tony Rogers;

Center Hill (Killen, AL)

Keith Jones;

Srygley (Tuscumbia, AL)

Ron Hayes;

Jackson Heights (Florence, AL)

Jimmy Williams;

Vadosta (Tuscumbia, AL)

Darrell Reid;

Frankfort Road (Tuscumbia, AL)

Johnny Wisdom;

Red Rock (Tuscumbia, AL)

John Denson;

Liberty (Dennis, MS)

Tom House;

Plainview (Fulton, MS)

Bob Gilliland;

Plainview (Fulton, MS)

Micah Laney;

Southern Hills (Fulton, MS)

Milton Barlow;

Plainview (Fulton, MS)

Craig Hickox (and son);

Berea (Burnsville, MS)

Matthew Post;

Heritage Christian University (Florence, AL)

Billy Rainey;

Strickland (Glen, MS)

Justin Taylor;

Annapolis Avenue (Sheffield, AL)

Bryan Vickers;

Hillcrest (Baldwyn, MS)

Russ Vickers;

Hillcrest (Baldwyn, MS)

Barry Wren;

Second Street (Belmont, MS)

Jeff Gray;

Liberty (Dennis, MS)

Butch Carr;

Liberty (Dennis, MS)

from a Woman's Viewpoint

Worship Now Heaven Later

By June Franks

Recently someone shared a post on Face-book that caught my attention. The statement said, "If you don't enjoy attending church services, you are probably not going to enjoy being in heaven." We know that everything we read on Face-book is not true; however, this particular post prompted my thinking. If we do not enjoy worshipping God now, are we going to enjoy worshipping God, later, in heaven?

Why post this statement? It may because so many are not attending worship services. I know, from personal experience, the difficulty of helping people to understand the importance of regular church attendance. Through the years, we have begged people to be faithful in attendance, showing from the scriptures the importance of worshipping God. But, at times, to no avail!

The Bible says, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6:33). The Kingdom of God is the church! Are you seeking (putting) the church **first** in your life? The Bible also says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (Matthew 23:37). How can we say that we love God if we deliberately forsake the assembly?

The Bible teaches, when we depart this life, there only two places to go. One is to **Heaven** and the other is to **Hell**. We should be serious about attending worship services because we certainly don't want to go to hell. Somehow, we have convinced ourselves that it really doesn't matter; anyway, death is so far out in the future. Besides, who has time for church, for worship services?

There is definitely a connection between worshipping now and worshipping God in the hereafter. If we don't enjoy worshipping God in church services now, are we going to enjoy being in heaven? Of course, we do not really understand nor can we truly comprehend what heaven is going to be like. The Bible describes heaven in Revelation 21. From Scripture we understand that it is a beautiful place where there will be no tears, no pain and no dying. The Bible also teaches that Heaven is place prepared for a prepared people. Worship

services are designed to help me prepare!

We see so many people who deliberately do not attend any worship services.

Over the past 30 or 40 years, church attendance has been on the decline. People, especially here in the United States, are becoming more and more worldly; they are drifting deeper and deeper into unbelief and are getting out of the habit of regular church attendance. Some often use the excuse, "I don't have time"; others will say, "Sunday is my only day off!" Some try to justify missing church services by saying, "I can worship God at home." And, that is true. You can worship God at home. You should! But, that is not enough. The



JUNE FRANKS

Some often use the excuse, "I don't have time"; others will say, "Sunday is my only day off!" Some try to justify missing church services by saying, "I can worship God at home."

Bible still commands that we **not forsake** the assemblies of the church (Heb. 10:25).

The Bible says, "...Christ is head of the church, and he is the Savior of the body" (Ephesians 5:23). The body is the church. The elders or shepherds are overseers of the church which He (Christ) purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Scheduled services are provided so that we, through worship, can draw closer to God and closer to one another. Church services are planned and conducted so that we may feed upon the "milk and meat" of the word; that we may grow spiritually. Realizing that Christ purchased the church **with His own blood** should help us to see that the church is of utmost importance. "Husbands, love your wives just as Christ also loved the church and *gave himself for her*" (Ephesians 5:25). If Christ loved the church enough to die for it, then why wouldn't we want to be a part of His church and participate in all assemblies?

Sunday is the "Lord's Day", the first day of the week. It certainly should be considered a day of worship to God! The disciples of the first century came together on the first day of the week to worship -- to "break bread" and to hear God's word preached (Acts 20:7). The word "worship" involves honor and respect for God. To worship is to honor someone having worth. God is so good and worthy of our love and adoration. Just think of the many ways each of us has been blessed by our good Lord. The Bible says, "This is the day which the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24). Should this not be especially true in our efforts each Lord's day?

Worshipping God, now, in church gatherings and worshipping God, later, in heaven seem to be inseparable. It is privilege and a great blessing to be able to worship the Lord with our brothers and sisters in the Lord's church on the Lord's Day! How can we truly show our love and

devotion to God by deliberately staying home? Please think about your relationship to God! Study God's Word more and focus

Someone on Facebook wrote, "If you don't enjoy attending church services, you are probably not going to enjoy being in heaven."

your life on devotion to and worship of God. What else really matters? The Bible says, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36)

Mrs. A. L. Franks; P. O. Box 1578; Kosciusko, MS 39090; franksmm@aol.com



Running the Race at Every Age

You are invited to our annual
Ladies' Day
hosted by the
Siwell Road Church of Christ
Saturday, March 24th

with guest speaker
Donna Faughn
Registration begins at 9:00 am
Lunch provided

For more information contact church office: 601-372-2551

MAGNOLIA Messenger

IN MEMORY OF

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PHILIP HATHCOCK

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REGGIE CRAWFORD

Reginal & Susan Crawford

(Eads, TN)

RAY NANNEY

Shari Tipton (Jackson, TN)

Thank you for thinking about

the work of the MM as you

remember and/or honor loved

ones/friends.(alf, editor)

The 21st Annual Magnolia Messenger RV Rally April 16-20, 2018 (Monday through Thursday) Lake Tiak-O-Khata in Louisville, MS.



The 21st annual Magnolia Messenger rally will be held April 16-20, 2018 Monday through Thursday at Lake Tiak-O-Khata in Louisville, MS. Mike Price will be the resource person. The theme is **"The Truth That Jesus Taught."** Have an RV? Bring it. Don't have an RV? You don't have to have an RV to come to this event.

We decided to move our rally back to Lake Tiak-O-Khata because they not only have RV hookups; they also have cabins and a hotel, along with a great restaurant. Lake Tiak-O-Khata is a very beautiful place. We encourage you to attend, if at all possible. Make your reservation now! You can call 1-888-845-6151 or 662-773-7853 and tell them of your plans to attend the Magnolia Messenger rally.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Guest Speaker: MIKE PRICE
"The Truth that Jesus Taught"

Monday -- April 16

- 4:00 PM — Arrive at Park
- 5:00 PM — Dinner at the Park Restaurant
- 6:00 PM — Fellowship and Fun

Tuesday -- April 17

- 9:30 AM — Get acquainted devotional
- 11:00 AM — Break
- 12:00 PM — Pot Luck Lunch, everyone bring their favorite dish
- 1:00 PM — Free time (games, activities, etc.)
- 5:00 PM — Dinner at the park restaurant
- 6:00 PM — Entertainment with Mike Price

Wednesday -- April 18

- 9:30 AM — Lesson # 1 -- **"The Eye is the Lamp of the Body"**
- 10:30 AM — Break
- 10:45 AM — Lesson # 2 -- **"When He Saw Their Faith."**
- 12:00 PM — Potluck leftovers
- 1:00 PM — Free time (Games, activities, etc)
- 5:00 PM — Hamburger/Hot-dog Cookout-- Franks Chevy
- 6:00 PM — Lesson # 3 -- **"The One Who Showed Him Mercy"**

Thursday -- April 19

- 9:30 AM — Lesson # 4 -- **"I will follow Jesus Where Ever He goes"**
- 10:30 AM — Break
- 10:45 AM — Lesson # 5 -- **"Life is Not Found in Covetousness"**
- 12:00 PM — Potluck leftovers
- 1:00 PM — Free time (Games, activities, etc)
- 5:00 PM — Catfish Dinner at Restaurant
- 6:00 PM — MM Auction

For more information,

Please call Paul Franks 662-792-2700
or the Park at 1-888-845-6151 or 662-773-7853

Visiting among Churches in north Mississippi

(October through December, 2017)

By Eddie Lewis

It was a great joy for me to visit among the churches. This quarter I was able to visit with several churches and preach at a few. The following is my report as I visited among the churches.

■ WREN, October 8:

I visited with the Wren church of Christ near Aberdeen, MS. Tommy Lawson is the long time preacher for the congregation. He has been there for 40+ years. What a great ministry. The congregation has two elders and 42 in attendance. They have a good mix of all ages. They support several mission works around the world.



Gerald Worthey and Tommy Lawson

Gerald Worthey, one of the elders, taught the Bible class. They used the "Old Testament Studies" by Granville Tyler. They discussed the questions on Zechariah 1-3. It was a good study of God calling Judah to faithfulness.

Tommy asked me to preach for him. I was glad to do that. I presented a lesson on "Wired for Connection" based on Philippians 1:3-11. The lesson talks about Paul's love for the church at Philippi.

They had a fellowship meal after services so I could visit with the congregation. I appreciate their thoughtfulness. It was a great meal. I enjoyed meeting the folks at Wren and hope to visit with them again soon.

■ ABERDEEN, October 15:

I visited with the Aberdeen church of Christ. Derrick Maranto is the preacher there. He has only been there a few years and the church has doubled in size. They have four elders and about 105 in attendance. They support several Radio/TV programs in the area. I enjoyed meeting

Derrick and the brethren at Aberdeen. Leslie, Derrick's wife, is from Senatobia, my hometown. I went to high school with her parents. Derrick's dad is Norman Maranto, who is now preaching at the Skyline church in the Tupelo area.

One of the great programs in the congregation is the Rotation Model they use in their Bible School for the children. The children rotate through learning centers each Sunday. It takes five sessions for them to cover a subject. It's a wonderful teaching program for the children. The children are excited about learning.

One of the elders, Tom Allmond, asked me to teach the auditorium class. I was happy to present a lesson from Philippians 1, "Wired for Connection." In the lesson I talk about the importance of our love for each other.

Derrick preached in the worship service. He had been presenting a series of lessons on "God's Expectations." This Sunday he preached on, "What God Expects of Our Focus in Our Worship." He

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EDDIE LEWIS

presented five things that will help us stay focused in our worship. He said all week we must begin with God, remain in prayer, limit the distractions, carry a servant's towel, and fix our eyes on Jesus, run the race. It was a good lesson and I enjoyed seeing Derrick again and hearing him preach.

■ TUNICA, October 29:

I was invited to preach at the Tunica church of Christ. Dennis Doughty is the minister there. He was out of town visiting with one of his sponsoring congregations. The church at Tunica, over the last few months, has experienced the loss of two of its leaders. It's been a hard blow to the congregation, but God blessed them and they have also experienced some growth. I enjoyed seeing the folks there. It's been two years since my last visit. Two young men in the congregation lead the service. I appreciate Tommy and Daniel stepping up into this leadership role.

In Bible class I lead the group in a study of two Bible words: Atonement and Propitiation. Both words are very important to our understanding of our salvation.

In the worship I preached on two responsibilities that we have toward each other in the body. I used James 5:16 as our text. We are to confess sin and pray for one another. Paul gives us some guidelines in Galatians 6:1-2 to help us carry out this command to carry each other's burdens. What a great blessing it can be to all of us if you learn this important lesson.



Tommy Swindoll and Daniel Boone

■ TIPLERSVILLE, November 12:

I was invited to preach for the Tiplersville church of Christ. They have been looking for a minister to help them on a regular basis. I'm happy to announce that Conner Patterson, who is a student at FHU, began preaching for them in December. I hope you will keep Conner and the congregation in your prayers. The church has around 50 in attendance and two elders. It's a good congregation of very friendly folks.

In Bible class I looked at the Bible words Redemption and Regeneration. Both words deal with our deliverance from sin. I considered the four Greek words that are translated redeem and their meaning.

In the morning worship I talked about our love for one another (Jo. 13:34) and in the evening worship I talked about the importance of us honoring one another (Rom. 12:10). Both lessons are part of a study about our relationships as Christians. I enjoyed my visit with the brethren there.

■ CLEVELAND, November 19:

I was invited to preach for the Cleveland church of Christ. Tim McCarter is the minister there and one of the elders. He and Debbie were away visiting with family. I was happy to sub for him. Cleveland is a good congregation. I have many friends and family there. Several visitors came home for Thanksgiving holiday. It was good to see them and get to visit for a while.

They had a special fellowship time after the morning service and then meet at 1:00 pm for the



Elders Aberdeen-Todd Wilemon, Dwight McComb, Tom Allmond, and James House



Debbie and Tim McCarter

evening service.

In Bible class I talked about the Bible words Redemption and Regeneration. It's a good study about God's work in saving man.

In the worship I talked about our love for one another (Jo. 13:34) and in the evening worship I talked about confessing sin and praying for one another (James 5:16). Both passages are very important and talk about our relationship in the body.

■ GERMANTOWN, November 26:

I visited with the Germantown church of Christ. Our preacher, Dave Phillips and his wife Ann, were out of town and he asked Joshua Adams and me to preach for him. Germantown is my sponsoring congregation and I always enjoy visiting with my church family. Since it was Thanksgiving weekend, lots of folks were home for the holiday. It was good to see them.

In the worship Joshua preached on "Harvesting the Unexpected" based on Colossians 3:15-17. It was an excellent lesson on how our plans often change and we must trust God to do what is best for us. One of the points he made that I found interesting was the thought that the way to peace is through thankfulness. No matter what happens in our lives, if we will practice thankfulness we will be blessed.

In the pm service I preached on the Bible Words of Redemption and Regeneration (Eph. 1:7). It's a good lesson on two very important words for the Christian. It describes what God has done for us to set us free from sin. I enjoyed my day at Germantown.

■ WEST CHAPEL, December 3:

I visited with the West Chapel church of Christ near Aberdeen, MS. Adam Pearson is the minister there. He is a MBC graduate and is a bi-vocational minister for the congregation. They have no elders and about 15 in attendance. It was a pleasure to meet Adam and his wife Donna. They invited me to eat lunch with their family and his parents. It was good to get to know them better and meet the members of the congregation. Adam taught the Bible Class. They were studying Luke chapter 12. He reviewed the first few verses they had talked about the week before. His lesson was on the parable of the Rich Young Ruler. Jesus is warning them about greed and the importance of us listening to God.

In the worship, Adam began a new series on 2 Corinthians. His theme was "The God of all Comfort." We all face trials and these trials are to teach us to trust in God. As we face trials we learn about how to trust God and this knowledge enables us to help others as they go through trials in their lives. It was a good lesson. I enjoyed my visit.



Donna and Adam Pearson

■ RIPLEY, December 10:

I was invited to preach for the Ripley church of Christ. Josh McCrary is the minister there. He was away on a mission trip to the Philippines. He had been gone a couple of weeks and had great success. I always enjoy visiting with the congregation at Ripley. They are always welcoming and express their love and care for all.

In Bible class I presented a lesson on the Bible words of Redemption and Regeneration. Four Greek words are translated redeem and help us see the different sides of God's plan to buy us back from sin. It's a good study.

In the morning worship I considered the first of two lessons on our "one another" relationships in the body of Christ. I talked about our love for one another. I used the example of Jesus in the upper room washing the feet of the disciples (Jo. 13). Jesus showed them his love and asked them to love each other.

In the evening worship I talked about being hospitable to one another. We often think that hospitality is about having people in our homes, but from the biblical perspective it means more than that. It's an attitude of the heart where we give of ourselves to help another with a burden they are carrying. It's an interesting study.

■ NORTH JACKSON, December 17:

I visited with the North Jackson church of Christ in Houston, MS. Jim Allen is the minister there. They have no elders and around 30 in attendance. Jim has been there two years. I enjoyed meeting him and the folks there. Jim asked me to preach for him that morning, which I was glad to do. He and his wife invited me to eat lunch with them after the service. We had a good visit.



Jim Allen and Eddie Wiggs

In the Bible Class, Eddie Wiggs, lead the class in a study of Hebrews 9. They used a study book by Robert Harkrider from the "Bible Speaks" series. There was lots of discussion as the class answered the questions.

In the worship I preached on "Christian Fellowship" based on Philippians 1:3-11. It's a good study about the eternal things we have in common as Christians. I enjoyed my visit.

■ OLIVE BRANCH, December 31:

I visited with the Olive Branch church of Christ. I was warmly welcomed by the congregation. Mike Hixson is the minister there. He has been there several years. He has a TV program that airs on GBN. The church has 3 elders and about 290 in attendance. Billy Sasser serves as an elder and minister for the congregation. He also leads the singing. Jared Rhodes is their youth minister. The church supports several radio and TV ministers. They support several mission works around the world. I really enjoyed visiting with the church and renewing several old friendships.

Mike had a very good lesson in Bible class. They were studying Colossians 2. He did an overview of their passed study and discussed the blessings we have in Christ. He encouraged us not to let anyone defraud us from our reward in Christ.

In the worship Mike preached on "Abundant Life in Christ" based on John 10:10. He talked about the purpose of Christ's coming, that we might be saved. He talked about the provisions of his coming, that we might have an abundant life. It was a very encouraging lesson. I appreciate the good work that Mike is doing with the congregation and all those in the congregation who are involved with the ministry.

During this quarter I preached four times at the Antioch church of Christ in Independence, MS. I always enjoy visiting with the folks there. They are very encouraging to my work. Bob Chambers and Howard Scruggs are the song leaders. We have around 38 in attendance.



Bob Chambers and Howard Scruggs

In Bible class I finished a series of lessons on the Fruit of the Spirit. I talked about the fruit of Self-control. I considered several verses that talk about self-control and how we are to develop it in our lives. Of course, the Spirit of God helps us accomplish this beyond what we can do ourselves. On the other Sundays I began a study of "Bible Words." We looked at Atonement and Propitiation, Redemption and Regeneration and Justification. All these words are very important to our understanding of the message of God to man.

In worship I began a series of lesson on "One Another" passages in the New Testament. I used 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 as the source of these 12 relationships we have in the body. The first lesson was on being hospitable to one another. I defined hospitality as an act that shows our love and concern for others. The second lesson was on confession and prayer for one another. The third lesson was on honoring one another. The forth lesson was on love for one another. It's a very interesting series of lessons and one that could help all Christians grow in our relationship to one another.

PREACHER SEARCH



Brownsville, TN

The Westside church of Christ, Brownsville, TN, with membership of approximately 50, is seeking a full-time gospel preacher. Our minister of 11 years is seeking a different avenue of service in the Kingdom. A three bedroom, two bath brick home is provided. Salary is negotiable and competitive. Applicants please send resume and picture to:

Westside church of Christ

3235 Hwy. 54 West • Brownsville, TN 38012

Phone: 731-780-1073

email: mblatt4626@bellsouth.net

church website: <http://WESTSIDEBROWNSVILLE.COM>

Dyer, TN Church

Congregation: 100 • Attendance: 70-115

Elders and Deacons • Good Bible Teachers

House available

("Close relationship with FHU. Dyer, a community of 2,500 in West Tennessee... preacher over 20 years is retiring but plans to stay and worship with us.")

Interested?

Contact: Lyle Tate at 731-487-7413

Leesville, LA Church

Dear Brethren at the Magnolia Messenger,

My name is Ricky Jackson. I am a member of the Jackson Chapel Church of Christ in Leesville, LA. This past October, my pawpaw and our preacher, Travis Murray, passed away. Since this time, the men of the congregation, along with some support from area congregations, have fulfilled the duties of the preaching.

We are currently searching for a preacher to fill the opening we have. Sadly, the effort to find a man in our surrounding area, able to take on the position, has not transpired. Being said, we are continuing in prayer and doing what we can, with the men we have, to tend to the needs of our congregation. At this time we are seeking support in locating a preacher for our congregation.

We ask, if you have any information on someone willing to take such a role, please contact me. Also, we would like to post an ad in the Magnolia Messenger seeking to hire a preacher.

Thank you for any and all support you can provide. You can reach me in the following ways.

Ricky Jackson

Email: lsutigers_1@icloud.com • Phone: (337)424-0670
Address: 132 Mae and Jack Ln • Leesville, LA 71446

Coffeeville Church

The Coffeeville Church of Christ in north Mississippi is currently looking for a full time preacher. "We have a Sunday AM attendance of 55 to 60. We offer adequate salary, a three bedroom, two bath house adjacent to the church building and partial utilities paid." If interested, please contact

John W. Purdy by calling 662-675-2681.

Instrumental Music

Continued from page 16

and the striking beauty of ornate tapestry met the eyes. Sounds of sheep bleating and cattle lowing were heard. Dancers danced before the Lord and a white-robed choir of Levites sang to the accompaniment of the trumpet, lute, harp, tambourine, stringed instruments, flutes and loud clashing cymbals. A magnificent performance assailing every avenue of sensory perception!

By sharp contrast, the New Testament church is to worship in spirit and have no confidence in the flesh (Philippians 3:3). In Hebrews the Old Testament fleshly sacrificial worship is contrasted with the sacrifice of Jesus who died outside the camp. The priests of the New Testament (every Christian) are exhorted to "continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name" (Hebrews 13:10-13).

The elements of Jewish worship which were also to be included in Christian worship are specified. Singing was. Instrumental music was not. Instruments of music were prominent in temple worship and were generally used in pagan worship and in theatrical performances as well. They were known and were available to be used in Christian worship, but they were not used. Their omission in New Testament worship is no more "just incidental" than the omission of incense, of dancing before the Lord, or the use of the bitter herbs of the Passover meal in the Lord's Supper.

There is an abundance of New Testament evidence for vocal music; none for instrumental music. Jesus and the eleven apostles (without Judas Iscariot) sang a hymn as they left the upper room where the Lord had instituted the Lord's Supper (Matthew



26:30; Mark 14:26). James encourages singing as a means of expressing joy, and prayer as an appropriate reaction to suffering (James 5:13). Paul exhorts Christians to sing with grace in their hearts to the Lord (Colossians 3:16), and to sing and make melody in their hearts to the Lord (Ephesians 5:19). Christians are to teach and admonish one another by singing (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 5:19).

Some references to singing place it specifically in the Christian assembly. A prophecy in Psalm 22:22, cited in Hebrews 2:12, pictures Christ in the assembly of His people singing praises to God with them. The Corinthians sang in the assembly, and Paul reminded them that the assembly is for the edification of the saints and urged them therefore to sing with intelligible words (1 Corinthians 14:15).

The purposes of singing are noted in the New Testament: praise God (Hebrews 2:12), give thanks to God (Ephesians 5:19-20; Colossians 3:16-17), teach and admonish one another (Colossians 3:16) and confess faith in Christ (Hebrews 13:15, literal translation). Musical instruments do none of these things.

To Be Continued

God willing, in our next issue, Cecil May's response to a sermon preached in favor of Christians worshipping God with instruments of music will be continued. In Part II of the four part series, brother May responds to questions about "Instruments in Heaven", the word "Psallo", the "Law of Silence" and "What Else Comes Through the Same Door?"

NOTE: Be looking for Part II of Cecil May's response to a sermon preached in favor of Christians using instrumental music in worship. Lord willing, next issue of the MM.



Readers' Response

Reasons Why We Continue Publishing the Magnolia Messenger

We love to read the Messenger. Thank you so much for all you do. (Gaylan Cleveland, Tracey, CA)

I enjoy the Magnolia Messenger very much. Thankful for the good work you are doing through this good newspaper. (Jerry L. Wages, Vancleave, MS)

I enjoy reading MM paper. When I finish reading it, I give it to a friend. (Vera Yerg, Molino, FL)

I want to take a minute to say "Thank You." My new Bible is so wonderful. It is on my desk and every time I go by it I have to stop and read. "What a Blessing." I was so glad that y'all were able to make the trip up. We enjoyed the both of you at our fellowship meal. We will always pray for y'all and your work. In Christian Love, (Beverly Miles, Como, MS)

...Thanks for such an excellent and informative paper, we enjoy it very much. Sincerely, (John W. Purdy, Coffeeville, MS)

We enjoy the MM! Especially Bro. May's answer and questions. (Dan Eubanks, Stantonville, TN)

We really enjoy reading the Magnolia Messenger. After we read it we pass it along to other people. They seem to be excited to know about it. Thank you, (The Fritts, Florence, AL)

I appreciate more and more your newsletter we have received so many years. After I read it I pass it on. Hope this small donation is a help. Sincerely, (Verta L. Ray)

We love the Magnolia Messenger! Not only do we enjoy the publication but we have a great fun with our friend Dorothy Winslett in seeing who gets their name published first in the MM. Keep up the good work! (Foster & Mattie Ann Owens, Chattanooga, TN)

A fellow convict allowed me to read one of your publications titled "Magnolia Messenger," I really enjoyed the articles and the Bible puzzle inside the newspaper, and would like to be placed on your mailing list to receive the "Magnolia Messenger" by return mail. Thank you so very much for your time and response. Would you also put me on your prayer list? Thanks and God bless! Very Truly Yours, (Joseph Bolden, Houston, MS)

427 Sent in Answers to the “Question Box” (See Page 24)

- | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Claude Williams | 68. Scott Valentine | 134. Mary Robinson | 200. Josephine Carter | 266. Fern Land | 342. Autumn Griffin | 386. Bettye Colvin |
| 2. Sherry Gordon | 69. Doyce Britt | 135. Glenda Wooldridge | 201. Katheryn Lee | 267. Ida Tuggle Walls | 343. Peyton Shapley | 387. Leora White |
| 3. Bobby Garrett | 70. Ruby Wright | 136. Stacey, Melinda & Gregory Hawkins | 202. Bettie Brown | 268. Ryan Foster | 344. Kathie Beth Grisham | 388. Charlotte Ritter |
| 4. Shane & Lindsey Cardwell | 71. Dorothy Brunson | 137. Dorothy Winslett | 203. Burlean Leatherwood | 269. Sue Foster | 345. Isabella Thompson | 389. Sandra Grisham |
| 5. Susan Boyd | 72. Coy Daily | 138. George W. Lowrey | 204. Bonnie Johnson | 270. Sandra Sturdvant | 346. Alex Green | 390. Reagan Hall |
| 6. Gavin Newman | 73. Ann Kimble | 139. Kathy Perry | 205. James Hurlbut | 271. Barbara Livingston | 347. Olivia Pounders | 391. Lynn Grisham |
| 7. Deborah Brannon | 74. Betty Spears | 140. Cynthia Peacock | 206. Ava Lewis & Jean Lewis | 272. Brenda Burlison | 348. Jane Phillips | 392. Gary Willis |
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| 13. Carolyn Ware | 80. Pamela F. Luna | 146. Greg Ward | 212. Johnny Ivy | 278. Shirley Bostick | 354. Ann Whetstone | 398. W. E. Hales |
| 14. Carole Shelby | 81. Corliss Jones | 147. Kenny Kelley | 213. Michael Euer | 279. Frances Patti | 355. Martha Magee | 399. Natalie Redmond White |
| 15. Brenda Redd | 82. Jean Clemmer | 148. Kenneth Harmon | 214. Mildred Carroll | 280. Frank A. Patti | 356. Dorsey & Margie Burton | 400. Kittie Edwards |
| 16. Rosa Sanders | 83. Sidney Clemmer | 149. Jimmy Dillinger | 215. Jane Barnett | 281. Joe Arnold | 357. Artie Collins | 401. Noah Robertson |
| 17. James & Judy Hill | 84. Carolyn Harvill | 150. LaRane Dillinger | 216. Mack Moore | 282. Arva Fisher | 358. Catherine Allen | 402. Joshua Williams |
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| 19. Ray Parham | 86. Marcella Moore | 152. Herschel Ford | 218. Natalie Stewart | 284. Mary Grigsby | 360. Brenda Green | 404. Makiyah Burnett |
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| 22. William Pyron | 89. Jerry & Norma Inman | 155. Linda Bonner | 221. Shelia Hall | 287. Irene Wright | 363. Lessie Tanson | 407. Kayla Paine |
| 23. Linda Keirn | 90. Billy Willingham | 156. Lloyd & Barbara Beard | 222. Vera Mae Winfrey | 288. Linda Caillouett | 364. Loretha Widger | 408. Caiden Holliday |
| 24. Princess Watson | 91. Pearlie Hurst | 157. Janice Griffin | 223. Sylvester & Linda Burton | 289. Doris Townsend Britt | 365. Jeff Carpenter | 409. Kalib Smith |
| 25. Bobby Brown | 92. Ann Sims | 158. Jane Kuykendall | 224. Bobby, Shirley & Ashley Howell | 290. Joe Holmes | 366. Patricia McClure | 410. Carmen Paine |
| 26. Sarah Dantzler | 93. Don Lee | 159. Sandra Morris | 225. Doralynn Felton | 291. Hanna Englebert | 367. Roger King | 411. Sue Glenn |
| 27. Tug & Peggy Rollins | 94. Thomas Forrest, Sr. | 160. Charlotte Langley | 226. Oreatha Johnson | 292. Keith Wilson | 368. Barbara Loden | 412. Bonnie Brown Glass |
| 28. M/M Arthur Burnett | 95. Ken Barnwell | 161. Pat Shadle | 227. Lisa Dearman | 293. Lela Englebert | 369. Mitchell Gurley | 413. Nettie Doss |
| 29. James & Katie Houston | 96. Velva Dykes | 162. Shirley Sigman | 228. Roberta Folk | 294. Olivia Leigh Wilson | 370. Judy Gurley | 414. Floyd & Millie Goode |
| 30. Annie Mae Pipkin | 97. Joyce King | 163. Curtis Lamp | 229. Juanita Slaughter | 295. Brantley Ford Hopper | 371. James & Patricia Thornton | 415. Ella Darnell |
| 31. Bernita Booker | 98. Ann Holeman | 164. Dennis Davis | 230. Melvin & Kay Linton | 296. Jay & Ruby Windham | 372. Bonnie Dixon | 416. Melody Stiek |
| 32. Dannie Davis | 99. Tom McLemore | 165. Steve Rich | 231. L.B. Winters | 297. Ruby Silvers | 373. Mrs. John Perry | 417. Rosie Lee Odoms |
| 33. Jerry Fleming | 100. Steve Gooch | 166. Roberta McAfee | 232. Sherry Townsend | 298. Joshua Cunningham | 374. Boyce McWhirter | 418. Bonnie Skates |
| 34. Admiral & Ruth Tidwell | 101. Dorothy Banks | 167. Christene Holliday | 233. Frances Harrell | 299. Ellen Welsh | 375. Floyd Goode | 419. Betty Brown |
| 35. Victor Frank Boone | 102. Bettye McCool | 168. Brailey Bryan | 234. Nan Conley | 300. Barbara Yates | 376. Vickie Comer | 420. Rose Russell |
| 36. Charlene Jent | 103. Gail Saxon | 169. Mary King | 235. Evelyn Baker | 301. Charlotte Rauchle | 377. Artis Hinton | 421. Shirley Ray / Bernice Richardson |
| 37. Earlean F. Williams | 104. Maggie R. Edmonds | 170. Dee Collier | 236. Betty & Arvel Miles | 302. Lucille Anders | 378. Jeanette Marshall | 422. Bonnie Howell |
| 38. Cheri G. Moore | 105. Sharon I. Rachels | 171. Madonna Langford | 237. Shirley Shire | 303. Willa Fox | 379. Steven Tutor | 423. Shane, Lindsey & Sawyer Cardwell |
| 39. Ken Harris | 106. Melba Ogg | 172. Darren Sterling | 238. Dillie Horton | 304. Lane Lawler | 380. Roger & Phyllis Spiers | 381. Betty Harris |
| 40. Glenda Jefcoat | 107. Donna Gulley | 173. Blaise Fernandez | 239. Irene Rogers | 305. Gwendolyn Bryant | 382. Carla Owen | 424. Susan Boyd |
| 41. Emily C. Overton | 108. Barbara Skrobak | 174. Frank Winding | 240. Geraldine Wilbanks | 306. Cynthia Lawler | 383. Bobby Lively | 425. Bobby Garrett |
| 42. Garry Gooch | 109. Barbara Parks | 175. Merlene Scott | 241. Carolyn Perry | 307. Elsie Brock | 384. Marie Lively | 426. The Newmans |
| 43. Bill Moore | 110. Carolyn Stanford | 176. Foy Smith | 242. Sue Fisher | 308. Eva Almon | 385. Joe Ferguson | 427. Charles Goff |
| 44. Sharon Praylor | 111. Eddie Vermillion | 177. Mary Salinas | 243. Dorothy Mallett | 309. Eva Mason | | |
| 45. Rosie M. Felton | 112. Jim Vermillion | 178. Betty Van Buren | 244. Mattie Ann Owens | 310. David & Missy Blackmon | | |
| 46. Nell Millsaps | 113. Marvin England | 179. Mary Brannan | 245. Daniel Thomas | 311. Johnnnye Blackmon | | |
| 47. Carl Trimm | 114. Mary Lois Moore | 180. Jeff Ennies | 246. Lena Barber | 312. Earl Franks | | |
| 48. Dee Kepler | 115. Roy Gambrell | 181. Barbara White | 247. Gloria Nielsen | 313. Dorothy Franks | | |
| 49. Julius Lee Wales | 116. Ann Hulsey | 182. June Faulkner | 248. Jennifer Gray | 314. Wes & Rhoda Jeans | | |
| 50. Wilda Pounds | 117. Paul Pounds | 183. Eddie & Luccile Clark | 249. Wanda Cochran | 315. Ginny Luther | | |
| 51. Sharon Dantzler | 118. James & Gloria Breckenridge | 184. Pat Moore | 250. Perkins Cochran | 316. Carolyn Strickland | | |
| 52. Marilyn Howell | 119. Leon Garcia | 185. Linda Cook | 251. Tommy & Nell Lawson | 317. Tishia Williams | | |
| 53. Bobbie Loggins | 120. Rachel Pruitt | 186. Fran Williford | 252. Foster Owens | 318. Nadine Patton | | |
| 54. Charlotte Vandiver | 121. Shelia Ganier Williams | 187. Billye Wiyugil | 253. Jeremiah & Shelia Woodard | 319. Jo Ann Mayer | | |
| 55. Bonnie Lipsey | 122. Vera Spencer | 188. Steven Arthur Franklin | 254. Jeremiah Woodard, Jr. | 320. Cary Mayer | | |
| 56. Gary Jones | 123. Wanda Robinson | 189. Michelle Simpson | 255. Benrus & Nicole Womack | 321. Emma Mayer | | |
| 57. Doris Darnell | 124. Rhenda Miltner | 190. James Hudley | 256. Ma'Nia & Bralan Womack | 322. Jackson Mayer | | |
| 58. Anna Cockroft | 125. Terry Miltner | 191. Batsell Booker | 257. Elnorsh Duckworth | 323. Easton Mayer | | |
| 59. Lawrence Horn | 126. Charlane Stanfield | 192. Ollie Wooten | 258. Beverly Miles | 324. Jean Girdner | | |
| 60. Kimberly Easterling | 127. Peggy Wroten | 193. Norwood Burgess | 260. Velma Isom | 325. Irene Hall | | |
| 61. Elizabeth Todd | 128. Shirley Waggenger | 194. Garfield Moss | 261. Sharon Huckaba | 326. Elvis Dilmore | | |
| 62. Frederick Alan Jones | 129. Barbara Baker | 195. Curly Hay | 262. Alice Humphries | 327. Linda Kennamore | | |
| 63. Linda Gentry | 130. Ima Jean Fogus | 196. Lorrance Kimble | 263. Anne Shelton | 328. Jan Wiese | | |
| 64. Nancy Floyd | 131. Bobbie Sindle | 197. Addie Brown | 264. Peggy Engel | 329. Tommy Shull | | |
| 65. Faye Stanford | 132. Shellie Hancock | 198. Sherry Ross | 265. Michael Coleman | 330. Wanda Orman | | |
| 66. Patrilla Maddox | 133. Althea House | 199. Mattie Cole-Gregory | | 331. Kira Smith | | |

INVITATION

Join hundreds of Bible students by answering "The Question Box" on page 24. You learn.
You encourage MM readers. You encourage MM supporters. You may also win a beautiful Study Bible.

House Parents Needed

North Alabama Christian Childrens' Home

We are looking for house parents to attend to the daily needs of our boys home here at North Alabama Christian Children's Home in Florence, Alabama. We normally hire the mother of the home, thus allowing the father to work outside the home, attend school, etc. We are looking for a dedicated Christian couple/family to become a part of this exciting ministry of attending to the needs of the boys of our home. The job is full time and includes a great salary, including sick leave, vacation time, and good benefits.

*For more information and details, please contact
Don Williams, Director*

256-366-3327

*Melinda Jackson, Social Worker
256-757-4212.*

THE QUESTION BOX

If You Died Today, Would You Spend Eternity With God?

We are all going to die! What happens after we die? Would you like to know? The Bible provides reliable answers. "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may _____ that ye have _____ life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (I John ____:13). As you study and answer the "Question Box" in this issue, it is needful that you carefully read four chapters in the Bible: Romans chapters 1, 2 and 3; also Acts chapter 2. This lesson which is based upon a sermon I heard sometime ago, can be used to help someone prepare for death in coming to know Jesus Christ. (Note: As you fill in the blanks (spelling and wording), it would be helpful to use the KJV. Paul Franks)

True or False

- _____ 1. The power of God to save souls from eternal destruction is found in the gospel of Christ. (Romans 1:____)
"For I am not ashamed of the _____ of Christ: for it is the _____ of God unto salvation to every one that _____; to the _____ first, and also to the Greek."
- _____ 2. Because God is clearly seen in nature, there is no excuse for atheism. (Romans 1:19-20)
- _____ 3. Every generation lives in an ungodly world! "...but became _____ in their _____, and their foolish heart was _____. "God also gave them up to _____ through the _____ of their own _____, to dishonour their own _____ between themselves." "God gave them up unto _____," "God gave them over to a _____ mind." (Romans 1:21-28)
- _____ 4. Those who give themselves over to vile affections are "worthy of death." (Romans 1:____)
- _____ 5. Because of sin, every responsible person needs the gospel of Christ! (Romans 3:____) "For _____ have _____, and come _____ of the glory of God."
- _____ 6. Paul says we are "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 1:24) Consider: "Justified" is a legal concept, meaning: "Total approval from the judge." We are declared innocent or guiltless when we evidence our faith/trust in the Savior. Your past doesn't matter. You can be saved. Souls are saved by His grace! You will never have enough money or works on your own. You are not going to be good enough. Redemption is said to be "in Christ Jesus." Are you in Christ -- in His body -- in His "blood-bought" church (Acts 20:28)? The choice is yours. Do you truly believe?
- _____ 7. On Pentecost, when the apostles started speaking in "other tongues," or languages they had not previously known, they were mocked and accused of being deceived. (Acts 2)
- _____ 8. Peter told the crowd of thousands, assembled at the Passover in Jerusalem, that they had killed Jesus, yet, God raised Him from the dead, called Him back into heaven and made Him "both Lord and Christ."
- _____ 9. Peter's sermon provoked a tremendous response! Unbelievers became believers and asked, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37)
- _____ 10. Peter told them to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins and promised the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). What about you? What are you going to do? "And with many other words did he _____ and _____, saying, save yourselves from this untoward generation." (Acts 2:____)
- _____ 11. In one day, exactly 3,000 souls were added to the body or church of Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:41)
- _____ 12. Many people today do not believe or teach Acts 2:38. Instead they believe and teach that all you have to do to be saved is to recite the "Sinner's Prayer".
- _____ 13. By repenting and being baptized, believers are "calling on the name of the Lord." Saul (Paul) was told how to call on the name of the Lord. "And now why _____ thou? Arise and be _____, and wash away thy _____, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16)
- _____ 14. I have done what first century believers in Christ were told to do. [If you haven't, are you now ready? Can we be of assistance? Please let us know if we can be of help. Paul Franks; 662-792-2700; apaulfranks@gmail.com]

Please Send Your Answers To Us

(Print your name... Please. Thank you!)

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 or a Bible Study CD Library. You may be the one! Send your answers to:

"The Question Box"

P. O. Box 1578

Kosciusko, MS 39090

New Bible Winner MARY CATHIE GRIGSBY

Gatesville, Texas. Congratulations!



Recent Bible Winner Worships With the Oak Grove Church

Stefan Dickerson, long time preacher for the country church in Panola County, Mississippi, is shown presenting a new "Thompson Chain Reference" Bible to Beverly Miles, long time member of the Oak Grove church. In a recent Sunday visit, we found the small group of disciples to be very friendly and loving. Morning worship was uplifting; brother Stephan's good sermon was strengthening; the noon meal was wonderful. Fellowship was great. We want to go back! (alf)

Seeking two missionaries to go to India

Needed: One, prefer two, preachers or Bible teachers to go to India to visit established churches, assist in evangelism campaigns, report to donor congregation and help raise funds for trips.

Also needed: A church to take over a fund which helps twenty-five Indian ministers. Present director, because of failing health, is not able to go to India. If interested, please call Terry G. Tate at 1-573-246-4236 or email: tgtate@newwavecomm.net. Reference: Jim Estes -- Booneville, MS Church of Christ: 1-622-728-2500.

Campbell Church of Christ
507 North Oak
Campbell, MO 63933



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