Bear Creek Baptist Church

Fall Colors
By Bruce Cannon
Mitchell County

Job 12:7-10 “But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee; and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee: Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee: and the fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this? In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.”

Once again, the Lord is getting ready to make western North Carolina a very color-filled, beautiful place. Already the fall colors are beginning in the higher elevations. How amazing! What a palette of colors the Lord uses to decorate the trees! How amazing are His eyes and heart for beauty!

And if He will do that for Himself and for us to enjoy, what more will He do for those who love Him? Paul wrote in Romans 8:32, “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

As we look at the beauty of the trees let us remember there is a divine being, the Lord, who loves us so much and watches over us just as He does the trees. Jesus Himself taught, “Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will He clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things: But rather seek ye the kingdom of God: and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock: for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Luke 12:27-33)

Are we not much more important in the Lord's eyes than the grasses of the field, the colors of the trees and the sparrows? Absolutely! So, as we see the fall colors, or the beauty of a sunrise or sunset, or the beauty of a starry night or the moon that is so beautiful to gaze upon remembering that there is a God who loves us more than words can say. He wants to walk with us through life! He wants to encourage us, give us peace, make our lives full of joy and let us sense His presence in our lives fully. He gave His only begotten Son for our salvation!

As I wrote this article, I am enjoying the Lord and want badly for you to enjoy Him as well. Tell Him you love Him right now. Tell Him how thankful you are to know that He is with you and will always be with you. Walk with Him. Pray to Him. Read His Word. And, as you do these things, feel His amazing love for you.

And, whenever you see the fall colors do not take them for granted. Remember there is a God who does all this for us every year as a demonstration of His love for us.

Rev. Bruce Cannon currently serves as the Senior Pastor of Bear Creek Baptist Church in Bakersville. Formerly he served as Director of Missions for the Elkins Baptist Association and has served on the General Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.
Neighbors Feeding Neighbors
By Amy Holman
Mitchell County

We are Neighbors Feeding Neighbors Food Ministry. We serve Mitchell, Yancey, & Avery Counties. This Ministry is doing God’s work in our local area. There are ministries all over the world, but God has given us the burden of serving our local people, yes, our neighbors in need. Mitchell County is the county with the most people that we serve, but we do reach out to Yancey and Avery counties.

God has opened our eyes to meet this need in our area. A lot of people said there is no one going hungry here in our country, but that is not true. In the month of August, the Ministry gave out food to 91 people in Mitchell, Yancey, & Avery counties. We gave out 17,535 pounds of food in August.

Why do we keep suppressing the truth that hunger and homelessness are not here in our area? Well, it is here, and we are reaching out to them. Jesus started reaching out to those right where His feet were. 1 Peter 2:21 says, “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.” Jesus taught us the ones that were in need of help. The Bible tells us to love, and not to judge. This is God’s word, not man’s word. How can God put something in our hearts and it never manifests in our actions? This Ministry does all things in God’s honor and Glory.

Folks, God’s word tells us what to do in our lives. Let’s work together to end hunger, homelessness in our area, and to help those in their time of need. The need is real, and the people are real, and most important God is real, alive, and true in His word and works.

Luke 16:21 “But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.”

Matthew 25:40 “And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

To find out more about the Ministry or if you need food assistance please call Amy 828-385-3075, Allen 828-385-9446, or Josh Robison 828-385-1315. Thanks, and God Bless.

The Demand of the Gospel
By Dr. Tom Walker
McDowell County

Rom 1:1 says, “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God.” The Apostle Paul introduces his apostles to the Romans with the text we are using for this article.

We are going to consider the demand of the Gospel that is issued in this verse, but before we go there, I see two important things given in Romans 1:1. When we see these three truths, we will move on to consider the heart of this study.

First, he calls himself a “servant.” It is also translated in our King James Bibles as “bond.” It is the word for a bond slave. It can have the idea of being brought into bondage. We were bound to Satan to serve him, but now that we have been redeemed, we are prisoners of love, slaves to the Master. Dottie Rambo wrote a song years ago whose lyrics say the following: “I’m a prisoner of love, a slave to the master, I will go through the heat and the cold. I seek no reward, in this world below, but payday will come when the weary gates unfold.”

Paul the Apostle felt bound in servitude to the Lord as an instrument of labor. In Biblical times a bond slave was one who has lost his liberty and had no rights. Believers are no longer slaves to bondage to Satan, rather he or she is in bondage to the Master.

The Preacher’s Outline and Sermon Bible makes the following observations:
1. The slave was owned by his master; he was totally possessed by his master.

This is what Paul meant: Paul was purchased and possessed by Christ. Christ had looked upon him and had seen his degraded and needful condition. And when Christ looked, the most wonderful thing happened. Christ loved him and bought him; therefore, he was now the possession of Christ.

2. The slave existed for his master and he had no other reason for existence. He had no personal rights whatsoever. The same was true with Paul: He existed only for Christ. His rights were the rights of Christ only.

3. The slave served his master and he existed only for the purpose of service. He was at the master’s disposal any hour of the day or night. So, it was with Paul: He lived only to serve Christ—hour by hour, day by day, and night by night.

4. The slave belongs to his master. He was allowed no will and no ambition other than the will and ambition of the master. He was completely subservient to the master and owed total obedience to the will of the master. Paul belonged to Christ. In fact, he said that he fought and struggled to bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5).

Secondly, he calls himself an apostle or a “sent one.” He was sent by the Lord, and as well by the church. The Holy Ghost separated Paul and Barnabas for the mission work God had called them to do (Acts 13:2). Romans 10:15 says, “Now, continued on page 40.
Church Directory

The Bridge Church of WNC
207 Paved Bridge Avenue
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
www.bridgewnc.org
Pastors - Tom & Tammy Anglin
Sunday Service 10:30 AM
Church Office Mon-Fri 9:00 AM-3:00 PM
"Home of Round Mountain Christian School"
Our passion is to help connect the Body of Christ in this area in order to see the fruit of God transform our community, state, nation and world! (See John 17:21)

Berry Chapel Baptist Church
208 Chapel St.
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
828-765-6580
www.berrychapelbaptist.com
Pastor - Steve Williams
Sunday School 9:45 AM
Worship Service 11:00 AM
Sunday Evening Catechism
Ministry - 5:30 PM
Wednesday Evening Service - 7:00 PM
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And Jesus Christ is Lord!

Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church
2187 Jameson Road
Morganton, NC 28655
828-594-9212
Pastor Rick Mercer
Sabbath (Saturday)
Bible Study 9:30 am
Sabbath Worship - 10:45 am
Vegetarian Buffet after church
Wednesday Prayer Meeting - 7:00 pm
www.morgantonsda.org

Faith Fellowship Church
Champ Ray Rd.
Idalene, NC 28755
(828) 487-0984
www.ffcc.org
www.florida.org
Pastor: David Gillispie
Sunday School - 10:00 am
Worship Service - 11:00 am
Wednesday Bible Study - 7:00 pm
"Thieves of a good man are punished by the Lord.
And he delighteth in his way."
Psalm 37:23

Altapass Baptist Church
3601 Altapass Hwy
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
828-765-0660
www.altapassbaptistchurch.org
Dr. Marcus R. Benfield
Sunday School - 10:00 am
Worship - 11:00 am
Sunday Evening - 7:00 pm
Sunday Youth Program - 7:00 pm
3rd and 5th Sunday
(Constructs for Christ ages 5-11)
2nd and 4th Sunday
(Teen Discovery ages 12-18)
Wednesday - 7:00 pm
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Grassy Creek Baptist Church
793 NC Hwy 272 E
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
828-765-4620
www.grassycreckbc.org
Pastor Ken Bridges
Sunday School 10:00 am
Worship Service 11:00 am
Sunday Evening 6:30 pm
Wednesday: J.A.M. (Jesus and Me) 7:00 pm
See Young girls 7:00 pm
Midweek Worship 7:30 pm
"That Mitchell County may know Christ"

West Burnsville Baptist Church
222 West Burnsville Church Rd.
Burnsville, NC 28714
Pastor: Jerry Long
Sunday School 9:45 am
Worship Service 11:00 am
Sunday Night Service 6:30 pm
Church picnic: Gathering God through knowing, growing, giving, in building the church and impact the world.

Burkemont Baptist Church
4668 Burkemont Rd.
Morganton, NC 28655
828-437-2357
For more information, please visit
www.burkemontbaptist.org
Dr. Luke A. Lane
9:30am - Early Worship
9:45am - Sunday School
11:00am - Worship
6:00 pm - Evening Worship

Pine Branch Baptist Church
48 Church Rd.
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Phone: (828) 765-9910
Pastor: Barry Mallone
Sabbath: (Saturday)
Bible Study 10:00 am
Worship Service - 11:00 am
Vegetarian Buffet after church
Wednesday: Praise, Prayer & Proclamation
www.graysbranchbc.com

Bear Creek Baptist Church
247 Bear Creek Road
Bakersville, NC 28705
www.bearcreekbaptist.com
Pastor: Reverend Bruce Cannon
Sunday School 9:45 AM
Worship Service 10:45 AM
Discipleship 5:00 PM
Evening Worship 6:45 pm
Wednesday Worship 7:30 PM
"For God so loved the world, he gave his only Son..."

St. Lucien's Catholic Church
695 Summit St.
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Phone (828) 765-2224
Sunday Mass 9:00 am
Wednesday Faith Formation
Food Pantry Weds. 1:00-4:00 pm

First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine
152 Tappan Street
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
828-765-4471
www.firstbaptistmorganton.com
Pastor: Rocky Branch
Sunday School 9:45 am
Sunday Worship - 11:00 am
Sunday Evening - 6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening - 6:30 pm
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Great Hope Seventh-day Adventist Church
2076 US Hwy 70 E
Morganton, NC 28655
828-475-2040
Pastor Barry Mallone
Sabbath (Saturday)
Bible Study 10:00 am
Worship Service - 11:00 am
Vegetarian Buffet after church
Wednesday: Praise, Prayer & Proclamation
www.graysbranchbc.com

Spruce Pine United Methodist Church
11080 Hwy 231 South
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Sprucepineumc.org
Pastor: Rev. Jared Moore
Pastor Rev. Jared Moore
Sunday School - 10:00 am
Sunday Worship - 11:00 am
Choir Wednesday - 7:00 pm
The mission of Spruce Pine United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ by sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ through Worship, Fellowship, Education, and Nurturing Service

Newland Christian Church
28000 Hwy 70 W
Newland, NC 28657
Phone 828-265-1404
www.newlandchurchnc.com
Pastor - David Greene
Sunday School: 9:45 am
Sunday Worship: 11 am
Sunday Evening Bible Study: 6 pm
Wednesday Evening Prayer Meeting 7 pm
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The Parable of a Valuable Pearl

Dr. Terry Cheek
McDowell County

Each of us has things of value in our lives. Examples could be, our families, homes, careers, investments and even our friends. Then we have possessions of great value and these are usually items we have searched for painstakingly and persistently for a long time. Jesus reminds us that He too has possessions of great value. Notice with me Matthew Chapter 13 verses 45 and 46 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.”

Many, if not most of us, have heard this parable preach with emphasis on the pearl as an illustration of the church and the Christian. I too have preached this parable as such and believe it correctly applies. As I prayerfully considered Christ’s parables this month, I kept returning to this one. I believe the Holy Spirit was directing me to write a reminder to the Church. Why do we need a reminder? And, what do we need reminding of? Well keep reading!

In post-modern America, the Church has been labeled everything from a bigot to a fake by the media, academic institutions, political leaders and social media influencers. This attack has been carried on for so long and to such desensitizing degree even the Church itself has become affected by it. You may want to disagree with me on that point but take a serious look around, paying attention to the lack boldness coming from many churches today.

The aforementioned seems to answer the why and what question given previously. We have been silenced by this storm and those under his influence. I’m not suggesting we have turned away from the Lord Jesus Christ. I am suggesting our boldness has been tamed down. Let’s consider this as we investigate the verse shared above.

The Lord is looking for something of great value and He compares it to the very best pearls. The very best pearls are the most valuable too. When we consider how a pearl is created, I believe we will rediscover a level boldness that has been squelched for at least some of us. First pearls are created by friction. That’s right there is a continuous grinding within an oyster. A grinding that required time and patience. We are reminded in Roman 5:3-5 KJV “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (4) And patience, experience: and experience, hope: (5) And hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” The friction or grinding experienced by the oyster is akin to the tribulations that Paul speaks of in the life of the believer. Too often we allow tribulation to be a stumbling block instead of a building block. Tribulation is our stepping-stone to hope and we learn that hope makes us bold and through that boldness, we share the Holy Ghost the love of God, which is the hope of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Second, the oyster is immersed in the ocean while it engages in the works of producing a pearl. Likewise, Christians should find themselves immersed in the Lord Jesus Christ. The act of baptism has as immersed in the water rising from it as Christ was buried and resurrected to a new life and new nature. Should immersion stop at Baptism? I suggest you use. We should immerse ourselves daily in the Lord Jesus Christ prayer and petition Him through the power of the Holy Ghost. By praise we engage Him in worship. By His word, our Bible, we hear from Him. Just as the oyster is immersed in the ocean to accomplish the task of creating a pearl, we should be immersed in the Lord Jesus Christ to become His pearl of great price. The Church He died for and will be returning for.

So, our boldness comes from the very thing we suffer because we have believed in Jesus Christ and called on Him to be our Lord and Savior. Let’s not allow this enemy to come sit beside us and subtly convince us to be silent when the Lord’s word calls us to stand up and stand out, sharing the love of God abroad to those who need the good news of Jesus Christ. The Christian is the body of Christ, the Church. As His Church we are very valuable to the Lord. After all He died on Calvary’s cross to redeem us from our sin. Such a great price was paid for us and we should let that empower us to live for Him boldly all day, every day. Embrace the boldness that comes from being a pearl of great price. Until we meet again, either in print or in person, may God richly bless you.

Terry is the Executive Director and broadcaster of The Inspiring Word media ministry. You can contact Terry by email at theinspiringword@gmail.com Or by visiting www.theinspiringword.org
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A Pastor's View

God's Children: NOT Exempt from Suffering
By Shawn Thomas
Burke County

In early 1865, hundreds of thousands of men from the North were being drafted into the Union Army to help finally bring an end to the war. President Abraham Lincoln's own son Robert was now also being sent. Lincoln's wife Mary did NOT want him to go. She said, "I am so frightened he may never come back to us!" But Lincoln replied, "Mary a poor mother, Mary, has made this sacrifice ..." After sending so many others off to war, Lincoln could hardly exempt his own son. Just because he was the President's son didn't mean he didn't have to go to war. (Sandburg, Abraham Lincoln, The Prairie Years and the War Years, p. 609)

And so, it is with us. Just because we are God's children, does not mean we are somehow "exempt" from various sufferings. In fact, it is rather GUARANTEED them — because God will purposefully use these difficulties to grow us spiritually and teach us important things He needs us to learn.

Hebrews 5:8, speaking of Jesus' time here on earth, says, "although He was a Son. He learned obedience from the things which He suffered." Being God's Son did not "exempt" Jesus from sufferings — and neither does being His child exempt us! Even though we are God's children, we will suffer in His will, because we will "learn obedience" from it.

Among other things, this means just because you are suffering does NOT mean that you are not God's child — or that you are not in His will. Sometimes when we face difficulties we might be tempted to think, "Perhaps I am not in God's will? Perhaps He is punishing me?" But this is not necessarily so. God's children, right in the center of His perfect will, may suffer. Just like Jesus, "although (you) are a son, (you) are learning obedience from the things which (you) are suffering." — So, suffering doesn't mean you aren't God's child.

— Suffering does not mean you aren't in His will.
— It just means that God has chosen to use what you are going through to teach you something very important. So, walk with God through that difficult time in your life, and be sure to learn the important spiritual lesson(s) your Heavenly Father intends to teach you through it!

Shawn Thomas is Senior Pastor at Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church in Morganton. His messages and devotions are available at www.shawnthomas.com

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Perfect Timing
By Christy Lownsm
Berke County

As summer is coming to an end, I wanted to tell you about my very favorite animal that visits me only in the summer. Can you guess what it is? It’s not that lets you see a couple of ches. This animal is the butterfly of the insect world. It can only be found in the Northeast, Central, and Southern U.S., nowhere else in the whole world. This animal visits about 100 flowers a day and drinks nectar from the flower petals. Have you guessed my favorite animal yet? Hmmm, guessed it doesn’t mean I am correct.

Male hummingbirds are found in North Carolina as the Ruby-throated Hummingbird. The female has a ruby throat, while the female is mostly green with a white throat. They can often be found East of the Mississippi River. This bird is known to be red and orange flowers, but that is why you will see red and orange on most hummingbird feeders.

There are over 330 different hummingbird species found in the Americas. They only live in average of 3-5 inches long. However, the smallest, the bee hummingbird, is only 2 inches long while the largest, the giant hummingbird, is up to 8 inches in length. Hummingbirds lay only 1 jelly beans sized egg in an incredibly small nest that is about the size of a half dollar. They take up to 250 breaths a minute while their hearts beat around 1250 beats a minute.

Hummingbirds are terrific flyers. They do not tap near wings but instead use their wings in a figure eight pattern. They beat their wings fast, between 50-200 per second and can fly up to 34 mph. When the wind is blowing in their favor, however, they can reach speeds of 50mph! These flies are the only birds that can fly backwards. They can also fly forward, upside down, and even hover, but they can not walk. Their tail legs are only used for balancing, not for moving sideways while still. The humming sound of their wings beating is where they get their name.

Hummingbirds leave 10 times more pollen when visiting flowers than bumblebees do, making them a prolific pollinator. Their favorite flowers include the bluebells, snowdrops, and the hummingbird vine. They can not smell the sweet smelling perfume of the flowers, (or anything else for that matter) but can see and hear very well, even ultraviolet colors, especially the color red.

My tutorial. However, if you do get to see a flock of hummingbirds, they are called many different words such as a bouquet, a glittering, a hover, a shimmer, a tume or a charm.

Hummingbirds have the highest metabolism of all the animals except for insects. This is from the need to beat their wings so rapidly. At night they will fall asleep in a hibernating-like sleep called a torpor to conserve their energy.

Hummingbirds can be found as far as Alaska in the summer but in the fall when the daylight starts being less, they will travel up to 1840 miles to Mexico and Central America to spend the winter. Before this long migration hummingbirds will start to half their body to use for energy on their long journey.

Hummingbirds mostly consume nectar but will occasionally eat insects for a source of protein. You can set out a feeder if you would like to feed them. For their food, all you have to do is mix 1 cup of cold water with ¼ cup of sugar. Stir it several times over a course of time to let the sugar dissolve. Change out your water every 2 days to keep your hummingbird feeder clean. If the hummingbird comes to eat, he will drink the nectar by moving his tongue in and out of the holes as fast as at 11 times a second. It has been said that hummingbirds are very smart (even though their brain is the size of a piece of rice), and will remember you specifically and that you fed them. What I love by this is that they will come back next year to visit you and drink from your feeder!

Hummingbirds do have predators: blue jays, fast-moving ravens, and flying praying mantis. So, check your feeders regularly to make sure there are not any praying mantises lurking around.

You are probably wondering why I decided to talk about this amazing little bird. Well, every year that we have lived at our new house, (almost 5 years) I have have vouched that as soon as spring rolls around I would hang out a hummingbird feeder because I love to watch them. Every year I get so busy and time goes away from me and I forget that feeder hung.

About two weeks ago, every morning when I would take our dog out to use the bathroom, I would have a hummingbird buzz around my head. I guess it was attracted to my red hair. I had already been a little bummed that I had missed another early spring, but as my dog was eating out of the window, I noticed a hummingbird flying around me. It was so sweet and tiny, I started feeding them every day. It is now a daily routine for me to feed them every day. I am never without my hummingbird feeder now.

We also had different ones that would stop by and drink. This got me to thinking. Was there ever a time when you had to be patient and wait for God for something? Maybe you have been praying a special prayer over and over and waiting for God to answer it. It is a very hard thing to have when you are passionately wanting something to happen. Sometimes I am not very patient. I have been there, wanting, pleading, begging for God to answer my prayers. One of those prayers I waited for over 15 years to be answered and there are some that I am still waiting to be answered today. My message to you is this, God will answer your prayers in His own timing. His timing is perfect and there is a specific time for your prayer to be answered. He may not answer them exactly how you want them to be answered either, but He will answer them. Do not give up, or get discouraged. Know that when that perfect time comes God will answer your prayer and you will understand why you had to wait until the time and why He answered it His way. Just like I had to patiently wait on the hummingbird to find my feeder, the hummingbird also had been waiting every spring and summer for 3 years for me to finally hang a feeder out for them.

Patience wait on God. He knows best and only want the best for you! Never give up on Him! Trust me, you will be glad you waited!

Dear Lord, please help me wait upon You to answer our prayers instead of trying to answer them ourselves. Help me not get discouraged while I wait and most importantly when you answer those prayers let me recognize they were answered and the reasoning for the timing. I pray we will always thank You for, however, You decide to answer our prayers! In Jesus’s name I pray AMEN.

Still, I am certain to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. 14 “Wait patiently for the LORD; be strong and courageous. Wait patiently for the LORD.” Psalms 27:13-14

But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew [their] strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not be faint! Isaiah 40:31

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Chris Lownsm is a Christian author and illustrator that lives in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains with her husband and two children. She enjoys writing and illustrating books for all ages. Some of her short stories are published with Guideposts and HCJ. Christy gives all the glory to God in everything she does. A portion of every book sold from the Small Bible Christian Series will be donated to battle human trafficking. If you enjoy her books, ‘like’ her author page on Facebook and let her know! You can buy her books at http://www.amazon.com/ ref=d_u_5629_178?tag=svan00-20&asc Dial=Christy-Lownsm&search-ali as=books&x=0&y=0
You can reach her at http://www.facebook.com/authorChristyLownsm/ or christycoops@yahoo.com.
High Peak Baptist Church

By Kevin Purcell
Barke County

In many churches today, when the pastor says, “Turn to Matthew 22: 21” a lot of the attendees will pull out their phones and start tapping on the screens. Others in the congregation get angry saying those crazy kids with their smartphones. Here’s my question: why?

The number of people using a Bible app instead of a printer or Bible increased in recent years. That’s because the phone conveniently fits in a pocket or purse. Most owners of smartphones take them everywhere they go. So, it’s just more convenient.

The first distraction is the number of people who keep their favorite copy of God’s word in book form on their desk or nightstand at home and read out of it when they do personal Bible study. However, taking the phone feels easier because it’s so easy to bring and never forget to bring with habit.

Distractions cut two ways. First, the phone doesn’t only store the phone app. It has games, text messaging, email and the Internet. It also includes notifications that pop up on screen during the sermon distracting the user from the content of the preacher’s sermon. Second, the phone distractions the people near the user. That’s because it’s different. We’re used to people carrying a leather bound or hardcover Bible with pages. It’s not unusual, so it doesn’t distract people.

The first distraction is real. That’s why I recommend using the phone’s Do Not Disturb mode. You can find this simply by swiping down from the top of the screen or up from the bottom, depending on the phone and its software. Other than that, the user needs to control their impulses. If you easily distracted do one of two things in your pocket or purse or use the phone to take notes so you focus on the sermon instead of feeling distracted by the temptation to play Tetris or Candy Crush (a couple of games you can play on a phone). Most Bible apps include a note feature that lets you put notes on each verse or even on each word. Parents keep an eye on your kids and keep them on task or take away the phone.

People who get distracted by others using their phones usually do so because of their emotional reaction to the idea of using a Bible app on a phone. People look down on Bible app users. Should they?

Should People Use Apps?

Some of the reasons I’ve heard come from prejudice against new things. “I just don’t like it” usually means that it’s different than what we’re used to. So, we feel like it’s a bad thing. Others say the book is better because it’s a “real Bible”. If that’s true, then it’s a shame that Jesus and His disciples never used a real Bible. They didn’t have books.

Someone might respond by saying, “No, The scrolls were real Bibles too.”

What makes a scroll or printed book a real Bible while a digital Bible is not? The change from scrolls to books often was met with anger too. New technol"ogy leads people to feel threatened. It’s different and therefore inferior. However, today we can’t imagine not having printed paper books.

Now we’re entering a new era where the digital book is replacing the printed book. The digital book will probably have some advantages that might keep us from printing books. But because of the benefits we find with digital books, I think that a Bible app can really help Bible students. Some of those benefits include...

- Bible references, commentaries, and multiple translations in one place. I can carry a library of over 5,000 books in my phone with Logos Bible App on my phone.
- Not-taking. It’s hard to fit much in the margins of many Bibles, but my Bible app can fit a ton of notes since they don’t take up physical space. I have long notes with the equivalent of many pages of content in a single verse.
- Using your Bible app in the gym. A lot of kids will enjoy using an app and it gets them into the Word.
- Share the Bible with Others. Thanks to Social Networks like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat to name a few, people can share the Bible with their friends right inside the app. What a great witness and what a wonderful way to extend the reach of the pastor’s sermon.

The next time someone next to you opens their phone during the sermon, give them some kind patience. They very likely might be reading the Bible and studying the lessons. The maid or the phone might be the reaction of one Bible verse in the rest of the very Bible understanding the meaning of the pastor’s sermon further.

Phone users, enjoy using a Bible app. But turn off the notifications. Keep it in your pocket or purse if you can’t keep yourself from playing games and checking email during church.

Dr. Kevin Purcell is the pastor of High Peak Baptist Church of Exit 107 on I-40. He is also an author about church and Bible technology, for www.ChurchTechToday.com and other publications. He covers Bibles software and tech at www.KEVINpurcell.org and on his YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/KEVINpurcellBehindThePulpit.

High Country Prison Ministry

By Judy Griffin
Avery and Mitchell Counties

“There is a proverb which says, ‘For what it is worth, and to kill and to destroy.’ I come now that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.’ (John 10:10)

There have been many excellent events happening at Avery Mitchell Correctional this summer.

First, the contemporary Christian band, Sligh, 429, performed and gave inspiring meetings to the work God has done in their lives. The men who attended were challenged by the words of the leader who spoke of two decades of waiting for God to answer his prayers about his calling to spread the Good News that he had found in Jesus. His message of how God had blessed the band after they waited so long for a sign brought the reminder of how we must trust God every day to lead us and provide for us.

Then, there were two Revivals held with thirteen men total making public professions of their faith in God through Jesus Christ! There were many rededications and the Lord worked in mighty ways to reach the hearts of the men who attended.

As Chaplain, I am honored to assist them as they now seek to live in accordance with what God has done for them. I received numerous words of appreciation from the men for these opportunities and passed along their gratitude for such blessings.

Special thanks are due to the ministry teams from Harmony Baptist Church in Hampton, TN and Rock of Ages Ministry in Cleveland, TN who so faithfully brought the very powerful Word of God with them! Your seed planting labor is producing a spiritual harvest!

As Chaplain, I am honored to assist them as they now seek to live in accordance with what God has done for them. But you can believe that I warned them of what they might face now that they have committed themselves to the Lord... which reminded me of an experience from long ago.

A pastor friend of mine invited me one summer to climb into his old pickup so he could show off his church’s fall harvest display that included a GIANT pumpkin. As we approached the front of the church, we noticed a car parked on the side of the road. We got out of the truck to offer our support and the car sped off in front of us. “Get in!” my friend yelled. “They’ve stolen the pumpkin!”

Such stories and thrilling dramas raced off into the night as we pursued them at speeds that to this day make me wonder what my friend was thinking! Security prayed that we would lose them so that I might live to see another day. Shortly after, my prayer was answered, and the old truck started sputtering. They had gotten away with the grand centerpiece of my friend’s labors.

Furious, my friend and I rode back to the display. We marveled at the scene of an entire town stealing something in the bright glow of a spotlight and then making a break for it.

And I wonder... is that the way it is with God? We are given a life to show forth God’s Glory but there is always an adversary looking for an opportunity to steal that which has been given. And if we don’t have it, then he will settle for destroying our joy, our peace and our hope-leading us to believe that we are nothing special. Nothing could be further from the Truth. Thank God.

Judy Griffin is pastor of Central Baptist Church in Spruce Pine and Community Funded Chaplin at Avery-Mitchell Correctional Institution.

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our LORD Jesus Christ, Ephesians 5:20

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Life Lessons

By Doug Harrell
Mitchell County

Life for all of us can get complicated at times. Quite often we bring it on ourselves because of our inner feelings of anger and frustration. The feeling that the world is not fair to us, and in reality, life is not always fair. There are times in our lives that things happen that are hard on our tranquility with what is going on at the moment.

Sometimes we let the weight on our shoulders burden us down. I am talking about the grudge we tend to carry when we are upset with people, when we have been disappointed and hurt, either intentionally or unintentionally. The anger we feel is like a cloud over us, a fog in our minds.

Forgiving is easier than forgetting. We can say that we forgive but continue to remember the hurt and pain we feel or feel. Learning to put it behind us and moving on lightens our load and changes our entire outlook on the day, it removes the clouds from the horizon.

Jesus Christ came into this world as a sacrifice for our sins. His promise was to wash us white as snow, to erase the sin from our past, to be remembered no more. We need to pray constantly to do the same for those that we wronged us in any way, to forgive and forget.

"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matthew 6:14-15 KJV

To be forgiven, Jesus says we must also forgive, a pretty strong statement from our Lord and Savior. He also says that if we get ready to pray and have anger in our hearts, to go seek the one that we are angry with and make peace before we come to the altar to give and ask for forgiveness.

Doug Harrell is a life-long resident of Mitchell County. Owner of Harrell Hill Farms, Inc, a member of Bear Creek Baptist Church.

Mine Creek Baptist Church

WHEW!
By Chris Rabinow
Mitchell County

No, not if that’s the proper spelling of that word or not, but that’s my way I’ve felt the last 3 months. It’s been one of those seasons in my family where life seems as though everything has hit at once. Dad and Mom’s health has been declining. Gere had to have emergency surgery, I’ve been sick twice, one lasted a week, the other hit a couple of days ago and caused me to miss a revival service at my own church! DWay had when the pastor doesn’t show up to revitalize at his own church! It appears all I’ve done this month is back forth to hospitals, doctor’s offices, pharmacies, nursing facilities, etc. On top of all that, we’re in the middle of a small addition to our house. Our house was built in 1953 and only has one bathroom. It gets pretty interesting around here two teenagers with only one bathtub.

Every time I think I’m going to get some work done, one of the other things has happened and put a lot of work on the back burner.

My main concern has been trying to care for my parents. I have to say it has been one of the most emotionally trying times that we’ve been through. When we see other families going through this same process, we really don’t understand how hard it can be. When we see other people go through things and we try to sympathize with them, we really can’t unless we have gone through it ourselves.

To say the least, the Lord and his experience have taught me a lot about what others have gone through that I did not really understand. Many times, I’ve prayed for folks when they were going through tough times but only when I have experienced what they have done, I really know how to pray for them. Experience, for the most part, is the best teacher.

In the back of our minds, we know that one day our parents will be at that point where they are going to need our help. Somehow time goes by so fast that even though we knew it was coming, it’s like all of sudden we’re in the middle of it and wonder how it happened so fast. For the most part, Dad and Mom have been fairly independent. Dad has actually been pretty physically strong and has taken care of Mom the best he could. Over the last couple of years that has changed. With Mom’s health continuing to decline and Dad’s age catching up with him, circumstances have been rough, to say the least. Seeing my Dad do all he can and it’s not enough, is hard. After being so independent all his life, I know it must be hard for him to admit that it’s at the point where he needs help. Mom has had a hard time understanding that Dad can’t do things like he once did. She is so accustomed to Dad being the one to always help her, maybe she’s having issues coming to grips with his declining health. You see, I don’t understand what they are going through because I’ve not experienced it... yet.

While they are desperately holding on to the way things have always been, we kids have been trying to convince them that things cannot stay the same. There have been so many nights that I’ve begged God for wisdom. Team for my parent’s condition have been numerous. Sometimes it’s as if there is an overwhelming burden laid upon my shoulders that some days cannot be carried. I’ve got down on my knees to pray and did not have the words. There have been moments when it felt as if Jesus was right there beside us and other times it felt as if He was a million miles away. Even though we know He never leaves us.

We’re hanging on the promises of God. Those promises that tell us that these circumstances will work out. Even though it’s hard to see how God will work them out. In the meantime, we are doing our best to trust Jesus, to care for Dad and Mom, and praying that the decisions we have to make will honor them and our Heavenly Father in the process. If you are where we are, pray for us, and we will pray for you. And even if it’s one of the times when we just feel like saying, “Wheee,” we may keep our belief in God’s Guide!”

Preacher Chris Rabinow serves as Pastor at Mine Creek Baptist Church.
Humor
By Buddy Freeman

“LAUGHTER IS HEALTHY FOR YOU”

Every year the teacher sent a note home with each child that read: “Dear Parents, if you promise not to believe everything your child says happened at school, I will promise not to believe everything he or she says happens at home.”

A veterinarian, who was also a taxidermist, had a sign in his office that said, “No matter what happens, you will still get your dog back.”

When another veterinarian takes his staff out to lunch, he puts a sign on the door that says, “SIT – STAY!”

A man noticed a young boy trying to reach the doorknob of a house. Thinking he might be able to help the boy, the man rang it for him. “Okay what now?” he asked the boy. “Run like crazy! That’s what I am going to do!” replied the boy.

Son: “Great news, Dad!” Dad: “What’s the great news?” Son: “You don’t have to buy me new books for school next year. I’m taking all of the same classes again.”

A restaurant owner asked one of his employees to put a sign on the door because they were closing early. The employee wrote on the sign, “We are closing because we have run out of MEET!”

Some church members are kind, polite, and sweet-smelling until you try to sit in their pew.

Don’t let your worries get the best of you, remember, Moses started out as a basket case.

Dr Buddy Freeman is now serving as the pastor at First Baptist Church of Marshall, NC.

Standing on the Truth
By Chrissy Young
Mitchell County

As we travel throughout this life, we are faced with daily choices. How we respond to these choices allows us to either shine the light of Jesus in the situation or be defeated by the world. We have allowed ourselves to be caught up in the devotion of what the world expects from us. We live our lives with the expectation of fitting in, belonging. Our energy, time, and money are devoted to the unfilled efforts of appearance. We fall prey to the materialistic thought that by achieving rank, status, and material items that we, somehow, at last, will become satisfied. Often after receiving some of or all of these things, we’re exhausted, unhappy, and miserable. Through our exhaustion we realize that we are chasing a life of defeat. Happiness only comes from total surrender to God. God has a solution to our problems that leads to satisfaction. That satisfaction comes from a daily walk with Him. Allowing yourself to be “set apart” from the world 1 Peter 29 says, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” We are chosen by God, how special is that! When we allow ourselves to commit and surrender to the calling that God has placed upon our lives we will be empowered to live our lives with boldness, patience, and grace. We will have a craving for the “divine light” that defeats the darkness of life. We become “peculiar people”. The world may refer to us as strange, odd, unusual, and the ones who don’t fit in”. That’s perfectly fine! Our purpose for this life is to stand on the truth and the teaching of Jesus. Don’t get caught up in the way the world defines you. Remember that you’re a project of the Master, you’re chosen by God, and have been called to do his work. Don’t ever judge yourself by the world’s standards, remind yourself that you are a unique possession of God. Live your life consistent with who you serve and always stand on the truth.

Cherry Young is the blessed wife of Chris Young and proud mother of Hunter and Highland. She is a life long resident of Mitchell County, bookkeeper at Young, Miller & Gillespie, PA, and a member of Bear Creek Baptist Church.

Ready to make a difference?
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Classes starting soon!

- Foster Care
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The NC state application can be completed and emailed to DSSApplicants@mitchellcounty.org

Leadership opportunities available!!

Please contact Donna Davis
Mitchell County DSS • 828-688-2175

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Social Drinking and the Christian
Right or Wrong?
By Dean Honeycutt
Mitchell County

I want to write about the abuse of alcohol among
Christians. And the reason I write about this is, first,
my dad was an alcoholic, and second, the drinking of
alcohol has no place in the Christian life. The abuse of
alcohol destroyed our family and eventually took
my dad’s life (his Check) and colon cancer in my
dad. One of the quickest ways to ruin your testimony is to damage your witness
for Christ. Social drinking at receptions, parties, tail gates, and bar-b-ques is not the
way to win your friends to Christ.

First let’s explore the obvious, and that which cannot be denied, the danger of
alcohol and health risks. Alcohol is a drug. Let’s not fool ourselves. The Centers
for Disease Control and Prevention report among users of alcohol:
- Drinking will harm your health. Excessive alcohol use led to approximately
85,000 deaths and 2.5 million years of potential life lost (YPLL) each year in the
United States from 2006–2010, shortening the lives of those who died by an
average of 30 years.
- Further, excessive drinking was responsible for 1 in 10 deaths among working-
age adults aged 20-64 years. The economic costs of excessive alcohol consump-
tion in 2010 were estimated at $249 billion, or $2.55 a drink.
- Every day, 20 people die in alcohol-impaired driving crashes, account-
ing for 28% of all traffic-related deaths in the United States.
- At least 1.3 million traffic deaths among children age 1 to 12 in 2016, 214 (17%)
involved an alcohol-impaired driver. In 2016, more than 1 million drivers were
arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. That’s one percent
of the 111 million self-reported episodes of alcohol-impaired driving among U.S.
adults each year. Alcohol-related crashes total more than 144 billion.

According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, Mitchell County is the third highest county in the state for opioid
drug abuse. Why do I mention this? Because we have a serious problem and
alcohol is a gateway drug to other drugs. Listen to the testimonies of drug users,
almost all of them started with alcohol. Alcohol was also a gateway drug for my
dad to abuse prescription drugs.

The Bible says, “be not drunk with wine (alcohol), i.e. do not drink alcohol. We
know the implication here is alcohol causes drunkenness so do not drink.
This cannot be any simpler stated besides all the other scriptures that deal with the
subject.

We have a serious problem because so many professing Christians drink alco-
hol. We cannot turn a blind eye to our sin. We cannot use the Bible, as many try to
argue, as “entirely social drinking.” It is plain and simple that the use of strong drink
is a sin. And that new wine talked about in the Bible has no comparison to the alco-
holic content in beverages people buy to drink today. So please do not make a fool
of yourself to try and use the Bible to justify your sin. Consumption of anything
that alters your mind or judgment is not sanctified. And all Christians are always
to be sober. This is plain and simple and uncontested in scripture.

So why do Christians drink alcohol? Well for many people they want to be
socially accepted. They want to fit in and do what everyone else is doing. That is
why these brewery companies are so popular. It is a popular thing to do among
many people. But should we not be different from the world?

Others like to feel the buzz from alcohol. To speak honestly, they would say
“I like to feel drunk or I love the taste.” To speak truthfully about the things they
drink, they because they want to. I have heard so many say, “we drink a
little to keep the joy in the privacy of our home.” Give me a break. This is not in privacy
because you have told them what you are doing in the privacy of your home and you
have told others. You have found others that agree with you and you will share
your wine with them and they with you. And you will feel justified because some
other professing Christian now shares your privacy. But it is not private - your
friends, family, and the whole world can see you on Facebook of your
drinking at your social drinking events. It is bad enough that we run our own testimony
for Christ, but also become a stumbling block to others watching and observing what
we do.

Would anyone want to stand before God and be responsible for leading a young
child to drink alcohol and possibly die because mom or dad, pastor, deacon, a
friend was a social drinker? Folks I know because that was my reasoning “If dad
can do it so can I.” Thank God Jesus spared me from that sin.

In conclusion, my dad after a lifetime of alcohol abuse gave his life to Jesus
Christ. Dad lived three more years, and he lived them sober. Thank the Lord for
the power of prayer and the Gospel. Christ can help you as well.

A desire of every Christian moved by the Holy Ghost is to glorify Christ as is all
they do. Live life with “No Regrets.”
Revive Us Again
By Carol Cline
Roche County

Psalm 55:4-9 is a key passage concerning revival.

1. How do you know if you need revival?
2. Revive means to restore to life or consciousness or to bring back to life. Physically, if you need to be revived, you don’t know it. Someone else must recognize your needs and do something about it. You are unconscious responsive.
3. Spiritually, revive in the Hebrew is ‘Chayen’ and means to keep, make alive, quicken, restore or be whole. Often, Christians do not even realize that they need revival, yet Psalm 55 shows what is lacking in our lives when we need reviving.

1. Joy—“Will God revive us again that our people may rejoice in You?” (Num. 21:14)
   (Again—Once more) The root word of rejoice is joy. We have heard hundreds of sermons on joy. We know that joy is not the same as happiness because it is based on something more solid than mere emotion. Joy is the steadfast belief that even in the worst of circumstances, there is a future of hope and prosperity. Joy comes from believing the promises of God and Nehemiah tells us that the joy of the Lord is our strength. The key is that we are to find joy or rejoice in the Lord, not our possessions or our family or ourselves, but in the Lord.

2. Peace—“Let me hear what God the Lord will speak, for He will speak peace to His people, to His saints.”
   (Peace—is the Biblical definition is ‘to be whole’ or ‘to be sound’. This can be wholeness of physical or mental health or wholeness between people. God is the source of peace, Jehovah Shalom. (Judges 5:24)
   Notice that the Psalmist is asking God to revive them and now he says he will hear what the Lord will answer. God will speak and it will bring peace, for God is always for us and He has a good future in mind, a future of peace.

At the moment of salvation, we receive peace with God. Jesus’ sacrificial death and shed blood reconciled us to the Father. However, we must maintain the peace of God in our hearts and minds.

Colossians 3:15 says “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, as a member of one body, you have been called to peace. and be thankful.”

When we allow Jesus to rule our lives, we will experience a deep sense of peace regardless of our circumstances. If He is our ruling lives, there is no peace and we need reviving.

3. Glory—“Surely His salvation is near to those who fear Him that glory may dwell in our land.”
   The Hebrew word for glory is ‘Kodab’ and means weighty or splendid, majesty, honorable.
   In Exodus 24:16-17 God’s glory appeared as a burning fire to the eyes of the Israelites. Exodus 20:43 says that God would meet with His people and the Tabernacle would be sanctified by His glory. Moses begged God to show him His glory in Exodus 33:18.

C. S. Lewis says: “the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord’s house. All the sons of Israel, seeing the fire come down and the glory of the Lord upon the house, bowed down on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave praise to the Lord saying. Truly He is good. Truly His lovingkindness is everlasting.”

The glory of God is raw power. When God’s glory dwells in the land, in the home, and in our hearts, there is a supernatural power that changes everything. Sometimes it appears God’s glory is covered by a cloud and sometimes we see it as a fire. The bottom line is there must be presence in our lives for the glory of God. Do we have the fire of the Holy Spirit within? If there is no power and no passion in our lives for the things of God, we need reviving.

Today is the day to seek the Lord. Now is the time. We need a breakthrough individually and collectively as the body of Christ. God is sitting on the edge of His throne waiting for us to ask Him to invade our space.

Isaiah 54:1-4 challenges us to call out to the Lord: “Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains might quake at your Presence—At fire kindles the bushwood, at fire causes water to boil—to make your name known among your adversaries, that the nations may tremble at your Presence! When You did awesome things which we did not expect, You came down, the mountains quaked at Your Presence. For from days of old they have not heard or perceived by ear, nor has the eye seen a God besides You. Who acts in behalf of the one who waits for Him.”

Le’t ask God to rend the heavens and come down and revive us once more that we may rejoice in His Presence!”

Carol Cline is a follower of Jesus Christ who loves to teach the word of God. Her desire is to see every believer growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.

Evangelism Explosion International

Be Intentional About Impacting Your Community For Christ
By Rev. John B. Sorensen

Is your church intentional about sharing the Gospel in your community? Generic outreach like fall festivals and community cleanups are great, but if we aren’t intentional about sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ as part of our service, our actions can be nothing more than good deeds.

So, how might we be more intentional about sharing Christ in the community? I’d like you to ask. Make it a goal to share the Gospel in some way as part of every outreach. You don’t need a divinity degree or experience as a preacher to do this. Let me share with you some examples.

One church set up a prayer booth at a local farmers market. As they spoke with individuals who needed prayer, church members had the opportunity to share the Gospel. Another church engages college students on a local campus with a “board game” and questionnaires during the school’s fall festival. The questionnaire includes questions about the student’s spiritual beliefs and opens the door for them to find out more about God. Some churches hold barbecues and various community festivals but train their volunteers to share conversations with visitors towards the Gospel. Regardless of the event, you can easily offer prayer anywhere at any time.

Making an impact in your community doesn’t have to be a church-wide event. Small groups within churches can join together to make laundry baskets full of supplies at a local Laundromat. Pass out pamphlets with prayer cards in your church’s neighborhood, or pass out bags of food and supplies to the homeless in your community. The key is to include sharing the Gospel. Talk to people one-on-one about how to build a relationship with Christ. Include tracks or a personal invitation to your church. Share your story. You can reach out and make an impact even when you are alone. Betty learned a simple Gospel presentation while listening to our radio program. She began sharing it with those in her community - a nursing home - and had the opportunity to lead one man to Christ. Greg and Jim and began developing a relationship and talked about God with the woman who loaded groceries into their car each week at a local supermarket. She gave her life to Christ! Abby posted the question, “On a scale of 1-10, with being 10 and 1 poor, how fulfilling would you say your life is?” on her Facebook page. She was amazed at the doors that question opened for her to share her testimony as she began to talk with her online friends.

The opportunities are endless. Just remember, impacting your community happens one life at a time. So, get creative. Be intentional. Share the Gospel. And watch the Holy Spirit as He moves in the lives of the people around you.

Rev. John B. Sorensen, D.D. is the President/CEO of Evangelism Explosion International, headquartered in Arden, N.C. E.E. has been a leader in equipping Christians to share their faith for more than 30 years. For more free tips and resources, visit evangelismexplosion.org.

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church

The hospice you choose makes a difference. Choose the one with:

• local staff
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• palliative care in all settings
• grief counseling for any adult
• Kids Path

Camp Erin
The Purpose Of Salvation
By David Vals
Mitchell County

For the next few months, we are going to be looking at some of the reasons why God saved us. My prayer is, that through these series of articles, it will help us to have a greater appreciation for God’s overall plan and purpose for salvation. In this month’s article, we will be covering the doctrine of imputation. The meaning of the word imputation simpliciter means to have something placed on our account. Imputation affects every single person on the face of the earth. In regards to sin, Adam was the first one to experience this in the Garden of Eden. Although we are not held personally responsible for his sin, the results of his sin were not only placed upon him but also upon all of humanity. At first glance, this may seem a bit unfair. This question often arises “Why should the actions of one person affect all of humanity?” Well, let’s think about this for a minute. If the state of North Carolina decided that there was going to be a 10 percent tax on bread, then that would have an effect on every resident in the state that walked in the store to buy bread. We would have no choice but to pay that price or else we wouldn’t get our bread! Something like this can happen without us having any say in the matter. That is exactly what happened in the garden of Eden. When the fall took place, the curse that came upon Adam as a result of his disobedience not only affected him but also affected all of humanity. The Bible tells us that by one man sin entered into the world and death, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men for all have sinned. (Romans 5:12) This means that the sinful nature brought upon Adam as a result of his sin against God, is not only brought upon him but upon every man, woman, and child upon the face of the earth... no exceptions! Romans 3:22, tells us all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There is nothing anyone of us can do. As long as we are in the flesh, we cannot please God. There is no way, within ourselves, we could fulfill God’s requirement for righteousness. The wages of sin are death. That means if we received what we could earn on our own, we would only receive death... not only physically but spiritually. We will all experience physical death. As Adam and Eve began to die physically the day they disobeyed God, so do we from the time we are born. Our bodies are on a collision course with death. So what is the remedy for all this you may ask? It may sound hopeless... so one may ask the question: “If it’s possible for all to be made sinners by the actions of one man, is it also possible that by the actions of one man we all can be made righteous?” The answer my friends is a resounding yes!!! The wages of sin may be death, but the gift of God is Eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord! This is the other side of imputation. Just as the curse of sin was imposed upon all mankind through Adam, so also can the righteousness of God be imposed upon man through Christ. I was condemned by the actions of one man... but the day I came to know Jesus, I was also made righteous by the actions one man. When you are saved, God wipes the slate clean of ALL of your sins. He pays the debt you owe as a result of sin and places righteousness on your account. “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Romans 10:9-10.

There is no way we can ever be deserving of having Christ’s righteousness placed on our account. Let us be thankful that we serve a God that gives us what we don’t deserve.

David Vals attends Middle District Freewill Baptist Church in Buladean. I am from Mitchell County. I have been the adult class Sunday school teacher for the past 13 years.

Ag Awareness 2019
By Kimberly Slottnick
Mitchell County

Cooperative Extension’s annual Agriculture Awareness Day was held at Harrell Hill Farm on Thursday, September 19. Doug and Barbara Harrell have graciously hosted this event for nearly 15 years on their Heritage farm located in the Red Hill community. Each year Cooperative Extension coordinates a fun-filled day for 4th graders to learn about farm production and other interesting agricultural topics.

This year, 132 4th graders visited 7 different stations at the farm to learn about sheep and their purpose on the farm, how chickens and rabbits are raised on the farm, butterfly migration, bees and their contribution as pollinators, making mozzarella, how peanuts are started from seed, and farm equipment safety. The kids had a great day learning from the presenters. All students were challenged to share their new knowledge with others to promote the importance of farming. Each participant has the opportunity to write an essay on a topic discussed during their visit to the farm and the best essay is eligible to win a cash prize provided by Cooperative Extension.

A special thanks to all the presenters that made this a special day filled with fun and facts. Harrell Hill Farm, Soil and Water Conservation Service, Toe Canee Beeswax Association, Silver Bush Farm, Coirsch Farm, Foss Sidobottom, Cooperative Extension Specialist, and the Mitchell County Cooperative Extension staff (Gary Foyart, Agriculture Extension Agent; Eve Kindeley, Extension Director; Kaley Brown, Extension 4-H Agent; Kim Slottnick, 4-H Program Assistant). A special thanks to Harding Landscape of Spruce Pine for the beautiful mums that were given to the presenters.

Kim Slottnick is 4-H Program Assistant for the NC Cooperative Extension Mitchell County Center. You may contact her at kim_slottnick@ncsu.edu.

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The Eyes Of The Lord
By Patricia Jackson
McDowell County

There are a number of scriptures in the Holy Bible that tell us we are always under the watchful eye of the Lord. 2 Chronicles 16:9 “For the eyes of the Lord run through the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect towards him.” What an amazing thought, that not a sorrow, trial, or temptation visits us without his notice and loving sympathy. When I think of being under a watchful eye, I think of the first moment a baby enters this world; his parents are concerned for his needs, safety, and care.

A descendant of David, King Asa of the Southern Kingdom of Israel (Judah) sought God with a perfect heart. A perfect heart is one that is surrendered, humble, obedient, and faithful. 1 Kings 14:2 tells us “he did what was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God”. He removed altars of the strange gods, and broke down the images. He deposed his grandmother from her position as queen mother because of her worship of Asherah (female idol). King Asa commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers and obey the law and the commandments. As a result, they entered into a covenant with God and all of Judah rejoiced at the oath.

When the million-man army from Ethiopia attempted an invasion, Asa cried out to God for help and deliverance. God responded with a mighty victory. Judah carried away the spoils of cattle, sheep, and camels in abundance. “God was his refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” Psalm 46:1.

Asa continued to strengthen the nation spiritually, economically, and militarily as he served God. Unfortunately, as the nation grew, Asa’s sense of dependence upon God waned. In the thirty-sixth year of his reign, King Baasha of the Northern Kingdom of Israel came up against Asa and Judah and closed off the cities. Instead of praying and depending on God for deliverance, he sought an alliance with the King of Syria. While the nation rejoiced at his political move, God was not pleased and sent Hamani, the eunuch to rebuke him. Asa had missed the opportunity to seek God’s help and trust in him for deliverance. King Asa put the seal in prison because he came with the truth. Since Asa’s heart was not perfect for God, Judah faced ongoing wars during the remainder of his reign. His conspiacy and backsliding caused undue hardship and loss upon the great nation God gave him to reign over.

God is looking for a perfect heart to show Himself strong on their behalf. God is not watching us because He wants to judge us, but because He wants us to help us, lest we fall. God is not an ancient God, He is a God of today, tomorrow and always. As long as we serve Him, He will be strong on our behalf. His eyes continually run to and fro helping those who serve and seek Him.

As King Asa sadly learned, it’s not enough to have a perfect heart yesterday and receive God’s blessings and protection always, we must keep our heart perfect towards Him daily.

Patricia Jackson is the Assistant Teacher for the Ladies Class at Redeemed Free Will Baptist Church, Glenwood, NC. She is a grant writer for non-profit, a published author and retired Nursing Home Administrator. She lives in Rutherford County with her husband.
The Rest of the Story:

This was the second Dairy Farm Story that Clint wrote back in 2010. He was just getting his feet wet, so to speak, on writing these articles. As I read back through them, I see the upper table, a big home-cooked meal that Barbara had prepared, and usually a cake of some kind to finish off the meal. This is where we had the pleasure of listening to Clint’s tale of the day and the adventures he had had, in reality, for himself. One of his endearing qualities was his ability to poke fun at himself without reservation, and to revel in telling the story. I have often thought he would have been a winner at the story telling contest over in Jonesboro, Tennessee. I would have loved to have seen him participate in something like this. He was such a competitor in every walk of his life that if he had no doubt that he would have been a winner here as well. It was always a laugh-a-thon around the upper table just listening to the events unfold. His description in real life was just as tall of tale, if not more so, than his written stories were. I hope you enjoy this one as much as I did when I read it today.

Have a blessed day.

Farmer Doug

Dear Friends,

As late as March of this year I believed I was a country boy. My home is Hasdonville, NC, a nice town of 20,000+ in the heart of the country, but my perspective changed dramatically in late March when I came to spend a few months with my friends Doug and Barbara Harrell at Harrell Hill Farm near Bakerville.

Doug and I go back more than twenty years. I was executive vice president for GTE Corporation (now Verizon) and Doug was a technology marketeer. A “country boy” who does good is the way I often thought of him.

Well let me tell you, I have learned some valuable and unmentionable lessons since arriving in the real country... I’ve worked on the farm now for nearly six months and experienced things which could only happen in a Chevy Chase film – or so me.

Anyway, if you’ll all tolerate me I want to share some of my hair raising farm stories. We’ll call them: “Clint’s Chronicles on the Funny Farm” – names will be changed to protect the innocent and chances are I may exaggerate the facts a wee bit. It will go something like this.

Clint’s Chronicles on the Funny Farm

A Beast In The Beans!

“Twas a beautiful day at Harrell Hill Farm, crystal clear sky, a torrid 83 degrees as I headed for the garden to harvest a couple bushels of blue lake bush beans. I had been nearly devoured by ticks and yellow jackets the day before – the most aggressive microscopic critters on earth. So I donned my overalls, long-sleeve shirt and high boots for an adventure in the bean patch.

Now what I found growing there I thought was a strong bean but have since learned that there is no longer a strong, just a snap. That was a pretty big disappointment to me, although I’m not sure why. Just so many new farm facts in my head these days I can hardly catalog them all!

Doug told me this was breaking work – that I might want to take a three-legged stool along for more comfortable picking. Well I did that but we’d had an inch of rain overnight and the three legs kept getting satuired in the dirt so it was breaking my back moving the stool around. I tossed it aside. Besides, I’ve been on the farm 3 months now, have lost 62 pounds of chubby and ten inches in the waistline I am fit like a fiddle, strong as a bull, peiced and ready to go again. I have had no farm jobs to do (except the gardens) and I don’t think I’ll be doing much of that.

It is important, mind you, that I remain vigilant while harvesting these succulent little pods. For I know that beetles, spiders, snakes and other killer vermin can attack without warning. It’s simply one of the hazards of being Farmer Clint, yet one I gladly embrace. I chuckled to myself as I thought of the Scripture, “Be self controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8. Not that I expected a lion, although a hungry bear was not out of the realm of possibility. Regardless, a farmer cannot be too careful.

Somewhere, about mid-morning, I heard a soft rustling in the sorghum cane field. I figured it must be a deer since they had been eating virtually every other crop we’d planted at Harrell Hill Farm. I never knew deer are such destructive beasts and was praying that he wouldn’t come over and eat all the beans. It was such a glorious day, I continued to pick and pull, to pick and hum, to pick and thank God for the joy of being one with the farm.

Then, from nowhere and from everywhere a huge monster burst from the perimeter of the cane field... I heard it coming, running, stamping, growling, moaning—insanely gnawing things who were portrayed in Steven King novels. I stood my ground, poised for war, girded for battle, prepared to lose my life for the blue lake bush bean patch... then I FELT IT, it was on me!

My head dropped quickly, so quickly in fact that my sawhant fell to the ground. And there, I mean right there, moving across my steel-toed boots was the ugliest monster I’ve ever seen. It was RIG... it was BROWN... it had ears like a SHARK... I screamed like a girl... it looked at me, made some gargling sound and darted away. My friends, in the midst of picking beans and praising God I stood shoulder to shoulder with my very first KILLER GROUNDHOG. (Okay, maybe not shoulder to shoulder but he was a whopper!)

I always thought groundhogs were like prairie dogs, tiny and cute like Chip and Dale. Well, I know... they resemble Smilla, or Alain or King Kong, or any number of other prehistoric beasts. (You laugh yet you are reading this from the comfort of your easy chair, not staring Godzilla in the face.)

I had spilled beans from one end of the garden to the other, lost my three-legged stool, trpping over and destroying many tomato plants, stumbling through young broccoli spears and squashing most of the tender beet greens... I jumped into my farm truck – an 1801 vintage Jeep but that’s a story for another day – and slammed the door.

My heart was pounding like a sack full of angry opomuses. My blood pressure sky high. I’m not sure I had taken a breath during the battle for the blue lake bush bean patch. Yet after a half hour or so, I again tasted the peace of the Lord; all was well with my soul; the monster had slithered into the woods.

I dismantled my jeep and resumed the harvest of blue lake bush beans – confident that I had survived yet another test on the Funny Farm.

Humbled in the Hills,
Farmer Clint

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My Spiritual Birthday and Chick-fil-A: The joy of Living Biblically
By Jim Denison

My spiritual birthday was yesterday. On September 9, 1973, I asked Jesus Christ to forgive my sins and become my Savior and Lord.

Thank with me about all that has changed in the last forty-six years.

I remember when people called each other on a device called a rotary telephone. The first house Janet and I owned had a sheet built into a wall in the entryway where such a phone was meant to reside. You could get an extra-long cord that enabled you to walk into the kitchen while talking on it.

Then came push-button phones. Then came phones with wireless handsets (and very long antennas). I remember the first big phone I ever saw—it was “mobile” so long as you carried around a backpack-sized battery. The day I got a phone built into my car was a game-changer.

Now Apple is set to release this morning to unveil its latest technology. Analysts expect iPhones with a three-lens camera array on the back and improvements to their facial recognition system. The company may also announce innovations to their watches, AirPods, Macs, and subscription music, games, and TV.

Drones and suburbs

Technology is revolutionizing every dimension of the human experience. Advances in genetics are helping doctors diagnose, treat, and prevent disease on an unprecedented scale. Retailers are developing ways to deliver their products to your homes via drone.

Mobile devices allow people to work remotely more easily than ever. Autonomous vehicles will enable them to commute to the office while working in their cars. As a result, suburbs will extend farther from city centers than ever before.

It’s hard to identify a dimension of our daily lives unaffected by the amazing advances of technology. Those with the skill and discipline to create and market such remarkable innovations deserve the gratitude of those of us who benefit from their expertise daily.

And yet, despite all our astounding scientific progress, our perennial problems are still problems.

As of today, seventy thousand people have been left homeless in the Bahamas by Hurricane Dorian. The Centers for Disease Control is investigating more than 400 possible cases of lung disease linked to vaping. North Korea fired two projectiles into the East Sea this morning, its eighth weapons test since late July.

“Our most basic common link”

I remember well the day I encountered this theological fact in a seminary textbook: God’s word is always relevant because human nature doesn’t change. You and I still face the same fears and embrace the same hopes as our first ancestors.

President John F. Kennedy spoke for all humans across all time when he said, “In the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children’s future. And we are all mortal.”

Because God’s word is as relevant today as when it was first inspired, living by biblical truth and sharing it with others is as relevant as ever. In our secular, post-Christian culture, this is an important fact to remember.

You’re not trusting an old, outdated book when you choose to live by biblical morality—you’re aligning your life with the Creator of the universe and living a life he can bless. You’re not “proselytizing” when you share the gospel—you’re offering other people the only pathway to eternal life.

You’re not “imposing your values on others” when you speak on cultural issues—you’re sharing life-changing truth with people. The more they reject God’s word, the more they need it.

“The most joyful hearts and a lot of love”

Chick-fil-A is back in the news. Not because opponents of biblical morality are organizing more boycotts against the restaurant, but because the company’s employees have once again embodied their founder’s biblical values.

When a man opened fire in West Texas on August 31, a local Chick-fil-A closed early so workers could be with their loved ones. A Facebook post explains what happened next. As restaurant employees were leaving, “an opportunity to feed local law enforcement presented itself and they were given the option to help ... not one person said no.”

Pampered with another local Chick-fil-A, they cooked five hundred sandwiches “and packaged them with the most joyful hearts and a lot of love.” The post continued. “Sometimes the light in a dark world looks as simple as a hot chicken sandwich.”

“It shall accomplish that which I purposes”

The next time you wonder if living by God’s word is worth the cost of personal obedience and public opposition, remember your Father’s promise: his word “shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it” (Isaiah 55:11).

It may seem dangerous to live by biblical truth, but it’s more dangerous not to.

Jim Denison Ph.D. speaks and writes on cultural and contemporary issues. His daily column is distributed to more than 113,000 subscribers in 208 countries. See more on the website at www.denisondman.org. Copyrighted and printed by permission from Denison Forum.
FRANKLIN GRAHAM
DECISION AMERICA
TAR HEEL STATE TOUR

GRAHAM LAUNCHES DECISION AMERICA TAR HEEL STATE TOUR

Eight-city tour will bring prayer, live music and life-changing message of hope to Asheville, North Carolina, on October 13

CHARLOTTE, N.C., Sept. 12, 2019 — Franklin Graham has preached in all 50 states over the past three years for the Decision America Tour. The next stop will be especially meaningful to him as he goes to eight cities in his home state of North Carolina.

Graham will be sharing a powerful message of hope with people in the Tar Heel state. He will also invite them to join him in praying for their communities and local, state, and national leaders.

"I’ve watched Asheville become one of the top destinations for tourism and relocation. However, many people here are faced with feelings of emptiness, loneliness, and distress. Alcoholism and drug abuse seems to be more and more prevalent," said Michael Brown, pastor of Crossroads Church in Asheville. "I like most of America, Asheville is in need of spiritual renewal that can only come about through prayer, repentance, and turning to Jesus."

On Oct. 13, Graham will bring the Decision America Tar Heel State Tour to Asheville. The free, family-friendly event begins at 4 p.m. at U.S. Cellular Center.

In addition to the stop in Asheville, the tour is also visiting Fayetteville, Greenville, Wilmington, Raleigh, Greensboro, Hickory, and Charlotte.

"We need an awakening in North Carolina—a spiritual revival," said Franklin Graham, president and CEO of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. "People across this state and the nation are searching. It is my prayer that during the Decision America Tour tens of thousands of North Carolinians will find the peace and security that comes through faith in Jesus Christ."

Graham will bring a message from the Bible at each stop on the Tar Heel State Tour.

"We all face moments when we come to a crossroads in our lives and we need to make important decisions," said Graham. "Through this event, people will have the opportunity to make a decision that can impact their lives not only now but for eternity."

Popular Grammy-nominated music artist Jeremy Camp and award-winning guitarist Dennis Agajanian are also traveling with Graham on the Tar Heel State Tour. They will perform live at each event. Camp joined Graham for the Decision America Tour in 2018 when an estimated 120,000 people attended events in California, Oregon and Washington. Agajanian started traveling the world with Billy Graham more than 40 years ago and he has participated in more than 300 events with Franklin Graham.

The Decision America Tar Heel State Tour is free and everyone is invited to attend.

Graham started Decision America in 2010 when he held events in all 50 state capitals. He continued to tour in 2017 by traveling to 11 cities across Tennessee and Texas. Then in 2018, he toured the West Coast, visiting 17 cities in California, Oregon and Washington. In May of this year, he visited eight cities in the Northeast.

To learn more about the Decision America Tar Heel State Tour, visit DecisionAmerica.com.

DATES AND LOCATIONS FOR DECISION AMERICA TAR HEEL STATE TOUR

- Fayetteville (Oct. 1)
- Greenville (Oct. 2)
- Wilmington (Oct. 5)
- Raleigh (Oct. 9)
- Greensboro (Oct. 9)
- Hickory (Oct. 10)
- Charlotte (Oct. 12)
- Asheville (Oct. 13)

MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

- Interviews with Franklin Graham
- Interviews with people attending events
- Video of event (audio connections available)

ON-SITE MEDIA CONTACT: Mark Barber, 828-366-5803

"Serving the Community"
Trips for October

- Friday, October 11 - TJ Maxx/Moss/Jenns & Lunch @ CiCi’s Pizza Ashevile, NC
- Friday, October 18 - Boone Thrift Stores/Mast General Store & Lunch @ Wendy’s-Boone, NC
- Friday, October 25 - Cherokee & Lunch @ Lunch at Granny’s Kitchen Cherokee NC

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Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 1 John 4:4

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Colossians 3:17
By Dave Ransey

Live like your income hasn’t changed

Dear Dave,

I’ll be graduating from college in December, and I’ll have a job waiting for me that pays $50,000 a year. This will bring our household income up to about $75,000. The problem is we’ve got $18,000 in student loan debt, $2,500 in credit card debt, and $4,000 to pay in medical bills. We’re living in an apartment right now, so how should we handle this income increase regarding our debt situation?

Mikayla

Dear Mikayla,

Congratulations on your decision to get control of your finances and your debt. If you two just keep living the way you have been, minus the debt, and put the rest toward the debt you’ve incurred, you could be debt-free in a year or so.

Remember, just because you’ve got a lot more money coming in doesn’t mean you should double your entertainment budget, take an expensive vacation, or run out and buy a new car. The first thing I’d recommend is sitting down together, and working out a budget, monthly budget. Give every dollar a name and a job to do before the coming month begins.

Don’t forget the debt snowball, either! List all your debts from smallest to largest, and attack the smallest—that credit card debt—first with a vengeance, while making minimum payments on the medical bills and student loan debt. Once you’ve paid off the credit card debt, roll the money from that payment over and apply it, plus any other cash you can scrape together, toward the medical bills. Once the medical bills are out of the way, repeat the process and roll the payments over again targeting the student loan debt. At this point, you should have a bunch of cash to throw at those student loans each month until all that debt is off your backs once and for all.

I’m really proud of you two, Mikayla. If you’ll follow my plan from here on out, you’ll gain control of your money and be set to start saving and building real wealth—I’ve said many times that partnerships are the only ships that won’t sink, and I’m a firm believer in that philosophy. I would encourage you guys to set up a situation where one of you is the owner, then figure out a plan where the other guys get paid off the bottom line—as if they were owners. Trust me, anything with three heads is going to end up being a monster at some point.

Here’s the story about family businesses. When everyone understands their role and has the best interest of the company in mind, family businesses can be a lot more fun and more successful than non-family businesses. Statistics show the average family business lasts 60 years, while the average publicly traded company lasts about 15 years.

So, there’s nothing inherently wrong with the family part of the equation. It’s the partnership aspect I’d stay away from.

Dave

The partnership, not the family, is the problem

Dear Dave,

My two brothers-in-law and I have been thinking about going into business together as a side project in the real estate world. One of them is an architect and licensed general contractor, one has a successful painting business, and I’m a chief financial officer with a CPA background. Plus, I had a lot of construction experience as a young man. I know you’re not a big fan of business partnerships, but how do you feel about a family business like this?

Dan

Dear Dan,

Going into business with family isn’t a big concern here. I’ve said many times that partnerships are the only ships that won’t sink, and I’m a firm believer in that philosophy. I would encourage you guys to set up a situation where one of you is the owner, then figure out a plan where the other guys get paid off the bottom line—as if they were owners. Trust me, anything with three heads is going to end up being a monster at some point.

Here’s the story about family businesses. When everyone understands their role and has the best interest of the company in mind, family businesses can be a lot more fun and more successful than non-family businesses. Statistics show the average family business lasts 60 years, while the average publicly traded company lasts about 15 years.

So, there’s nothing inherently wrong with the family part of the equation. It’s the partnership aspect I’d stay away from.

Dave

Renters’ insurance?

Dear Dave,

We just helped move our son into a cheap, off-campus apartment a few blocks from where he is attending college. We signed the agreement and are paying the rent because he makes very good grades. Do you think renter’s insurance is a smart buy? It’s less than $12 a month, but the minimum coverage I can get is $15,000, and he probably has less than $1,000 worth of belongings there.

Kevin

Dear Kevin,

I’d get renter’s insurance. My guess is it also comes with five or six figures in personal liability coverage, as well. That’s in case he’s out on the patio with his buddies, someone slips and falls, and they decide to sue because Daddy’s on the lease.

In a case like this, because there’s so little to start with, it’s not theft or fire taking the contents of the apartment that you’re worried about. It’s the liability portion of the coverage that makes it worth every penny of what you’d be paying. That alone makes it worth $10 to $12 a month just to make sure a slip-and-fall doesn’t mess with your life.

Dave

Dave Ramsey is CEO of Ramsey Solutions. He has authored seven best-selling books, including The Total Money Makeover. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 14 million listeners each week on 600 radio stations and multiple digital platforms. Follow Dave on the web at daveramsey.com and on Twitter at @DaveRamsey.
Marlene’s Meditations

Fire Drills for My Soul
By Marlene Horck
Burke County

How Firm a Foundation, Verse 3, Lutheran Book of Worship

“Mighty grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply;
The flames shall not hurt you; I only design
Your brass to consume and your gold to refine.”

Alarms blare and piercing lights stab through the morning quilt of the elementary school. Startled out of their routines, the children snap their heads up and stare at the teacher. She speaks firmly and calmly, authoritatively dispensing instructions. “Quiet,” she says. “Let’s line up and let’s go. Stop talking, Johnny, don’t tru...”

As the students emerge from the building, the crisp chilly wind bites their cheeks and turns them rosy. During a recent drill, musical rhythm sticks slammed in the first-grader hands as they sprinted the hallways, and a video conference immediately changes the background from cliché black to colorful brushes. My friend, who teaches elementary, recently described a fire drill with her young students. I realized that school fire drills formed a poignant analogy to the spiritual equivalent of practicing for the fiery trials of life. As I recall my own memories of school fire drills, I discovered that they are quite relevant for my own spiritual fire drills.

A kindergarten child’s innocent question prompted this spiritual analogy. He asked, “What would happen if we really had a fire?” My quick-thinking friend answered, “That’s why we have a fire drill — to practice for the real emergency.”

The same is true in the Christian life. We need to be practicing our spiritual fire drills so that when the fiery trials of life roar through our souls, we know the exit routes; described in the Bible. We’ve posted them on the walls of our hearts. We equip ourselves to remain calm when the smoke of life threatens to overwhelm us.

I asked my friend about the rules for a fire drill. She instantly quoted the guidelines which were posted in the employee handbook, reviewed at the beginning of the school year, and practiced once a month as required by the state.

1. We line up.
2. We are quiet and orderly.
3. We walk quickly but do not run.
4. We follow and obey the teacher.
5. Our goal is to get out of the building safely and quickly.
6. We can reenter when we are told it is safe to do so.

Do you see the spiritual analogy? — The fire drill is the spiritual preparation for the fiery trials of life.

Our spiritual authority requires that we practice scriptural principles to prepare for the flames of adversity. Here are the spiritual rules for a fiery trial:

1. We line up with God’s Word.
Psalm 16:6 “The lines are fall¬ing unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly inheritance.”
2. As much as possible, we are quiet and orderly in the way we approach the fiery trials of life. Isaiah 30:15 “For this saith the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel; In morning and in evening shall ye call upon his name; and in confidence shall be your strength; and ye would not.”
3. We walk quickly, but we do not run. We don’t panic for faith is a refusal to panic.
Galatians 5:17 “Walk in the Spirit.”
Psalm 119:65 “I made haste and delayed not to keep thy commandments.”
4. We follow and obey our teacher,
Jesus Christ.
Matthew 16:17-18 “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and follow me.” continued on page 47
It’s hard to believe that summer is over, and fall has arrived, even if the temperatures feel more like summer. The end of the first grading period at New Dimensions will be Wednesday, October 30, signaling the time that the first report cards will be distributed. With the distribution of report cards, it’s also time for New Dimensions to provide parents and teachers the opportunity to discuss the educational progress of the students we serve.

This is a wonderful chance for parents to talk with their child’s teacher and share any ideas or concerns they may have. It is also an occasion for a student’s teacher to update parents on how their child is doing in school and how they can work together to provide the best education possible. The “parent-teacher conference day” is designated as Thursday, October 31. I would encourage all parents to make every effort to attend a conference with your child’s teacher.

In order for our students to be successful, there must be communication between the home and the school. These conferences are one way to establish that line of communication. It’s very important for parents and teachers to get to know each other and to feel comfortable communicating with each other. One of the best tools a teacher possesses is the ability to call parents when students are not meeting their potential, see a special recognition, or when there is a special event/concern at school. It’s also important that parents know that they can pick up the phone and call the teacher if they sense a problem or have a complaint regarding their child’s classroom. To continue to improve our school system and make it one in which we are all very proud, we must work together. One way to do that is to take advantage of the Parent/Teacher Conference Day.

When preparing for a parent-teacher conference, I would make the following recommendations to the parents:

- Talk to your child.
- Ask WHICH subjects your child likes best and least.
- Find OUT why.
- Ask WHAT your child would like to discuss.
- Think about your own questions or concerns.
- Make a LIST of the questions or concerns before the conference.
- List INFORMATION you want the teacher to know about your child.
- Include QUESTIONS about school programs or policies.
- Some good questions to ask are:
  - How well does my child get along with others?
  - Is my child learning up to his or her ability?
  - Does my child participate in class discussions and activities?
  - Has any child missed any classes other than the ones I contacted the school about?
  - Has my child been tardy to school?
  - Have I noticed any sudden changes in the way my child acts? For example, have you noticed any eating, sleeping, or moodiness that might be signs of physical or other problems?
  - It’s a good idea to ask your most important questions first, just in case time runs out before you and the teacher have a chance to discuss them all.
  - Be sure to ask the teacher for specific suggestions on ways to help your child do better.
- This is the most important part of the meeting. It will become your action plan.
- If the teacher says something you don’t quite understand, don’t be shy about asking for an explanation.
- It’s a good idea to end the conference by summarizing the decisions you’ve made together.
- If needed, ask to meet again.
- An additional way our school is communicating with parents is through PowerSchool. Not only can teachers share assignments and feedback with their students but parents can also get instantaneous information on their child’s progress.

It is the desire of New Dimensions to work with our parents and community to make our school a place where all students can be successful. By working together, we can achieve this goal.

David Burleson is the Director of the New Dimensions Charter School in Burke County.

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New Dimensions School
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Burke County

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October 2019 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 20
Dr. James Dobson – Solid Answers

Why Does God Answer Some Prayers and Not Others?
By Dr. James Dobson

Question: Dr. Dobson, the Lord answered prayer miraculously for my son when he was eighteen years old. He had open-heart surgery and survived without any permanent problems. But my husband was diagnosed with cancer three years ago, and we prayed for him night and day. Nevertheless, he died last January.

I just can’t understand why God heard my prayer for my son but allowed my husband to die. Is He there—or isn’t He?

Answer: I assure you that He is there and that your prayers for your husband received no less attention or compassion than those for your endangered son. What you’ve experienced is evidence of the sovereignty of God. He will always be the determiner of what’s best for those who seek Him.

One of the most dramatic illustrations of this divine nature occurred in the lives of my good friends, Van and Joan Letherer. When Van was just one year old, his parents noticed that he bruised badly whenever he bumped into furniture or even tumbled in his crib. They took him to their doctor, who diagnosed Van with hemophilia—the hereditary “bleeder’s disease.” His blood lacked the substance necessary to coagulate, actually threatening his life each time he suffered the most minor injury. There was very little treatment for hemophilia in those days, and Van was not expected to live beyond childhood. Indeed, he survived because of prayer, and because of nearly four hundred pints of blood transfused by the time he reached the end of adolescence.

During those teen years, when Van’s life literally hung in the balance, there was a young lady standing by his side. Her name was Joan, and she was his childhood sweetheart. Joan understood very well that Van’s future was uncertain, but she loved him dearly. Hemophiliacs, they decided, was not going to determine the course of their lives. The couple was married when he was twenty-two and she was nineteen years old.

A new crisis occurred several years later when Joan was carrying their second child. She became seriously ill and was diagnosed with Hodgkin’s disease, a type of cancer that attacks the lymph glands. It was usually fatal in that era. Although a treatment program had been developed, Joan’s pregnancy prevented the doctors from prescribing it for her. She and Van could have aborted their baby, of course, but chose instead to place themselves in the hands of the Lord.

They began praying for a miracle—and promptly received one. Several weeks after the initial diagnosis, the hospital repeated the laboratory and clinical tests. Doctors concluded that there was no sign of Hodgkin’s disease in Joan. She has been cancer-free from that day to this.

Now, notice what occurred in this instance. As we have seen, Van was born with a painful, debilitating illness about which his father, a minister, and his mother prayed diligently. They asked repeatedly for God to heal their son, when Van got older, he began praying on his own behalf. Then Joan came along and joined the chorus. Despite these and many other petitions, the Lord did not heal Van’s hemophilia. At sixty-three years of age, he is still afflicted with the disorder and suffers daily from immobile joints and related physical difficulties. Joan has taken medication every day for many years, just to cope with the pain. Yet her indomitable spirit has been a witness to us and thousands of others through the years.

Why has the Lord been unwilling to heal this good man? I don’t know. Some might say it is part of His plan to beckon us, except for the fact that James was healed in response to their petitions. The same people who asked for intervention in her life were also praying for Van. In one instance the answer was yes, and in the other, it was no. And life goes on. The Lord has offered no explanation or interpretation of His response, except by inference, and we are left with that.

In this and countless other circumstances that occur within the human family, only one conclusion can be drawn: God will do what is best and we must continue to trust Him regardless of the outcome.

To the woman whose husband recently succumbed to cancer, let me offer this word of encouragement. The Father has not lost track of your circumstances, even though they seem to be swirling out of control. He is there. Hold on to your faith in the midst of these unanswered questions. Someday His purposes will be known, and you will have an eternity to talk it over. In the meantime, I pray that the Lord will help you cope with this tragic loss of, as you say, “a very special person,” from your partner and friend.

From Dr. Dobson’s book, Complete Marriage and Family Home Reference Guide.

Jame Dobson, Jr. is an American evangelical Christian author, psychologist, and founder in 1977 of Focus on the Family.

Faith Based Healthcare

Annuities. Do they deserve their bad rap?
By Steve Gasco
McDowell County

As a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNERTM, I frequently get asked my opinion of annuities. Since I do not sell them, I believe that I can be objective about their use or misuse. Like most financial products, annuities have their place in a financial plan. Given the fact that the traditional pensions from companies are few and far between, for most people annuities can replace the guaranteed income. The challenge is that the term “annuity” is used to describe several options of this insurance product.

As someone that has in the past been security licensed, which is necessary to sell variable annuities, I believe that for people that have a need for safety nets these may be a good option. They allow the owner to participate in a diversified mix of options and have some income guarantees. These guarantees come at a cost. For those that purchased these products in the early 2000s, they protected their retirement income. Today although the guarantees are lower, they still provide protection. As a word of caution make sure you understand the difference between cash surrender value and income value. If income is what you want this is a good option. If you are looking for just growth of your money it is probably best to look at other options.

Fixed Annuities are the second option and as the variable options, these are best for providing income. These are frequently used as an alternative to CDs. The interest credited in most is similar to CD’s, but in some cases come with a step surrender charge. There are many variables with these products to make them look better than they really are. These are usually described as bonus annuities. While they sound good, they seldom provide more income over the long haul.

Equity Index Annuities are probably the hottest product and are frequently marketed as a “safe” alternative to the stock market. The value proposition to these products is that you participate in the upside of the market with no downside risk. It sounds good until you dive into the details. Understanding the tax code may be easier than reading these contracts. They have point to point and spreads that make the annuity look great, but while they may do better than fixed annuities, they do not provide returns like the stock market in general. With these products make sure you understand how the interest crediting works and when it is credited.

So why do annuities get such a bad rap? I think it is because they are oversold. Annuities should be used for income and at the moment these products make them appear they are like stock market vehicles without the risk. This is not true. Depending on your risk tolerance any of these would be a great option for retirement income. If your goal is to cover your fixed expenses in retirement and there is a shortfall from Social Security benefits, I would use any of these. If you are in good health have some time before you will need the income, I would also suggest looking at Indexed Universal Life as a 4th option. I hope this has helped you feel more comfortable about annuities. They are an essential part of retirement planning and one that often gets criticized because they are missed. If used properly they provide the security that most are looking for in retirement.

If you have questions about finances, please feel free to either email me with questions or come to my office. I do not charge for initial meeting so there is no reason to not get your questions answered.

Steve W Gasco is a certified financial planner, owner of Faith Based Health Care and Retirement Resource Management, and is the author of a book on the topic of Social Security optimization, given in national publications like Money Magazine, US News and World Reports and Fox Business. Loves to educate and teach on financial topics like taxation of retirement accounts, long term care, healthcare, and efficient savings plans for small businesses.

This provided financial planning for missionaries through the International Mission Board.

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NC Baptist State Convention

3 Ways You Can 'Bless Every Home' In Your Neighborhood
By Josh Reed

The biblical narrative puts forth God's vision to have a people for Himself that function as priests to neighborhoods and nations to help bring about the reality that "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk 2:14).

Bless Every Home (BEH) is a web-based resource portal that offers tools to help believers be salt and light in their communities by praying for, caring for, sharing the gospel with and disciplining their neighbors. BEH utilizes a prayer care and share approach that helps you pray for your neighbors by name, build relationships with them and track interactions such as acts of service and gospel conversations.

In essence, BEH can help you see the work of the Spirit in and through each person in your neighborhood. It is an effective tool for at least three reasons:

1. Helps to recapture the priesthood of believers:
   God called all of Israel to ascend Mount Sinai in order to hear all that the Lord commanded so that they might be to Him "a kingdom of priests" (Exodus 19:6). However, after the Lord showed up in thunder and lightning, the people trembled, shrunk back and saw Moses up as a representative. Instead of becoming the kingdom of priests to the nations, they became a kingdom with priests like the nations. Through the person and work of Jesus, He has made it possible for people to be a kingdom of priests again, but this time, as people consisting of every tribe, tongue, and nation. And we still have a priest, the Great High Priest, Jesus Himself. "Through faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit comes and takes up residence in the hearts of those of us who follow Jesus, repurposing us to be the royal priesthood to our neighborhoods and the nations" (1 Peter 2:9-10), just as God intended.

2. Confronts our fractured society:
   In "America's Crisis of Disconnection Runs Deeper Than Politics," research professor Brené Brown reported that in 1990, 20 percent of Americans felt lonely. By 2010, that figure had doubled, according to AARP researchers. Bless Every Home helps neighbors have empathy for the people who live close to them. And the more informed you are about their lives, the more effective prayer can be. If Jesus rescues sinners and then repurposes them to be priests in their neighborhoods, BEH helps Christians be at the forefront of ministering to the large percentage of people who feel lonely.

3. Helps us obey both the Great Commandment and the Great Commission:
   In Matthew 22:34-40, Jesus said the greatest commandment is "to love the Lord your God with all of your heart, mind, soul and strength" and "to love your neighbor as yourself." BEH begins with the most loving thing you can do for your actual neighbor — prayer — and then encourages you to show acts of love as you pray. But it doesn't stop there. BEH also allows you to see your own progress as you pray, care for, share the gospel with and disciple your neighbors.

Twentieth-century pastor A.W. Tozer once said, "No man has any right to speak to men about God who has not first spoken to God about men." With the help of Bless Every Home, followers of Jesus can recapture a core piece of their identity — representing men before God and, in turn, representing God before men. Thus, coupled with acts of love and good deeds, are the kind of things God envisions when He calls people to be His "royal priesthood," having called them "out of darkness, and into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9-10).

Next steps:
Bless Every Home is helping Jesus followers across North America to reach their neighbors with the love and gospel of Christ, with a vision of reaching every home in America. Here are some steps you can take to join the movement.

Be a light:
As a light in your community, you will be given access to a dashboard that lists your nearest neighbors. This platform will help you to pray for your neighbors by name, lovingly care for them, share the hope of the gospel with them and make disciples of those who choose to follow Jesus. You will also be able to see what you are doing with your church to share your progress. It is free for any believer to sign up to become a light.

Be a bless partner church:
As a bless partner church, you will have access to a real-time dashboard that allows you to see the progress your members are making as lights with their neighbors in praying, caring, sharing and discipline. There is a minimal cost to become a bless partner church ($15 monthly or $180 yearly) or bless partner association ($25 monthly or $300 yearly).

Be trained for gospel conversations:
Ever wanted to have a gospel conversation with someone but had no idea where to begin? Gospel Conversations Training explains why and how to have these conversations so that you can share the good news of the gospel competently and confidently. Each training includes time for practice and follow-up processes for strategy development and accountability.

Josh Reed serves as the senior consultant for the Adult Evangelism and Discipleship Team.

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When Pigs Fly
By Steve Bier
Burke County

Historians tell us that the very first time a person received the “red carpet” treatment in America, was in 1821. It happened on April 1st, in Georgetown, South Carolina, and the recipient was President James Monroe. President Monroe was on a southern tour of the country, and he took a barge up the river into the Georgetown harbor. As he and his staff came onto the docks, the city had rolled out a red carpet from the boat dock all the way to a carriage waiting for President Monroe. A red carpet has lost much of the honor that it had a time once carried. Ever since the 1961 Oscars, anyone can just about walk on the red carpet.

Of course, I've never been given the red-carpet treatment. I am greeted with a welcome when I go to Walmart. That might be as close as a red-carpet welcome I'll ever get. And in our churches, we sing greetings to one another every time we come into our facility. I think a church greeter is very important. A church greeter is a very first-person people see when visiting a church. The church greeter is the face of any ministry, which makes it a very important job in our church.

I want to see if two men mentioned in scripture, would qualify as good greeters in our church forefathers. Matthew described them as demon possessed. Mark described them as screaming and cutting themselves. Luke tells us that they were asked and unaccountable even in chains and handcrafts.

Is that a good description of greeters at Walmart or at our church? Well, if you don’t think so, you had 12 men who were in complete agreement with you. The 12 disciples of Jesus didn't know why Jesus wanted to spend time in ministry on the otherwise side of the Galilee in the first place. A bunch of sinners lived there, and those two men greeting them on the beach were proof enough that they should run for the boat and get back on the western side of the lake of Galilee just as soon as possible. These two men were not ready to be greeters at Walmart.

Matthew tells us it happened like this: “When He had come to the other side, to the country of the Gergesenes, there met Him, two demon-possessed men coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass by that way. And suddenly they ceased saying, ‘What do we have to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God?’” Matthew 8:28, 29.

Now, not ready to be greeters in our church foyer. But these demons that possess these men, they recognize the Son of God. And they speak to Jesus. Why are you here? Have you come to destroy us? Equally appalling is Jesus talking back to the demons.

Then He asked him, “What is your name?” And He answered saying, “I am legion, for we are many.” And He begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country. Mark 5:9.

What a remarkable conversation. And now we are told about us offering the demons Jesus. We have such a deal to offer you today. Now a good way off from there was a herd of many swine feeding. So, the demons begged Him, saying, “If You cast us out, permit us to go into the herd of swine.” Matthew 8:31.

Don't destroy us. Please, Jesus, let us occupy some creatures. See, up there on the hill, a herd of pigs. In Mark's gospel, we're told it's a herd of 2000 pigs. This is a phenomenal request. And the response from Jesus is equally fascinating. Jesus said go. It happens next incredible, 2000 pigs jumping over the hill, suddenly gots nuts and stopped down the slope and jumped off the cliff. And for a moment, it looked like Pigs Could Fly. Well, only a moment. And all 2000 pigs fell headfirst into the Galilee and drowned.

The pig herders run to town and tell what happened to the pigs. And the entire community comes to the beach to see for themselves. And they now turn on Jesus with their complaints and demand that Jesus get out and never return.

Did Jesus get fooled? Did Christ get snicker-panicked by the devil? After all, Christ had come to the other side of the Galilee to spread the same good news that He had spread on the east side of the lake. They were his side, and they did not want Jesus to come ashore and mess things up. Jesus knew this, and He knew that Christ will heal these demon-possessed men. But, if the Jesus could convince the Lord to let the demons possess the 2000 pigs, then He Satan could drown the pigs and people will take and hate Jesus and Him out of town on a rail. Now that is a mighty little plan, don’t you think? And it looks like it works to perfection.

I would like to get recorded and say that I believe that Jesus knew what Satan was up to the entire time. Now yes, everybody wants Jesus to just go away. Well, all except the two men whom Jesus healed. In Mark 5, we are shown that these two former demon-possessed men requested to go with Christ. But Jesus says no. He tells the two men, you cannot stay. They are facing Him to go. And Jesus tells the men He had healed, you two stay here in my place and tell the story about what happened to you and those 2000 pigs.

These people living on the eastern side of the Lake of Galilee, they had heard of Jesus. But they liked their way of living just fine. They didn't want Jesus to come and change their lives. People are still the same today.

You want us to go to church on the Sabbath? Oh, no, we couldn’t go to church and worship. That just would not fit our schedule. You want us to eat a Biblical diet? Are you nuts? How are we going to survive by eating a biblical diet? We will survive without Christ! Return a tribe to the Lord? Oh no, we couldn’t do that. Have you seen my checkbook? No, it just would not fit my financial situation. What, spend time in prayer and Bible study each day, no no no, we just did that. I mean where would I find the time. ARE YOU CRAZY? IF I MADE THOSE KIND OF CHANGES IN MY LIFE, MY WHOLE WORLD WOULD BE TURNED UPSIDE DOWN! Nooding greater, there is nothing greater than having Jesus turn our world upside down… nothing greater.

These 2 former demon-possessed men, they stay and tell their story as Christ asked. You know, Jesus returned to that same area some 10 months later. And I tell you that crazy pig story, it had backfired on the devil. For now, 1000’s of people came to listen to Jesus and have Him turn our world upside down.

Jesus, He could not stay on planet earth. But He has requested that we as live here on planet earth, that we share our stories of how Jesus turned our lives upside down. I appreciate so much, the staff of Blue Ridge Christian News, as they share the story of salvation that comes from our loving God. May we each share our story as we tell how Jesus has turned our world upside down.

Steve Bier, Pastor, Morganton Seventh Adventist Church.

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**Spiritual Health**

**Is Fasting Healthy?**
By Miguel Cruz
Yancey County

First, let me say that the Bible often talks about fasting for different reasons. We won’t go into all the circumstances for fasting discussed in the Bible, perhaps that’s a discussion for another time, but one observation I have made is that, when he discusses fasting, usually makes the statement, “when” you fast… not if you fast. As it to say it be sure part of our regular routine.

Intermittent fasting instead of 3 meals a day can do wonders for our health according to a considerable amount of research that has been done. The research is pointing at eating at appointed times, usually during an 8-hour period or less, can boost your health and save you from insulin resistance, weight gain, and diseases according to an article published in the November 2018 issue of Science. You can do intermittent fasting by eating all your meals for example between 8 am and 4 pm. The rest of the time I recommend you drink water or herbal tea. If you sustains yourself on soda, you are defeating the purpose and most likely doing harm. And please don’t think the sugar free ones are a healthy choice because the artificial sweeteners have a negative effect. What this does is to allow your body to convert from burning sugar all day long from constantly eating to burning the fat you have in reserve. It will take a few days to get used to this, but within about 3-5 days you will feel the results in more energy, clearer thinking and sleeping better. Some people do feel sluggish for those first few days.

What should I fast?

The average American diet consists of too many carbohydrates consisting of sweets, bread, and other grains, too many unhealthy fats usually coming from fast foods and processed foods and not enough water. If this sounds like you, I suggest you start off by substituting your sodas with flavored water, just add a squeeze of lemon to your tap water or you can buy many of the flavored water drinks available (unsweetened, including no artificial sweeteners). Next start packing your own lunches instead of the drive-through. Choose healthier fats such as butter, eggs, avocado, coconut and olive rice, and choose proteins instead of high carbohydrate items that are mostly bread and other grains. There is no need to count calories when you do this, just choose healthy foods.

A growing number of research studies have shown the following health benefits:
- Improves blood sugar management, especially for type 2 diabetics
- Lowers triglyceride levels
- Increases human growth hormone, HGH
- Suppresses inflammation in your body
- Improves immune function
- Reduces your risk of heart disease
- Reduces your risk of cancer
- Improves pancreatic function
- Improves cognitive function, Protecting you against such diseases as dementia, Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s.
- Eliminate sugar cravings.

The above list should convince you that, yes indeed, periodic fasting is healthy.

Dr. Miguel Cruz is in practice along with his wife of 35 years, Leisa Cruz who is a certified Integrative Nutritionist. They own Cruz Life Center in Burnsville NC.

Dr. Cruz is a Licensed Chiropractor since 1981. When asked what he does for a living he explains that he helps people get out of pain and improve their overall health without the use of drugs or surgery. Something everyone seems to want but nobody seems to know how to get there. Dr. Cruz accepted Jesus Christ in the summer of 1979 while in chiropractic school. He has since dedicated his life towards helping people grow in physical health and spiritual health.

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**Healing Our Family Legacy**

By Rev. John Rice
Mitchell County

A Prayer Ministry Conference, “Healing Our Family Legacy”, will be held this coming November 1-3 at High Pastures Retreat Center, located just a few miles east of Burnsville, North Carolina. The Blessing Place, an interdenominational healing ministry begun in 2018, is presenting this conference with the purpose of bringing family members into the loving presence of God, to set their families free from generational struggles and strengthen (even increasing) the blessings passing down through the generations.

Many would ask, “What is healing our family legacy?” Most families recognize that physical characteristics, talents, and skills can pass from generation to generation within a family. Scripture refers to these as blessings. For example, just last week I talked with a landscape designer who proudly told me that he was a 4th generation farmer. Some years ago, I attended a family reunion where four generations were present. During their family talent show, members of each generation either sang, played a musical instrument, or recited poetry they had written. Music and creativity were a generational blessing in this family.

However, families usually do not recognize that harmful and life diminishing traits and behaviors frequently appear as a repeating pattern in the generations of their family ancestry. Scripture refers to these repeating struggles as curses. Some examples are depression, fear, addictions, physical illness, anger, divorce, premature death, abuse, and unforgiveness.

We are powerless in the face of such struggles. God uses wise and caring medical and psychotherapy interventions. God also provides us with powerful, life-changing spiritual tools. Prayer focused on “Healing Our Family Legacy” is one of these tools.

Teachings presented at the conference include: “God’s Desire to Heal Our Family Legacy”, “Representational Confession,” “A Family Story of Generational Healing” and “Preparing Our Family Tree History.” The conference moves to its most powerful moment when everyone is invited to bring their Family Tree Form and place it on the altar as they offering during the Generational Healing Service. This simple yet powerful act has been deeply healing and transformative for thousands of individuals and families.

Scripture instructs us to “choose life, that you and your descendants may live.” (Deut. 10:19) Participating in the “Healing Our Family Legacy” conference is a practical way of choosing life, choosing God’s blessings, so that we and our descendants (our children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren) may live “life fully as God’s beloved daughters and sons!”

To register or learn more about “Healing Our Family Legacy” conference, go to our website at www.theblessingplace.com

Rev. John Rice left parish ministry in 2012 in response to God’s call to Jesus’ healing ministry. He has shared his gifts of teaching and praying in hundreds of churches throughout the U.S. and northeast India. In 2017, John completed a three-year project, “Equipping the Saints for Jesus’ Healing Ministry.” This DVD teaching series includes five workshops intended to encourage, equip, and empower God’s people for healing prayer ministry. John and his wife, Debra, moved to the Burnsville area in 2016.

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Walnut Grove Church

Do You Doubt God At Times?
By Kurt Somar
Avery County

John was prophesied as the messenger who would announce the coming of the Messiah. Even before birth, he slept in the womb at the approach of Jesus. He trained for this job. He announced that he wasn’t worthy to untie the shoes of Jesus. He baptized Jesus. And then a strange thing happened, he doubted who Jesus was.

18 John’s disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them, 19 he sent them to the Lord to ask, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?” 20 When the men came to Jesus, they said, “John the Baptist sent us to you. Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

21 Why did he doubt? Probably because like all the other Jews, he was expecting Jesus to do at his first coming what he will do at his second coming, by power and might sit on the throne in Jerusalem and judge the world. But for whatever reason, he didn’t have the full picture and he doubted.

At that very time, Jesus cured many who had diseases, sickness, and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. 22 So he replied to the messengers, “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. 23 Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

Why didn’t Jesus just say “yes”? Than his answer would only have been as good as his word. Jesus knew that John knew the scriptures, so remove all doubt he pointed John to the scriptures so he could ground his faith in them. (Isaiah 29:18-19 and 55:6-9.) By saying this, John didn’t even have to take Jesus’ word for it. He would have known that it would be a fulfillment of scripture.

Notice in his response, Jesus doesn’t condemn John for doubting. In fact, he lifts him up.

24 After John’s messengers left, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. 25 This is the one about whom it is written: ’I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’ 26 I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

There is a huge lesson for us to learn here. In all likelihood, we will have times of doubting. If the greatest man ever a woman did, we probably will too. And Jesus will tell us the same thing he told John. He won’t jump on us and scold us. Rather he will communicate to us just what we need to ground our faith on a rock. (Billy Graham had such a moment as did many of the greatest Christian leaders in Church history.)

The second lesson is, if it’s not your doubting, rather a loved one, don’t despair. Jesus knows how to respond to him. It is better to have doubts and voice them and let God deal with them than to pretend they don’t exist and compound the problem.

Selah, (think about it)

Kurt Somar is pastor of Walnut Grove Church.

NC Baptists

Make Joy Your First Choice
By Katelyn Eskridge

The world around us is dark. It is so easy for our joy to seep slowly out of us as we observe the sin that surrounds us. Five minutes scrolling through a news site or reading the local paper shows us more than enough to make us stick our heads in the sand and just to make it through the day. We can go through life in an apathetic haze, but we are called to more.

Philippians 4:6 reads, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.” Paul considered joy so important, he reminded us to rejoice twice in one verse! How many songs do we teach our children about the joy in our heart that nothing can destroy? We proclaim every year at Christmas that, because of the arrival of our Savior, the world should be full of joy. In a song of praise to the Lord after hearing about some difficult times to come, Habakkuk 3:18 says, “I will rejoice in the Lord, I will take joy in my salvation.”

So how do we make joy our first choice each day? Here are a few things I try to do continually to help me remember my joy, which comes from the Lord:

1. Keep your eyes in the Word—Recently started a year-long Bible reading plan that has radically changed my perspective. Keeping my mind focused on the blessings and words of our Lord each day refreshes our outlook.

2. Breathe through your nose—It’s hard to breathe through your nose with your mouth open. Sometimes, we rot ourselves of joy by spending our time voicing our hurt, our complaints or our frustrations without first taking it to our Great Counselor.

3. Lift up your voice in song—One of the best things I’ve done is create a Spotify playlist called “To Remind Me Whose I Am.” When I feel the chaos of my own life starting to steal my joy, I turn on this playlist and listen to songs that remind me.

4. Lean on fellow believers—I cannot describe the blessing that my accountability group brings to me on a weekly basis. We meet once a week to share prayer requests, encourage each other, and maintain our focus on the glory of God rather than our circumstances. Regardless of situations that arise, my sisters remind me to consider it all joy!

5. Serve on the bench—Some of the moments of greatest joy come from serving others, even when it’s the most challenging. When you see aside the pressure of your own life for your neighbor, there is a special kind of blessing that comes from helping someone in service.

6. Remember your salvation—The source of our joy comes from knowing the inestimable we have in the Lord. By continually reminding ourselves of the grace that our Lord gave us when we were so undeserving, we can remember the purest source of our unending joy.

Katelyn Eskridge joined the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina’s Strategic Focus Team in October 2015. Previously, Katelyn served as the events assistant for Baptists in Mission. She also served as a college staff member for Deep Impact Mission.

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The Orchard at Altapass

Book Signing At The Orchard At Altapass

By Kate Groff
Mitchell County

On Sunday, October 6, the Orchard at Altapass will host its
first book signing of the season—Thomas Goldsmith’s newly
published “Earl Scruggs and Foggy Mountain Breakdown:
The Making of an American Classic”—the story of a song that
crossed the bluegrass-country barrier and into American
mainstream music. “I heard ‘Foggy Mountain Breakdown’ for the first time around 1965
when I started listening to Flatt & Scruggs, Bill Monroe, and the Stanley Brothers in
ear,” Goldsmith said during a recent interview with Bluegrass Today. “Along with
the rest of America, I became captivated by its energy and drive in the 1967 movie,
‘Bonnie and Clyde’.”

“Foggy Mountain Breakdown” brought bluegrass, the
banjo, and Earl Scruggs out of the shadows of 1940’s
country music and into the spotlight. Goldsmith thinks
that light in his new book. He says the “spark” came from
banjo player, Jim Mills, known for the 3-finger technique
named the Scruggs style after its innovator. He said that the
1940 recording ignited his interest in the banjo as a child.
As a closet banjo player himself, Jim’s words lit a fire in
Goldsmith to learn more about the man and the song.
This led to interviews, not only with Earl Scruggs, and banjoists
Bela Fleck, Sonny Osborne, Steve Martin, Mills, and many
others, but with Scruggs’ wife, Louise, and sidemen Curly
Sockett, Mac Wiseman, and Jerry Douglas. Although it took 12 years of research,
interviews, writing, and music, a book was born.

Thomas Goldsmith is a music journalist. For over thirty years, he has worked both
in daily newspapers in North Carolina and Tennessee and as a freelance writer. He is
the editor of The Bluegrass Reader and winner of the International Bluegrass Music
Association’s Best Journalist award. And some will recognize him from his performance
in the Playhouse production of “Along About Sundown” this past
spring.

For those few who aren’t familiar with the song, visit YouTube and type in Earl
Scruggs and Friends. Take a listen, then come meet the man who wrote the book—at
the Orchard’s red barn porch in a special fall event, Sunday, October 6 from 1 until 4
P.M. It’s free and open to the public.
The Orchard, 1205 Orchard Road, Spruce Pine at exit 328.3, Blue Ridge Parkway,
A non-profit working orchard, music, and educational venue. Open 10 to 5, Wednes-
day-Sunday through October. For more information about all the Orchard programs, visit
www.altapassorchard.org.

Kate Groff is the Programs Coordinator for the Toe River Arts Council.

Morganton Baptist Church

He Is Worthy!

By Dan Quarello
Burke County

My favorite time of year is upon us: football season!
I was recently outside at a well-known football stadium
where thousands of fans gathered to cheer their favorite team
to victory. Many of these fans went out of their way to
bring their team’s colors, and some even had vehicles that were the color
of their team. Tailgaters gathered around various tents to
show their support. Hours were unaccounted for in preparation for this game.
When the game began, you could hear the roar of the crowd a great distance away.
Throughout the whole game, they were there to let their voices be heard.

As I watched them, I could not help but be struck by the finality of their pur-
suit. They had spent hours preparing food, decorating vehicles, and pacing just
for one football game. I could not help but wonder to what end? Where would all
this excitement lead? They were heavily involved in a game whose outcome they
could not control. But they were present, and they were excited to be there.

One of my burdens over the last several months is to create a mindset of always
giving God our best. Undoubtedly, He is worthy of such praise and exalta-
tion. Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 1:17, “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible,
the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever.” Amen. The various
psalms are full of praise to God for who He is, not merely for what He has done. When
Solomon built the temple, every detail was important, including those places that
nobody would ever be able to see (cf. 2 Chronicles 4:12). Why did they go
to such extensive work? Why is the praise filled with constant praise? The answer is
simple: they understood that God alone is worthy.

Many people are tragically more eager to give their all to their favorite teams.
They sit in the stadium and cheer their team loudly, yet the outcome cannot be
controlled. Meanwhile, many Christians give God half-hearted service and church
attendance. When we consider the greatness of who God is, we will devote
ourselves to Him and will strive to glorify Him with our lives. Why? Because He
alone is worthy! Ponder the greatness of the God we serve and resolve to glorify
Him every day.

Pastor Dan Quarello is pastor Morganton Baptist Church. Check us out on our
website www.morgantonbaptist.net or find us on Facebook and YouTube.

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www.brcnews.com October 2019 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 26
The Strategy That Wins the Battle Every Time

Years ago, when I was just learning how to develop a personal relationship with God, I had a lot of problems. Because of the abuse I had experienced growing up, I was insecure, unstable, unhappy most of the time, and I got angry whenever things didn't go my way. It was a miserable way to live.

I eventually reached a point where I was willing to do whatever I had to do to have peace and to really enjoy my life. So, I sat down alone and asked the Lord to help me with this problem. I also asked Him to give me a personal relationship with Him. I started studying the Word and spending time with Him in prayer.

As I did this, I discovered that God wanted me to have abundant life and to live with His righteousness, peace, and joy. But getting there was a battle.

John 10:10 says Jesus “came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)” (AMP). And Romans 15:17 says, “The kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking [what one likes], but of righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

We can experience abundant life and have peace and joy in the Holy Spirit when we develop an intimate, personal relationship with God. And two main keys we need to keep in mind when having intimacy with God are truth and time.

You’ve probably heard the saying, “The truth will set you free!” This is not just a wise proverb someone came up with; it’s actually taken from Scripture. Jesus says in John 8:31-32 that “if you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32).

If we’re going to be set free from sin — wrong mindset, attitudes, and behavior that are not like Christ — then we must face the truth about ourselves and choose to believe what God says in His Word more than what we think or feel or what others say. We must be completely truthful with God and let Him into every part of our lives.

This means we have to think things like, “I have no idea. I never do anything right. I’ll never amount to anything. Nothing ever works out right for me!” We talk back to ourselves and say what God’s Word says. For example:

- God is love. He loves me, and nothing can separate me from His love! (1 John 4:16; John 3:16; Romans 8:35-39)
- I am a new creation in Christ, and I am made right with God because of what Jesus has done for me! (2 Corinthians 5:17, 21)
- I can do whatever I need to do through Christ who gives me strength! (Philippians 4:13)
- I trust God and put my faith in Him to cause everything in my life to work together for my good as I walk out His plans for my life. (Romans 8:28)

These declarations are based on a few verses you can use to come against old mindsets that don’t line up with the truth of God’s Word. Look up the scriptures in your Bible, and study them so you can get them rooted in your heart. I also recommend you write them on note cards or in a journal and read them frequently.

As you meditate on God’s Word, you’ll renew your mind with the truth. This is the key to experiencing freedom from anything that’s holding you back in your walk with Him.

The second thing we must do to cultivate intimacy with God is to spend quality time with Him each day. Christianity isn’t about a weekly trip to church or fulfilling a checklist of religious rituals that you feel obligated to do to stay on God’s good side.

Jesus died for us so we can have a personal relationship with Him, not a religion. You don’t just need to know about God; it’s more important for you to know Him.

If God doesn’t have first place in your life, you will never be fulfilled ... you’ll never have real, lasting peace and joy in anything you do or say or circumstance you experience. But if you will abide in Christ, continually seeking Him and obeying His teachings, then you will be empowered to live with victory over sin. You will have true intimacy with God.

You’ve been struggling to grow in your relationship with God or you’re discouraged because of battles you can’t seem to get through, I want to encourage you to make a determined decision to spend time alone with God each day. Even if you can only spend a few minutes with Him in the morning or during your lunchbreak at work, make this your priority.

God loves you so much! He wants you to succeed in being everything He created you to be and having the life Jesus came to give you. Make your relationship with Him the foundation of everything in your life and you will win the battles you face because He will be by your side.

For more on this topic, order Joyce’s four-disc CD series Let God Fight Your Battles. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, Enjoying Everyday Life, by calling (800) 727-9873 or visiting www.joycemeyer.org.

Please note: The views and opinions expressed throughout this publication and/or website are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Joyce Meyer Ministries.

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She has authored more than 100 books, including Battlefield of the Mind and Overload: How to Unplug, Unwind and Unleash Yourself from the Pressure of Stress (Hachette). She hosts the Enjoying Everyday Life radio and TV programs, which airs in hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit www.joycemeyer.org.

But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. 2 Thessalonians 2:13.
**Baptist on Mission** - Mission teams are needed to do Vacation Bible School, Evangelistic Outreach, and Construction projects in our partner states of Alaska, Vermont, Maine, and Pennsylvania. Mission teams can make a great impact in the community. For more information, visit our website for full list of projects at https://baptistonmission.org/Mission-Projects/United-States/New-England or contact NC Baptist on Mission at 919-467-5007 or mabernath@ncbaptist.org

Deep Impact Kids, Are you looking for a discipleship opportunity for the children in your church? Deep Impact Kids will be serving in many communities across the United States with projects for children 1st-5th grade. Sign up your church for this weekend, a week, or full week at one of these locations: Camp Cate, Red Springs, Slaebey, Mundo Vistas, Caswell, or Trust Baptist Camp. For more information contact Dolle Noa at dnoa@ncbaptist.org. Website http://baptistonmission.org/camps/di-kids

**Fall Events at the Billy Graham Library** - Oct. 3, 1-2:30 p.m. Meet & Greet with Anne Graham Lotz – Anne Graham Lotz, daughter of the late Billy and Ruth Graham, will greet guests at the Billy Graham Library during a limited engagement event. Her new book, Jesus is Ms, will be for sale in Ruth’s Arctic bookstore with a small number of signed copies available beginning at 12 p.m. The New York Times named Anne one of the five most influential evangelists of her generation. She’s been profiled on 60 Minutes and has appeared on TV programs such as Larry King Live, the TODAY Show, and Hannity Live. No tickets will be signed during the meet and greet. This is a free event and no registration is required.

Oct. 19, 5:30 p.m. – 2 p.m. Bikers with Bones – The 12th annual Eikers with Bones charity event brings together thousands of motorcyclists from across the region. In 2018, bikers brought over 5,000 gift-filled shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. Attendees will enjoy music, fellowship, giveaways, and complimentary lunch offered from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Pre-register for the event at http://bit.ly/3G1library.Bikers2019.

**Ombudsman Program** - Volunteers needed to advocate, protect the rights of long-term care residents. Boone, NC (June 26, 2019) - The High-Country Area Agency on Aging Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is calling for volunteers in Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey Counties. Volunteer ombudsman, also known as Community Advisory Committee’s (CAC) serve as advocates for residents living in nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

CAC members are trained, certified volunteers who are assigned to a local long-term care facility to advocate for residents’ rights.

To learn more about becoming a volunteer ombudsman or to request an application, call Steve John at (828) 261-5434 Ext. 126 or visit the High-Country Area Agency on Aging website at www.highcountryaging.org

**Bible Study Fellowship** - Acts and Letters of the Apostles In the Acts and Letters of the Apostles, we study, see evidence of God’s Unstoppable Spirit, the growth of His Unstopabble Church, and the Unstopabble witness of His people. Join us for this incredible study. Women begin Thursday September 26 – March 5, 2020.

Women’s Day group meet @ First Presbyterian Church, Spruce Pine 10 a.m. – 11:30 am, Mitchell County Women's Evening group meet @ Grassy Creek Baptist Church, Spruce Pine 5:45 p.m. – 7 p.m. Mitchell County Men's Begin Tuesday, September 10 Men meet @ Higgin's Methodist Church, Burnsville 6:30-7:30 p.m. – Yancey County Contact: Nancy Ball (828) 397-1199 (Day Women) - Angie Woody (828) 467-3830 (Evening Women)

**Burke County**

**Brown Mountain Baptist Church** - Fall Festival Saturday, October 19th 4 PM Until Dark.

We will have devotions, food, games, a pumpkin contest, trunk-n-treat, and a hayride. We will be eating promptly at 4 pm. Everyone is invited. (If you need more info, please call 828-200-5917. The address is 3004 Brown Mountain Beach Rd., Morganton, NC 28655

**Catamount River Baptist Association** - Fall-ing Into Missions Women's Ministry Fall Session. View #2 Baptist Church, 5510 Waton Price Rd, Morganton, NC 28655 Oct 10, 6-8 p.m.

Paul Longston, a Missions Mobilization Consultant for the Baptist State Convention will be speaking about local and state mission opportunities. We will be collecting donations for the Red Box Ministry. A meal will be provided. Please visit the CRBA office at 828-437-0137 if you plan to attend.

**Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church Events** - The Giving Heart Thrift Shop is OPEN every Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Like us on Facebook at beginningadventist and follow our giving heart ministry on Facebook. The Giving Heart Ministry is a part of the Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Calvin Taylor in Concert; Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2187 Jamestown Road, Morganton, NC 28655 Enjoy this uplifting musical experience brought to you by world-renowned pianist and composer, Dr. Calvin Taylor! This free concert will warm your hearts and lift your spirit. A love offering will be received and CD’s will be available for purchase after the evening concert. When: Saturday, October 12 7:00-8:30 pm @ 3:30 pm. For more information, call 828-584-8212.

**Fly-Away Mission and Is Ye Faith Gospel Promotions** - Saturday, October 26, 2019 – Starting at 10:00 am till 5:00 pm! Historic Morganton Courthouse, 102 Union Street, Morganton, NC. Presents: The Fall Faith, Hope & Love Gospel Festival Concert!

Featuring the talents of Reaseonate Hearns, Lynn Nnaran, Shad Crew, Minister of rap, Bishop Bennett, and Much more!

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Vendors welcome. For more information call 704-441-7595

**High Peak Baptist Church** - 3073 High Peak Road, Valdese, NC 28690 Pastor Kevin Purcell – call 828-448-2109 Homecoming – October 6, 2019, Speaker: Brad Hammon Meal after the morning service Truck or Treat – Thursday, October 31, 2019 6-7 pm in the church parking lot

**Valdese Events** - Druglaw High School Homecoming Parade October 1st | 6:30 pm | Downtown Valdese

Concerts at the Rock - Old Rock School Auditorium - 7:30 pm October 12 The True Grass Band opening for SIDELINE Tickets $20 per person | Tickets - Call 828-879-1129 or online at concertcrafterock.com Members at the Rock presents Scooby Doo (2002)

Old Rock School Auditorium October 18th | 7 pm | $2 person | Concessions available for purchase

Old Colony Players: Ward of Sleepy Hollow - RATED R Performed at the Fred B. Crumford Amphitheatre | October 11-12, 18-19, 25-26, 30-31 Tickets available by calling 828-522-1130 or online at oldcolonyplayers.com

Valdese Treats in the Street - October 31 Candy provided by local merchants from 4-6 p.m. | Main Street Closed Performance by Silver Sneakers at 4:45 pm | Come in your best costume for a chance to win special PRIZES!!

Over 10 prizes will be awarded by our special judge - Mother Goofie!

**HENDERSON COUNTY**

**Zion Baptist Church** - 1355 Pea Ridge Rd., Morganton, NC 28655 Trunk or Treat/Fall Festival, October 30, 2019, 6:00 – 8:00 pm Food, games, prizes, dunking booth and a petting zoo.

**McDOVELL COUNTY**

**Cross Mill United Methodist Church** - in Marion is now accepting donations of NEW items for an upcoming fundraising auction. Proceeds from the auction will go toward much-needed church building repairs and our 24/7 Sharing Food Pantry Ministries. Any business and/or individual donations would be greatly appreciated. Call 828-489-2537, 828-442-6909 or 828-830-8790.

**New Community Outreach** Benefits McDowell Families with Children Teens for Christ B.E.A.R. Closet (Baby Equipment and Resource Closet)

**Upcoming Events**

October 7th – 11th – Fall Beach Retreat, October 16th - Saint Alives Lunchmeat, October 24th - Dinner on the Town—Friday Friends, 5:15 pm - Departure, November 20th - Saints Alive 90+ Recognition Luncheon

Wed. Night Small Groups

Surprised by Hope October 2nd - November 29th A Study Based on the Book by

N.T. Wright: Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church. Join Scott Hallman as we explore new ways to approach the Bible and our faith.

20th Annual Mountain Glory Festival – Marion: Where Main Street Meets the Mountains. September 28, 2010, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Vendor applications for Marion’s largest craft festival are now being accepted. For 35 years, beautiful downtown Marion has hosted this popular celebration on the 2nd Saturday in October. This year’s plans include part of the Festival, Saturday, October 17th, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM. Visitors will be looking for original handcrafts on Main Street three main blocks. Featured will be 150 craft, food, non-profit and sponsor booths of locally made arts and crafts, festival foods and local wines and beers. Plus, two stages presenting Marion’s finest musicians.

Mount Olive School Quilt Show – Hillsville: The Hillsville School Quilt Show in the McDowell Arts Council. The quilt show is the gallery’s featured, October exhibit. The kids will have fun in the “Children’s Area” with hands-on activities and local entertainment.

Ye Olde Barrister: A can’t-miss food event, featuring local wineries, breweries, and distilleries. Get your tickets now!

Mitchell County

Celebrate Recovery - This is a Christ and Biblical Based Program, giving help and hope for men, women, and families suffering from addiction. Any questions contact Josh Wiese @ 385-0051

There will be a meeting every Thursday night with someone there to talk to men, women, and their families. There is also a Children’s program.

larry Hill Baptist Church – The Kingsmen Quartet will be at Larry Hill Baptist Church, November 2nd at 6 p.m. The address is 231 Hoot Owl Rd. Spruce Pine, NC 28777. Phone 828-467-2745.

Mayhew Small Business Center

Easy for Artists (2 Hours)

Sell your artwork, jewelry, crafts, and vintage items via Etsy. Learn how to register and start selling on Etsy. Taught by top-rated online seller Nick Hawks, this class will provide us in-depth look at Etsy’s tools and provide insider tips that will help you succeed in Etsy’s online marketplace. 10/2, W, 4:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Fee Waived. Instructor: Hawks TRA Spruce Pine Gallery 828.766.1295

How to Start and Grow a Local Business (2 Hours)

Learn how to properly start a small business in the western NC Mountain region. The seminar will cover how to properly register your business, small business management practices, and tips for growth. 10/8, T, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Fee Waived. Instructor: Cook Yaney 828.766.1295

Is Your Business Ready for the Holiday Sales Season? Business Builders Breakfast (1.5 Hours)

October is a prime time to make preparations for seasonal sales. At this final breakfast workshop of 2019, we will discuss free resources available for Small Businesses. The annual autumn sales strategy and marketing strategies for local businesses will appeal to buying customers. 10/8, T, 6:00-9:30 a.m. Fee Waived. Instructor: Cook Balsam Town Center 828.766.1295

Bookkeeping and Tax Tips for Local Artists (2 Hours)

Come register, file your tax return, and bookkeeping strategies to help keep your business audit-proof. Topics covered in this workshop will include sales tax guidance, business structure advice, bookkeeping strategies, and best practices for art-related businesses. Bring your questions! 10/16, W, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Fee Waived. Instructor: Beam TRA Spruce Pine Gallery 828.766.1295

Marketing Strategies for Studio Tours (2 Hours)

If you participate in the TRA studio tour, this is a must! TRA marketing specialist, Mea Johnson, will discuss proven visual and digital marketing strategies to help you have your best tour ever. Topics will include using video and photo footage on social media to connect with visitors, studio access/visibility checklist, best practices for visitor communication, and a marketing timeline. 10/13, W, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Fee Waived. Instructor: Johnson TRA Spruce Pine Gallery 828.766.1295

Mitchell Yaney Substance Abuse Task Force - Saturday, October 12: The 2019 Mitchell County State of the Child is being held on Saturday, Oct. 12 from 5 p.m. at Balsam Baptist Church, 327 Bear Creek Church Road, Balsam, NC 28712. Keynote Speaker: Resources for Resilience – Asheville NC. Lunch and Child Care will be provided. Register by October 1.

Spruce Pine Downtown Events

Zamboni Fundraiser

October 24, Riverdale Park

Fall Classic- October 3- 24, Downtown Spruce Pine

Peterson’s Market

Manchester Trick or Treat

Small Business Saturday

November 30th, Downtown Spruce Pine

Kwasi’s Christmas Parade

November 30th, Downtown Spruce Pine

TRAC Studio Tour

December 8th, Mitchell & Tracey County

The Orchard at Altapass Music Event: The Orchard at Altapass closes for the 2019 season in only five more weeks. We have made it a grand ending with great talent, great afternoon music and all free.

October 3-4, Thursday- Home Grown 4-Friday, 1:45-Terry McKinney 5-Saturday, 1:00-Dollar Brothers 3-Sunday- 6:00-Sight Departure 3:30- Tru Blu 10-Thursday- 1:45-Jack Vaughn 11-Friday, 1:45-Debbie Young 12-Saturday- 1:00-Snail Riddle 3-Crossfire 12-Sunday, 1:00-Hall County Grass 3-Typical Mountain Boys 17-Thursday, 1:45-Red Time Lucy 18-Friday, 1:45-Tom Sparks 19-Saturday, 1:00-Town & Country 3-Bearwall 20-Sunday, 1:00-Jerry Peace 3-00-Rewind 24-Thursday, 1:45-Randyacky 25-Friday, 1:45-Sum McKinney 26-Saturday, 1:00-Grass Catchers 3-Typical Mountain Boys 27-Sunday, 1:00-Terry McKinney 3-Anthony Mill

Tipton Hill Community Foundation (Tipton Hill) – Country Breakfast, the first Saturday each month, 7:30 – 10:30 am, at the old Methodist Church, across from Jerry’s Store. Come join us for homemade sausage, scrambled eggs, gravy, jellies, juice, and coffee. Eat-in or take-out, all funds support the Tipton Hill Community Foundation.

Tie River Arts

December 7-8, 2019- 10:00 – 5:00 Tour Time

The Tie River Arts Studio Tour is perhaps the largest and the longest-running studio tour in the country, you will find craftpeople and artisans in nearly every medium, many tops in their field and several new-to-the-tour participants. FREE, and self-guided, this adventure will just you to slow down in spaces situated between Mt Mitchell and Roan Mountain. Visitors travel through valleys, past streams, across rivers, over hilltops, and experience breathtaking mountain vistas as they make their journey through the Tie River Arts region. Meet the artist, see where they create and where they live.

Tie River Arts will sponsor a Meet-The-Artist reception at their Spruce Pine location on Friday evening, December 6 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm after the tour closes for the day. A sampling of participants will be on display geographically so one can plan a route for the rest of their journey.

For more information, please call 828 662 7215

YaYa Village – We are announcing the Opening of YaYa Village Commercial-Share Kitchen!

We’ve realized there’s a gap that needs to be filled between the production of local food and their consumption. That’s why YaYa Village Commercial-Share Use Kitchen so that we could provide a certified area at a reasonable cost for locals trying to sell their products. This way we strive to help community entrepreneurs with their part-time business.

So, if you have a product you want to market and sell (like jams, jellies, baked goods, etc.) or if you need a commercial kitchen for catering, having a private Pop Up dinner, hosting a class or whatever you’re imagining; we hope our Shared Use Kitchen can provide you with a solution.

Come visit our space, get an application and let us know what is that you have in mind!

We are also serving lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm.

Yancey County

Burnsville Towne Center – Upcoming Events

10/4 Dig In! Empty Bowls Dinner 4:30 pm

10/10 Maxwell Park Volunteers Meeting 6:30 pm

10/12 Burnsville Vintage Market 9 am – 2 pm

10/12 Family Violence Coalition Concert 7 pm

10/17 TRAC TRACTOR Annual Meeting 6 pm

10/20-27 Burnsville Women’s Show

10/30 Halloween Party 3-7 pm

6 South Main Street, Burnsville. Call 828-729-0000 or visit WEBSITE

Farmer’s Market – The Yancey County Farmers’ Market is open every Saturday through October from 8:30 am to 12:30 pm just off the Town Square. Seasonal produce, meats, cheeses, dairy, crafts, and entertainment. Check our WEBSITE or Facebook for more information.

Feed-A-Child Yancey County – Higgins fills bags on the second Tuesday of each month. We have both food and enough volunteers to fill the bags so far. They are going to continue the program this summer through the churches in the county that have Wednesday night meals. If you have any questions about Feed-A-Child they can be directed to Bill & Nancy Watkins at 828-675-5307.

NOTES

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Obedient Heart Fellowship

Rejoice Before Me
By Jim Huskins
McDowell County

Many call this the "holiday season." Most Christians observe the customs commemorating just after the winter solstice. Many will participate in the strange rituals at the end of October. While I suggest to faithful friends and acquaintances that they consider celebrating the holidays given to God's people in the Bible, I typically meet a chorus of protests ranging from disinterest to hostility to ridicule. Those objections fall into predictable categories:

Some argue that Christmas and Easter are "traditional." True, but whose tradition? They are found nowhere in scripture or the practices of the early Church. Believers who research the origins of these "traditions" are typically shocked by what they discover.

Others claim that the feasts outlined in scripture are "just for the Jews." The Bible claims otherwise. For one thing, the "Jews" represent only one of the twelve tribes of God's people. More importantly, Leviticus 23— and numerous other passages — refer to "the appointed feasts of the Lord." The "appointed times" including the seventh-day Sabbath, are near to our Father's heart. They were observed by Jesus, the Apostles, and the early Church. They were never revoked or altered in the Bible.

An argument against God's appointed times which is similar to "just for the Jews" is that the "Church" has somehow replaced the nation of Israel in God's heart and purpose. Messiah did not come to earth to start a new religion. He lived and died and rose again to fulfill the promises God began to make to Adam and expanded through the ages. Jeremiah 31:25-27 is one of many passages that state that the nation of Israel will always be God's chosen people. Through the grace and sacrifice of Jesus, everyone who believes has the privilege of being grafted into that family. Numbers 15:15-16 makes it clear that God's instructions for living—Torah—apply to everyone. The last book of the Bible states that heaven—New Jerusalem—has a gate for each of the twelve tribes of Israel but no separate gate for gentiles. Those who wish to spend eternity in God's presence must become part of His family.

The modern Church has lost sight of the fact that the "appointed feasts of the Lord"—the Hebrew term is mo'edim—were given to teach us about Jesus. Colossians 2:16-17 is often incorrectly cited by those who claim that Christians should not keep the mo'edim. The actual context is that some residents of Coloseae were criticizing Christians for keeping the dietary instructions and the mo'edim. Paul told them not to let the criticism bother them. They should keep the mo'edim because they are shadow pictures of what Messiah would accomplish during his first and second comings. "Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ." When we understand and observe the mo'edim, we better understand the work and call of our Savior. Luke 24:44 says that the books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms are all about Him. We've been taught that they have no significance.

Including the weekly Sabbath, we have seven mo'edim. I will mention one: Sukkot. Most English translations render the event as "Feast of Tabernacles" or "Feast of Booths." The last mo'ed on the biblical calendar is one of three annual mo'edim specifically called "feasts." The instructions for Sukkot are found in Leviticus 23:33-41.

Our Father commands His people to live for a week in temporary shelters to remind us that we lived in temporary shelters—sukkah—from the time we left Egyptian slavery until we settled in Canaan forty years later. During the week we are to celebrate the feast by relaxing "before the Lord." Part of that relaxing involves preparing food and other offerings and helping the poor. Jesus celebrated Sukkot, and He chose that time to offer us rivers of living water.

For those who understand the truth God wants all His children to live according to His Torah, Sukkot is the most joyous season of the year. Christian and Messianic and Jewish communities around the world are filled with temporary shelters. This is especially true in Israel.

Our fellowship has been blessed with a marvelous location to celebrate Sukkot 2019. We will spend the week of October 13-20 at Camp Barnes on Airport Road in Marion, NC. Each day will include worship with singing and dancing. Several Bible teachers will share insight into the Torah and the structure and mission of the early Church. Each evening will find us holding group discussions around a campfire. Part of that time will be used to prepare for our ministry to the homeless of McDowell County. We will also make herbal salves and tinctures for ourselves and to share. In obedience to scripture, we will spend the week feasting.

We invite you to join us for a part of the celebration. Our schedule is flexible, so you will find a variety of events to suit your interests. Call for details. You may attend any worship or teaching without notice. Those who wish to camp or share meals should give us much notice as you can. We will charge no fee for camping or meals, but all who attend should bring offerings and food to share with each other and with the poor.

Obedient Heart Fellowship believes that the entire Bible is true and relevant. We accept salvation by grace through faith in Jesus, and we attempt to love and serve Him by keeping his commandments. See Revelation 14:12. We meet each Sabbath—Seventh Day—in Marion. 10:00 A.M.

Abba's House is closing at the end of September. At the time of this writing, we do not know where we will be meeting in October. Please call for information. 828-466-7913

Jim & Beverly Huskins are members of Obedient Heart Fellowship.
Is This Normal?
By Carolyn Dotts
Mitchell County

"Grief is pervasive. You never get over it, but you
de learn to recognize and live with it." Zig Ziglar, well
known motivational speaker and author is well acquainted
with grief. He penned these enlightening, but comforting
He is one of the featured speakers in the GriefShare videos, where he shares with
viewers wisdom gained through experiencing the loss of his oldest daughter,
Susan.

His words accurately describe grief. It is not an event that you get over, it is
an experience you walk through. For that reason, grief is often described as a
journey. The length of that journey, as well as the details surrounding the journey,
are unique to each individual. There is NO one way to grieve, but there are some
commonalities among journeys. It is my hope that recognizing these will reassure
those in grief that the emotions you are experiencing are both normal and
appropriate.

Grief enables any sense of normalcy. It is intensely chaotic and can leave you
feeling as if you are losing your mind. Those in grief find it difficult to concentrate
with grief and experience memory loss. Disorganized and unfocused thought patterns
are also a result of grief. Your mind is struggling to process the loss and make
sense of the event. Often the grieving person will try to hide their grief, especially
when in public, for a variety of reasons. They may not want to appear out of con-
control and embittered by themselves, or they do not want to bother others around them.
Another reason can be they feel that spiritually mature Christians don't grieve,
or they want to appear strong among others who esteem them. Denial is another
reason grief is not expressed. None of these are a proper response to grief and can
actually hinder healing. Grief is a celebration of a good gift from God in the loss
of our loved one through tears. We loved the one who is now gone without love
there is no grief. Jesus offered Himself as an example of this in the death of Laza-
rus. He wept over the loss of a dear friend, even though He knew momentarily He
would raise him from the dead. Expressing pain is appropriate.

Give yourself permission to grieve. Allow yourself to be human by honestly ex-
pressing your emotions. This is not the time to be brave. God values transparency
and authenticity, especially when we are in pain. Don’t be ashamed to admit you
are hurting; this makes you open to receiving help from others. If you insist
you are fine, people may not offer help that you need. As emotions are released,
you will become more relaxed as tension drains from your body with the flow of
tears. King David expressed his emotions over loss in Psalms 61:2 and through
out other psalms he wrote. Consequences that can result in suppressing grief are
that it can hinder or lengthen the healing process or can also cause irritability and
irritation of others around you, creating even more difficulties.

Grief is intense. It can be overwhelming and disor-
derly and has been compared to a tangled ball of emo-
tions. Emotions will fluctuate rapidly, often changing
within minutes, and thoughts will appear irrational.
This, too, is normal. This pain will not last forever,
but you will be hurting intensely for a long time. Over
time the emotions will become less intense and less
frequent, but time itself will not heal. Only turning to
Jesus will begin the process of healing.

So how do you deal with grief on a daily basis? GriefShare offers the best advice I have
found on my own journey of grief.

*Plan into it, embrace it, be present in all the moments. Take it like waves of
the ocean, don’t try to run from it or avoid it. Let it take you where it will. You
don’t have to like it, but you have to go through it in order to heal.

*Try to postpone big decisions. You are too emotional, and thinking processes
are clearly disrupted. You think you will always feel the way you do at present,
but you won't. If you must make a major decision, find someone you trust who
is competent to help or offer advice. Ask God to put the right people in your path.

*Do the next right thing. Grief can immobilize you so that you feel like you’ll
never be able to start anything again. What is the next right thing? It can be
something ordinary, like getting a glass of water or performing a small house-
hold chore.

One last piece of advice is to attend the 13-week GriefShare cycle. It can give
you valuable insight into what life will be like. It may keep you from making unwise
decisions that could make your life even more difficult. You need the support of
others. Participation in GriefShare will help you to see yourself in others' stories. It
takes courage to step out and seek help, to make a commitment to connecting
with others who understand your pain and to open your heart to talk freely about
that pain. It’s not easy, but it is worthwhile.

GriefShare is being offered on Thursday nights at Western Carolina Church at 6:00
pm in the Wing. There is no charge to attend, and a light meal is prepared for
attendees. It’s never too late to start, even if you are able to attend only a few
sessions. Many participants repeat the cycle the next time they are offered. If you are
interested in attending or need more information, please call Carolyn Dotts at 828-
467-1413 or Western Carolina Church at 828-765-4631 and leave a message.

Carolyn Dotts makes her home in Ledger and is a retired Special Education
teacher. She is a widow with two sons and five grandchildren. She is a member of
Western Carolina Church in Spruce Pine.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the LORD Jesus,
giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Colossians 3:17

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US House of Representatives NC District 11

Representative Meadows, Senator Cotton Introduce "Nationale Injuction Abuse Prevention Act"

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Mark Meadows (R-North Carolina) and Senator Tom Cotton (R-Arkansas) today introduced the National Injunction Abuse Prevention Act, a bill to put an end to nationwide injunctions and prevent unlawful policy changes from being blocked based on the activist agendas of individual, unaccountable district court judges.

The bill follows a decision earlier this week by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California that reinstated a nationwide ban on enforcement of the Trump administration's new asylum rules, defying a ruling from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals that the district court's nationwide injunction was overly broad. It should not require an often-lengthy appeals process to correct unlawful injunctions that should never have been issued in the first place. This legislation would restore the appropriate role of district court judges by prohibiting them from issuing nationwide injunctions broader than the parties to the case or the geographic boundaries of the federal district in which the judge presides. With the new change, lawful administration policy changes would no longer linger on the opinion of one unselected judge.

Rep. Meadows released the following statement:

"Our laws need to be vigorously vetted through the courts, but it makes zero sense for the legality of a nationwide law to rest entirely on the opinion of one judge, or one district court. A district court in California should not be given sweeping authority to issue a rule—let alone on obvious legal reasoning—striking down policy from a duly elected President. Any law that inappropriately empowers a single judicial activist, and it needs to change. This is a common-sense reform that returns our system of checks and balances where it was intended to be. I want to thank Senator Cotton for joining me in the effort."

Senator Cotton added the following:

"Policy decisions ought to be made by elected officials, not activist judges with lifetime appointments. In the past few years, we've seen an explosion of activist forum shopping and nationwide injunctions to thwart the administration's priorities and grind government to a halt. This bill will restore respect for the system of government outlined in the Constitution by limiting the use of nationwide injunctions by district court judges."

NC House District 118

We paused to honor those courageous defenders and lost lives impacted by the horrific act of 9-11 01 8:46 North Tower Struck - 9:03 South Tower Struck - 9:57 Pentagone Struck - 9:59 South Tower Collapses - 10:03 Flights 93 Crashes (PA) - 10:28 North Tower Collapses

THIS HAS BEEN AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, TO SAY THE LEAST

"Today the North Carolina House voted to override the Governor's veto and put us one step closer to delivering historic, transformative and equal opportunity in our courts. I am pleased to provide you with the following information on how the override vote was taken.

Speaker Dennis House budget veto override vote.

Yes, the House of Representatives has voted to end the contentious budget impasse by overriding the Governor's veto. Do not be surprised when you hear the negative comments about our vote. The truth is, whatever we have a 'veto session' or a 'non-veto session', you have to show up. As elected Representatives, we have the responsibility to the people we represent and to the entire state to do our duty. And our duty is to be present during session. I SHOW UP!

To sum it up, I am profoundly disappointed that the Governor would wage war all just for the Teachers and Medicaid Expansion. He picked the wrong horses and cheaply spunk the budget for his own gain. You don't pick favorites when you have the extra State to think about and protect. The Democrats had 9 members to show up to work yesterday, the Republicans had 55. I knew nothing of the override until I was in my seat in the Chamber. What I did know is that HB866 has been on our calendar since June, in plain sight, and that any reasonable person would understand that it was subject to be heard.

Congessional elections: Rep. Greg Murphy, MD defeated former mayor of Greenville Allen Thomas 61-37% in a special election in District 3. This is the District represented by the late Congressman Walter Jones. Dan Bishop, NC Senator defeated Dan McCready 50-48% in District 9.

The House Redistricting Committee continues their work to comply with a court order to redraw some of our districts. They have a very compressed time schedule of September 18 to complete their work. We will remain in Session to vote on the maps as well as await the Senate's decision on the veto override.

NC Senate District 46

Over the past couple of years, I have been working hard with several of my colleagues to address the serious issue of declining membership in our volunteer fire departments. Earlier this year, I filed the 2019 Volunteer Firefighter Recruitment and Retention Act (SB 416) with Sen. Darby Brit (Robeson County) and Rep. Mike Wray (Avery County). The key components of the bill included a new scholarship program, local property tax incentives, as well as fire training and education licensing for qualifying volunteer firefighters.

While the bill was discussed earlier this session in committee, unfortunately, it has not yet moved forward for a vote. Sometimes in the legislature it is beneficial to just be patient and wait for the opportune moment to get something done, and that opportunity arose last month with House bill 397, Wildlife Resources Commission Amendments. Essentially the bill included a number of wildlife license fee increases aimed at shoring up the budget and operations of the Wildlife Commission. And while I admire and appreciate all the good work that the Wildlife Commission does around the state, I told their director flat out that there was no way I could support raising any wildlife fees unless we did something for the volunteer firefighters who protect tens of thousands of acres of public lands.

That conversation resulted in a broader compromise that I hope will be just the beginning of a more comprehensive approach to recruiting and retaining the volunteer firefighters that our communities so desperately need. On August 27th, HB397 was signed into law containing a key provision that will allow ANY volunteer firefighter who has been an eligible member of a volunteer fire department for five consecutive fiscal years, including the prior fiscal year, to purchase ANY adult resident lifetime hunting or fishing license for fifty percent (50%) of the full cost. This benefit will become effective on October 1, 2019. I hope that many volunteers will take advantage of this new opportunity and become a successful recruiting tool in the future.

The NC Senate recently passed new district voting maps, as instructed by court order in Common Cause v. Lewis, in a broadly bipartisan vote. Both Democrats and Republicans participated in the process as "most transparent in history." Here are some facts on the process. The map used as a starting point in the process was created by Dr. Jowei Chen, who was hired by the Democratic Party to produce partisan districts and testify as an expert witness in Common Cause v. Lewis. Dr. Chen created 2,000 near-unanimous maps.

The Senate identified the maps that score the least diversified communities as important and then chose a "winner" by random lottery draw. In its decision, the court used Dr. Chen's maps as a model of nonpartisanship. The only changes made to Dr. Chen's map were at the request of Democratic legislators, the final map then, is a nonpartisan base map chosen at random among a set created by the Democratic Party's own expert mapmaker, and then amended by Democratic legislators. Senate Leader Phil Berger (R-Rockingham) said, "The process to create new districts has been the most transparent in history, and it could be used as a national model. Every effort has been made to create fair, nonpartisan, and court-compliant districts. We urge the court to accept these districts so we can finally put this long battle behind us."

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Your Government Pages

NC Senate District 47

The state budget has been dragging on since Gov. Cooper vetoed the budget legislation presented to him in June, due to his desire for an expansion of Medicaid beyond the program’s current beneficiaries. The NC House override the Governor’s veto on September 11, but, as of this writing, the NC Senate has not calendared a vote to override the veto. Through a continuing resolution, our state is operating under last year’s budget.

However, the new budget, voted on by Gov. Cooper, contains a number of new expenditures that the previous one did not. Because the Governor will not negotiate with legislators on the budget, we have been sending over separate budget items that we believe are important for our state’s citizens. Gov. Cooper stated his objection, in the News & Observer, for the piecemeal approach of sending individual budget items over for his signature, “They don’t work well in Washington, and they won’t work well in North Carolina.” However, because of Gov. Cooper’s veto of the budget, passing these mini-budget items is the only way to get money where it needs to go. Following are four mini-budget bills that the Governor signed more than two months following his veto of the budget that provided this funding. All four bills also include a one-time supplement of five annual leave days for these permanent employees.

- House Bill 609 - Salary Increases/Adult Correctional Employees: authorizes more than $92 million over the biennium for raises and bonuses to correctional officers and permanent employees of adult correctional facilities with the Department of Public Safety (DPS). Also provided is a base supplemental bonus of $2,500 to employees serving in a high-security correctional facility.
- House Bill 777 - Pay Increases/SBI & ALE officers: authorizes more than $5.5 million to provide a pay raise for State Highway Patrol officers of 5% over the next 2 years and also funds the year-over-year annual step increases for officers.
- House Bill 777 - Pay Increases/SBI & ALE officers: authorizes more than $5.5 million to provide a pay raise for State Highway Patrol officers of 5% over the next 2 years and also funds the year-over-year annual step increases for officers.
- House Bill 226 - Pay Increases/State Employees: authorizes more than $1.5 million to provide a pay raise for state agency employees over the next 2 years which is the largest increase in more than a decade. The bill also funds the retirement system and the state health plan.

As a follow-up to my column in the September issue of this publication, Gov. Cooper, unfortunately, did veto Senate Bill 438 – Excellent Public Schools Act of 2019, important legislation focusing on early childhood literacy which his own administration was involved in writing.

As always, please share your thoughts with me on these or other issues related to the state government by emailing me at ralph.luke@ncleg.net or calling me at 919-733-3480.

NC House District 86

Is the State Holding Money for You That You Don’t Know About?
The Department of State Treasurer has launched a recent program entitled “NC Cash” that you as a North Carolina resident may want to consider. Under the program, state residents can verify whether money belonging to them may be included in approximately $1.11 million in an unclaimed property. The Treasurer’s initiative assists property owners in the recovery of their unclaimed property. According to the NC Treasurer, unclaimed property involves any bank accounts, wages, utility deposits, insurance policy proceeds, stocks, bonds, and contents of safe deposit boxes that have been abandoned or gone unclaimed for one to five years. For example, if a company does not have correct information or is missing information for a customer, funds may go unclaimed. The law dictates that such unclaimed funds be transferred to and held by the North Carolina Department of the Treasurer until they are claimed. Technically, the funds are said to “escheat” to the state.

The Department of State Treasurer’s website has a link where residents in North Carolina can provide their name or business name, as well as their city and zip code, to see if they are entitled to unclaimed property. If so, a person can officially file a claim to recover the property in question. Some claimants are able to submit an electronic claim where the claimant information is electronically matched with the owner’s information on file. If not eligible for filing an electronic claim, you will be notified and asked to print a claim with the relevant information for mail submission. More information is located online at www.nccash.com or by contacting the North Carolina Department of State Treasurer at 919-622-2741.

Richard Burr

US Senator North Carolina

Today, Senators Richard Burr (R-N.C) and Michael Bennet (D-CO) introduced the Kathryn Manginelli Act, or the Compassionate Retirement Act, which will help provide more financial stability to families battling devastating diseases, such as Lou Gehrig’s Disease or ALS. This legislation will allow families in these circumstances to use retirement savings without incurring an additional 10 percent penalty if withdrawing before the age of 59 1/2.

“Each year, families with North Carolinians who have been diagnosed with or affected by ALS, who share the unrelenting challenges that come with a devastating disease,” said Senator Burr. “It’s through these visits that I learned the importance of the Kathryn Manginelli Act and the potential hundreds of lives that will be saved by this legislation. I am proud to introduce this legislation with my colleague Senator Bennet.”

“Patients and families battling terminal illnesses face immense physical, emotional, and financial stresses,” said Senator Bennet. “The financial impact of managing a terminal illness can be overwhelming as income is restricted and health care bills can drain savings, leaving patients to shoulder the burden of not only their immediate care but their family’s financial future. Our legislation will allow families the ability to access their retirement accounts without penalty, helping to end the financial hardship facing many families. I’m proud to join my colleague Senator Burr in this effort.”

Background: Under current law, the disability exception requires that an employee be unable to carry out Substantial Gainful Activity. However, Americans diagnosed with degenerative, terminal, or serious illness, such as ALS, are still subject to the 10 percent penalty if they continue working in the months prior to becoming disabled to help cover their medical or disability-related expenses.

Named in honor of Kathryn Manginelli of Durham, North Carolina, who passed away from ALS on November 11, 2018, this legislation will provide families battling terminal illnesses with the ability to use their retirement savings without incurring this additional 10 percent penalty.

God Bless America
Judgement House
By Janice Browning
Burke County
Burkemont Baptist Church
The Vital Role of Encouragement
By Rev. Mark Creech
Burkemont Baptist Church presents Judgement House Script
"Why?"
Over the past three decades, Burkemont Baptist Church has employed its drama ministry as an evangelical outreach to bring souls to Christ. Judgement House, a key element of that evangelical outreach since 2001, is presented annually at the church in Morganton, NC during the last week of October. This year's presentation is scheduled for October 26th, 27th, 28th, and 29th, 2019.
Judgement House is a walk-through drama that teaches the truth about the choices we make in life and the belief in Jesus Christ. Although the storyline is different each year, each presentation demonstrates the earthly and eternal consequences of each person's choice to either accept or reject salvation through Jesus Christ. Watching the characters' dilemmas as they face a myriad of real-life situations often enables the audience to participate in stories that they can see themselves in the storyline.
The truths presented through scripture focus on God's own words. The realities of Heaven and Hell are portrayed in each script, contrary to the "turn or burn" approach. Judgement House scripts focus on God's saving grace and forgiveness in sin when we accept and believe in Jesus Christ. Audience participants find hope and assurance in the gospel message they witness as they watch the drama.
The script scheduled for presentation at Burkemont Baptist this year is titled "WHY?" Finding Purpose When Life Doesn't Make Sense. A family is in crisis stemming from the death of a loved one. While one chooses Christ resulting in a life filled with purpose and promise, the other rejects salvation and suffers pain, isolation, and devastating disappointment both in this life and throughout eternity.

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A Butterfly Cloud of Faith
By Timothy Torn
Barkley County

We awoke this morning to a blissful 64 degrees here in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It was indeed a long-anticipated respite from the summer’s toils. Although the sky was overcast, the soothing temperatures allowed for a more tranquil pace as we slowly made our way to church. Along the way, the beautiful colors of the wildflowers began to catch my attention. “Had they been there all summer and I just missed them amid the turmoil of heat and fatigue,” I pondered as we walked, knowing the hills were blanketed with an array of colors. I just could not believe that we could not let pass these wildflowers.

Like a wounded warrior returning from battle, my body fought to keep the path of descent. In our unencumbered ascent up the mountain, we had seen beholding God’s creations. “These were no acts of man’s toil but the design of the Creator,” we had just scaled the Germanna Valley in the Cattle Alarm to a point not far from the summit of Coo-Doo-Pis. The altitude was challenging, ascent reaching slightly above 9,000 feet in elevation. The thin air caused us to breathe more deeply, our bodies demanding oxygen to fuel our ascent.

As we reached the top, the panorama was breathtaking. The view stretched out before us, a sea of green and brown, punctuated by the occasional splash of color from wildflowers. The tranquility of the moment was almost palpable. I felt a deep sense of peace wash over me. It was as if all the worries and cares of the day had melted away, replaced by a sense of wonder and awe.

I closed my eyes and took a deep breath, feeling the cool air on my skin. The wind was gentle, almost whispering secrets of the mountain. For a moment, it was just me and the mountain. The silence was profound, yet not oppressive. It was as if the mountain was speaking to me, whispering its secrets of life and nature. I felt a deep connection to the mountain, a sense of gifts of the mountain.

As we descended, the view changed once again, this time to a rugged, rocky landscape. The earth was a patchwork of browns and greys, a testament to the harshness of nature. Yet, even in this landscape, there were signs of life. Wildflowers crept along the ledges, their petals a vibrant reminder of the resilience of nature.

As we reached the base, I closed my eyes again, letting the moment soak in. It was a reminder of the beauty of the world around us, a reminder that even in the most difficult of times, there is always hope. I felt uplifted by the experience, and I knew that I would carry this memory with me for a long time to come.
How Your Family Can Protect Songbirds Around Your House and Garden
By State Point Media
(StatePoint) Songbirds are not only beautiful, but they are also a vital component of the ecosystems they inhabit. If you have a garden, you may have observed this in action. Unfortunately, millions of wild birds are killed annually colliding with windows in the U.S. alone. But your family can take action to prevent it from happening on your own property. Here's how:

- Make windows visible to birds: Special decals that reflect ultraviolet sunlight to your home's windows, particularly those windows that are highly reflective of open sky, have been proven to substantially reduce the likelihood of bird strikes. Those from WindowAlert feature patterns that give the appearance of slightly frosted translucent glass, but glow like a stoplight for birds, and the brand also makes a high-tech liquid called WindowAlert UV Liquid, which can be applied between decals for greater protection. More information can be found at windowalert.com.

- Be mindful of birdfeeder placement: Birdfeeders are a lovely way to attract beautiful birds to your yard while giving them a place to rest and refuel. Remember though, bird strikes tend to occur near bird feeders, as feeding birds are easily frightened and are apt to take wild, evasive flight. To avoid this from happening, be sure to use window decals, as well as to position feeders closer than three feet or farther than 30 feet from windows. Surprisingly, the safest placement is attached to the window itself. Assess the birdfeeders in your yard and make changes as needed.

- Consider other hazards: Other ways you can protect birds on your property include gardening organically, keeping pet cats indoors or in an enclosure, and growing native plants and flower species suited to pollinating birds.

"With a few small home updates this season, your family can save the lives of wild birds and be better stewards of the environment," says Spencer Shockey, founder of WindowAlert.

Something To Think About
Why YOU Should Be Part of the Church!
By Dennis Love
AdDrew County
I read about a one-hundred-year-old man who was celebrating his birthday at the church where he had attended since he was a boy. The church threw him a big party with cake, ice cream, and lots of birthday cards. People were also taking the time to walk up to a microphone and share some fond memories and say a few words of thanks and kindness to the elderly man. Then, his great-grandson walked up to the microphone to say a few words. Turning to his grandfather he said, "Great-Grandpa, we know you can barely hear or see, so tell us why you still go to church every Sunday?"

"The elderly man replied, "Because I love Jesus with all my heart, and He commanded me to be here."

Then, he paused for a moment and added, "And I just want to show everybody whose side I'm on."

I'm sure you recall that after Jesus rose from the dead, one of His own disciples named Thomas wasn't with the group when Jesus appeared unto them. When they told Thomas what had happened, he said, "I will not believe it until I put my hand in the wound on His side and until I touch the holes in His hands." Later on, the Bible says that the next time they all met, Thomas was there. And guess who shows up once again? It was Jesus! When Thomas saw the resurrected Jesus, He suddenly believed. He didn't have to put his hands in His wounds. Thomas simply responded by saying, "My Lord and my God."

Now don't mix this up. Thomas: missed out on seeing Jesus when he separated himself from the group of other believers. But when he was with them, he saw the resurrected Jesus in all of His power and glory. In the same way, when we isolate ourselves from other believers, we can easily miss out on seeing our resurrected Lord in His great power and glory. In Psalm 37, the writer Asaph was wrestling with an age-old question: Why do the wicked prosper?" But he tells us plainly in Psalm 3:17 that it wasn't until he went into the house of the Lord and worshipped with God's people that he gained a better understanding of it all. Listen to what he says; "It wasn't until I went into the sanctuary of the Lord that I had a better understanding of their end."

So why should we be a part of the church? (1) It is where we hear the word of God. (2) It is where we worship the Lord. (3) It is where we receive a better understanding of spiritual truths. (4) It is where we encounter God.

Dr. Dennis Love is the Senior Pastor at Glenwood Baptist Church in Marion, NC. He and his wife Vicki have been married for 19 years and they have been in Marion for five years. They have two sons and three grandchildren.

Spooky Meadows
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Someday
By Steve Williams
Mitchell County

The Bible tells us that someday the Lord is coming back. 2 Peter 3:10 says, “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” Someday, this is going to take place. But you know what I have found out. Many people don’t believe or act like they don’t believe that this is going to happen. The reason I say that is because we live in a day of procrastination. We are always saying someday or one day I am going to do this or that. This has even crept into our Christian lives. Why not put off today what you can do tomorrow? It’s like riding a bike that the best day to always start a ride is tomorrow.

We start worrying about today because we are not guaranteed tomorrow. Every day we live is bringing us that much closer to the Day our Lord is coming back. This passage says He will come back as a thief in the night. What if He were to come back today, what would you do? If you are living under the assumption that someday you’re going to do something, you most likely are never going to do the something. You say because someday never comes in most of our lives. Let me share something with you folks, someday is going to be too late, I’m afraid for many a Christian.

This is our Typical Baptist in our Churches today. I can talk about Baptist because I am one. Someday I’m Going to Start Being More Faithful to God. Why not start today. Someday I’m Going to Start Coming to Sunday School. But everyday Sunday morning something comes up and most of the time it’s laziness. Someday I’m Going to Start Coming To Wednesday Night Services. But you always are too tired, or you have something more important. Someday I’m Going to Start Singing in the Choir. Someday I’m Going Out to Visit & Ask Some People to Church. Someday I’m Going to Stand Up & Give My Testimony. Someday has come and gone for many of you. While we are talking about Testimonies, I want to address this about testimonies. We will get up lots of times and give our testimony of what God has done for us in the past and that is well and good but we should not stop there. We need to let people know what God is doing in your life. I pray He has not stopped doing things for you. Many people will get up and tell people how they had to break the ice on the pond or there was ice on the side of the river when they were baptized, and a lot of time is when their testimonies stop. To me it sounds like most of them froze up in the pond or the river we got baptized in or have become members of the frozen chosen church.

Folks, God has not stopped blessing us and we need to let people know what He’s doing for us now. Tell them how He has comforts you. Tell them how He has talked with you, and you talk with Him. Tell them how He has spoken to you through song or by something is taking place in your life right now. Tell them what He means to you now. Folks, it doesn’t hurt to share how He has convinced you that something’s going on in your life. I know this is not good English but folks He is Reaser to me today than ever. I believe God will give us a new story to add to our testimony every day if we would just allow Him to. One Day Dear Friends He’s coming back and I’m going to have to give an account, and you are going to have to give an account of all the somedays we never get around to.

Words of Wisdom:
- Someday, folks, I’m going to leave all this behind me. Someday I won’t walk this way anymore. Someday I’ll step onto the shores of Heaven. The McKamey’s Song “Someday”
- Someday there be no more Heavy Heart Aches. Someday there be no more Pain, Someday there be no more Pressures, Someday there be no more Dying, Someday there be no more Broken Heart or Homes.

Preacher’s preaching God’s Word.
- Someday I’m going to meet Him Face to Face, Someday I’m going to Get to Walk the Streets of Glory, Someday I will be with Him forevermore. Hallelujah
Steve Williams
- Be sure Someday is coming and it is closer than ever before. Steve Williams

A Little Humor
Things You Will Never Hear in Church
- Hey! It’s MY turn to sit on the front pew!
- I was so captivated, I never noticed your sermon went over time 25 minutes.
- Personally, I find witnessing much more enjoyable than golf.
- I’ve decided to give our church the $500.00 a month I used to send to TV evangelists.

- I volunteer to be the permanent teacher for the Junior High Sunday School class.
- I love it when we sing hymns I’ve never heard before!
- Pastor, we’d like to send you to this Bible seminar in the Bahamas.

Steve Williams is the Pastor of Berry Chapel Baptist Church in Spruce Pine.
ACROSS
1 seeing — tree afar off having leaves (T.3) (Mark 11:13)
5 of clean and unclean animals, of birds and of all creatures (Gen 7:7)
9 projectile (Job 41:26)
15 them farewell, saying, I by all means keep (Acts 18:21) KJV
14 Sell me some property for a burial here (Gen 23:4)
16 Take an of manna and keep it for the generations to come (Ex 16:32)
17 The God of peace be with you all (Rom 15:33)
18 If anyone worships the beast and has mark and receives his (Rev 14:9)
19 the rat, any kind of great lizard (Lev 11:29)
21 made the hearts of the people with fear (Josh 14:8)
23 shin before men, that they may have good deeds (Matt 5:16)
24 Second son of Noah (Gen 7:13)
25 They around me like bees (Ps 118:12)
27 to the holy and faithful brothers in Christ at (Col 1:2)
28 were comforted in your comfort, and exceedingly (1 Cor 16:23)
29 a people for himself, and to (Ex 20:14)
30 a man to be a seal (Isa 5:5)
31 They built a siege up to the city (2 Sam 20:13)
32 two stones the way a cutter engraves a seal (Exod 23:11)
33 so you may be able to what is best (Phil 1:10)
34 many believed in name, when they saw the miracles (John 2:23)
35 And said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee (Gen 25:30)
36 silver in two bags, with two of clothing (2 Kings 5:23)
37 put an end to sin, to for wickedness (Dan 9:24)
38 LORD said to Moses, Stretch out your hand over the (Ex 14:26)
39 wasteland as his home, the salt flats as his (Job 39:6)
40 Ask and may Ephraim be born to Joseph by (Gen 46:20)
41 figs, which are so they cannot be eaten (Jer 24:3)
42 they shoot out the they shake the head (Ps 22:7)
43 the wall will cry out, and the beams of the woodwork will it (Hab 2:11)
44 a lamp unto my feet, and unto my path (1,3)
45 Blow the trumpet in Zion; (Ps 119:105) KJV
46 sound the on my holy hill (Joel 2:1)
47 son of Soth (Gen 4:26) KJV
48 First zookkeeper
49 the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to (Rom 8:21)
50 judgment is acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice (Ps 22:3)
51 wide is the and broad is the way (Matt 7:13)
52 all the tree of, that were in the garden of God (Exod 31:9)
53 though they were like crimson, they shall be as wool (2,3) (Isa 1:18) KJV
54 shall there come forth a rod out of the of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1)
55 the herds (Gen 32:16)
56 Your decrees are the of my song (Ps 119:54)
57 your father and your mother (Exodus 20:12)
58 ye lawyers! for ye men with burdens (Luke 11:46) KJV
59 I'll send you a young from my flock, he said (Gen 38:17)
60 other he will the one, and love the other (Luke 16:13)
61 Large crowds followed him, and he healed there (Matt 15:2)
62 Peter, however, got up and to the tomb (Luke 24:12)
63 King Solomon's mines had a great deal of this

DOWN
1 hurting stones and shooting arrows out of (1,3)
(1 Chr 12:2)
2 the thereof was heard in Pharaoh's house (Gen 45:16)
3 The man who was bearded no who it was (Job 3:13)
4 Zipperah gave birth to a son, and Moses named him (Ex 2:22)
5 Speak to another with hymns and spiritual songs (Eph 5:19)
6 Her is to be devoted to the Lord (1 Cor 7:3-4)
7 units, parts, points (1 Tim 5:23)
8 O LORD, they in our day, in our time make them known (Hab 3:2)
9 when Isaac was old, and his eyes were (Gen 25:38)
10 For the LORD has against his people, (Mic 6:2)
11 All day long the battle and the king of Israel (2 Chr 18:34)
12 Thou my beloved Son, in I am well pleased (Luke 3:22) KJV
13 and thou shall make the of fine linen (Exod 28:39) KJV
14 I mean not that other men be and ye burdened (2 Cor 8:13) KJV
15 in the morning there was a of dew around the camp (Ex 16:13)
16 deface (Job 30:13) KJV
17 Like full of birds, their houses are full of deceit (Jer 5:27)
18 for your little, and for your wives (Gen 45:19)
19 Jesus cried out in a loud voice (Ex 16:13)
20 What thee, O thou sea, that thou feeldest? (Ps 114:12) KJV
21 and keep some between

Solutions on page 14
Gardner Webb

Poem

CREATOR OF YOUR SOUL
By Jay Baldwin
Madison County

God created vast new heavens
He made the deep blue sea
The lovely mountains, hills, and trees
Sun's light and the heavenly breeze.

There was nothing everywhere
Then God had a plan
Forming creatures great and small
He then created man.

The spoken word had power
From God's throne above
All creation obeyed His voice
To us, He gave great love.

So if you are discouraged
In the Bible, we are told
The words you speak have power
From the Creator of your soul.

Amen

Joy is a resident of Madison County, where she now lives with her husband, Danny Joe Baldwin. She is currently a member of Mt Zion Baptist church in Marshall, NC. As a previous member, she calls Forks of Ivy Missionary Baptist Church in Waynesville, “home away from home”. She is currently singing with the Gospel Group “Joseph's Voice” out of Mars Hill, NC. Her latest song “Homecoming” will soon be heard by many.

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shall they preach except they be sent?” The Apostle Paul did not sit down one day and decide to go into preaching as a method to earn money or gain status. It was a calling from God. That is why Paul was in the ministry, the Lord put him there. The tragic tragedies of our day is that many men are seeking the ministry to serve a certain role, to give a certain sermon, not to serve the Lord. No, it is not a very lengthy work, but it is an important one. It is full of frustration. It is difficult to preach of a purpose. His life, after his conversion, was lived with the Gospel of Christ in view. In Acts 9, Paul met Jesus on the Damascus Road. It was there his life turned around. His life was drastically changed through the power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our main thought will revolve around Paul’s concept of being separated unto the Gospel of Christ.

The Importance of Separation unto the Gospel

There is separation unto sin. Some people are content to live their lives following sinful pleasures and living for themselves rather than for God and His glory. Most of the time we think of separation from something, but separation is far broader than that time of thinking.

There is a separation from evil influences and evil people. The Bible speaks of separation from evil itself and from the evil system the Scriptures call the “world.” The Bible says in 2 Cor 5:17-18, “Therefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing: and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

What do we separate ourselves from in our Christian life? We are wise to disconnect with all that will dull our sensitivity to God, all that will bring dissipation to our Heavenly Father, and all that will mar our testimony for the Lord. One can separate to give the mountains of old, who taught they were better than everyone else. We should beware of a spirit of superiority that can overcome us and under our fellowship with God and with others.

A spirit of humility should characterize the saint of God.

There is a separation from and a separation unto. Paul claimed to be and proved himself to be separated unto the Gospel of God. When he was a Jewish Rabbi, Paul was separated as a Pharisee to the laws and traditions of the Jews. But when he yielded to Christ, he was separated for the Gospel and its ministry. Gospel means “good news.” It is the message that Christ died for our sins, was buried and rose again, and now is able to save all who trust Him (1 Cor 15:1-4).

Dr. Rod Mattoon makes the following observation: “This word ‘separated’ is the Greek word apolouetos which forms our English word ‘horizon.’ It comes from a word meaning ‘to limn, mark out by boundaries, or mark out by an unshakeable sign.’ The idea behind this word is the boundaries of Paul’s life were marked by the Gospel. The word is set apart and devoted to a special purpose of preaching the Gospel. The Gospel of Jesus Christ determined His path Paul’s way of life was determined by the message of Jesus Christ. What determines the path of your life? Is it a boy or girl friend, the opinion of the crowd, money, things, your job, or your family?

What is the governing factor of your life? Paul was separated unto Christ. A Christian ought to be separated in his lifestyle. We are not to live wickedly like those who are without Christ. A Christian who is separated from something, but not separated unto Christ will have an empty life. Standards and convictions without devotion and love for Jesus Christ will leave you in the same boat as the Pharisees who were very separated, but not devoted to Christ. If you remove the one thing that is between the Lord and you, you will fill the void in your life with something else that is good. Fill your voids with the Lord and be set apart to Him. It is not enough to separate yourself from devil deceptions and evil people, you need to separate yourself unto God.

The Invitation for Separation unto the Gospel

Since Paul had separated himself unto the Gospel and was so successful in living for the Lord and influencing others to Christ, to me it is like sending an invitation of separation to the Lord for my own life. If we are separated unto the Lord, than what will we receive? Will we follow the Lord, be faithful to the Lord, and spread the Gospel if we are separated unto the Gospel? If it worked for the Apostle Paul, then I can assure you that it will work to the glory of God and your benefit if you do take Paul up on his invitation and challenge for us to live godly, righteous lives.

The Indication of Separation unto the Gospel

What does this separation unto the Gospel indicate? It points us to the following realities in our lives. God’s will is being done, God’s work is foremost in our lives and the Gospel message is being spread as God intends it to be. Be separated unto the Gospel and God will richly bless you.

Tom Walker | President of Foothills Baptist Bible College and Pastor of Zion Hill Baptist Church in Marion, NC.
Men’s Dinner with Darryl Strawberry

An eight-time Major League Baseball All-Star and four-time World Series Champion, Darryl Strawberry spoke to a sold-out crowd Friday evening at the Billy Graham Library’s Men’s Dinner, telling the crowd of 300 about his path to redemption through his relationship with Jesus Christ.

A battling addiction for much of his life and baseball career, Strawberry gave his life to Christ more than a decade ago and now serves as a pastor and speaker. He credited Billy Oraratm’s influence on his ministry, saying, “I learned how to preach the Gospel because of Billy Graham. [When I was called to the ministry] I started studying his books and listening to him as an evangelist who was called to win the lost Billy Graham left such a great legacy; his legacy was Jesus Christ.”

Before accepting Christ as his savior, Strawberry admitted that he had given many excuses for ignoring God, but finally came to the point of surrender. “I didn’t want to be me anymore. I wanted to be in Christ,” he said. “I didn’t want to be Darryl Strawberry, great baseball player, who had troubles. No, I wanted to be redeemed and restored.”

About 300 people attended a sold-out Men’s Dinner hosted by the Billy Graham Library on Friday. They gathered in the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) headquarters, located just behind the Library, to hear from famed outsider Darryl Strawberry.

In 1989, Darryl Strawberry was a first-round draft pick out of Los Angeles. He went on to help the New York Mets (1980) and New York Yankees (1990, 1991, 1996) win World Series championships. Darryl Strawberry became a Christian nearly a decade ago after battling a cocaine addiction. Friday, he said he had given so many excuses for ignoring God, but finally came to the point of surrender. “I didn’t want to be me anymore. I wanted to be in Christ,” he said. “I didn’t want to be Darryl Strawberry, a great baseball player, who had troubles. No, I wanted to be redeemed and restored.”

Lots of “amen’s” and head nods from the audience accompanied Strawberry’s time onstage during the Men’s Dinner. Many in the audience expressed an understanding of the kind of supernatural God can do in a man’s life.

Standing in the BGEA headquarters in Billy Graham’s hometown of Charlotte, North Carolina, Strawberry said Ms. Graham taught us about winning souls to Christ and growing the kingdom of God. Now, the All-Star has Strawberry Ministries alongside his wife, Tracy. The couple has opened several rehabilitation centers for young adults, with a desire to help others find freedom in Christ.

The dinner wasn’t just a time to eat and talk around the table, but to see baseball fashion, a time for games.

Strawberry has seen his fair share of trials, from run-ins with law enforcement to surviving cancer. He quoted John 4:6 to the room full of men: “...he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.” There are many things in life that will test your faith, he told the crowd, but “don’t give up.” Jesus has overcome all of them, he added. Here, he prays with chaplains from the Billy Graham Rapid Response Team.

Strawberry wrapped up his talk giving glory to God for putting the broken pieces of his life back together. “You’re looking at the masterpiece of what God has done in my life,” he shared. Many of those who attended also took this time to browse a table full of items from Billy Graham’s collection related to baseball. The evangelist was a big fan of the sport and as a young man thought that he, too, might become a baseball player.

Let every thing that hath breath praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.
Psalms 150:6

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“Hear what God the Lord will speak.”
Psalm 56:8, NIV
Desiring God
No, I Shall Not Want

An Anthem for Everyday Anxieties
By Scott Hubbard

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. (Psalm 23:1)

Every one of us wake up each morning as a bundle of desires. Beneath even the most outwardly apathetic demeanor are hunger, needs, and fears — each of us yearning to be understood. Many of us move through our days largely unconscious of these basic emotions, even though they sit at the control panel of our hearts, pulling the levers that decide what we say and do.

A husband and father, for example, leaves work filled with a love for comfort. He obeys that love by coming home, not to his wife and kids, but to his couch and sports.

An employee walks into the office feeling a need for his peers’ approval. So, he performs on the stage from nine to five, always listening for applause.

We shall not want. Even in discomfit. Even in rejection. Even in the valley of the shadow of death.

A young man, wounded from past relationships, fears the prospect of future pain. So, he withdraws socially, isolating himself from anyone who might learn him.

Such loves, needs, and fears present themselves so pervasively, so forcefully that we often fail to ask if they are feelings worth following. Can we keep us from hearing another voice that has been speaking to us all the while, bidding us to walk a better path.

The Other Voice

God, in His mercy, makes us stop and listen. He responds to the clamor of our desires, we hear the voice of a shepherd who invites us to green pastures and still waters. The rumble, however, is that his voice often leads in the opposite direction of our feelings. Our loves, needs, and fears push us toward one path, he calls us to another. But often we do not want to listen and hear that other voice, taking that other point of view, letting that other larger, stronger, quieter life flow in.

In moments such as these, we encounter what C.S. Lewis calls “the real problem of the Christian life.” The decisions that define us as Christians often do not come with a flash and a bang. They come softly, almost noisily. They come. The first job you take, your first love, your first marriage. You wake up each morning. All your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists simply in showing them all back; in listening to that other voice, taking that other point of view, letting that larger, stronger, quieter life flow in.

And so, on and on. (Mere Christianity, 199)

And what does that other voice — that larger, stronger, quieter life — teach us to say to our rebellious feelings? Four words: “I shall not want.” (Psalm 23:1)

“I Shall Not Want”

Imagine you wake up with an inquisitive love for comfort. You just want to make them comfortable, to give them what they want. But if you’re tired, if you’re worn out, if you’re burnt out, you’re no longer in the mood for comfort.

It may be a time when you’re feeling worn down. You’re worried about what’s going to happen. You’re scared of what’s coming next. But then that other point of view wraps its arms around your shoulders and good helps you say, “I have one ladder to please today. When others reject or ignore me, I shall not want.”

Or maybe you wake up with a vague fear of coming trials. You just want to hold what’s precious in your life out of God’s reach. A crowd of what-ifs runs through your mind, and you answer by searching for something to distract you.

But then the landscape is clearer, stronger, quieter life comes flowing in, and you find yourself saying, “When trouble comes, I shall not want.”

“Jesus spilled his blood in Golgotha’s dust so we could lie down in green pastures.”

The wild pack of loves, needs, and fears has raged at you, but you have broken them back with this four-word saying: I shall not want. You are not going to follow your shepherd wherever he leads. They may come back in the afternoon, or even ten minutes from now, but you know what to do. You plug your ears to their persuasions and remember, again and again, I shall not want.

And so on.

‘The Lord is My Shepherd’

Of course, the four words I shall not want possess any magical qualities. We cannot charm away temptation simply by saying them. Rather, they are powerful words that come before them: “The Lord is my shepherd.” (Psalm 23:1)

How do we know with confidence that we shall not want, even when our loves, needs, and fears say just the opposite? Because the Lord Jesus Christ is our shepherd.

Jesus spilled his blood in Golgotha’s dust so we could lie down in green pastures. (Psalm 23:3)

He laid his soul in the grave so ours could be raised to eternal life. (Psalm 23:4). He allowed the valley of the shadow of death to swallow him so that it might become for us the highway to Heaven. (Psalm 23:4). Every morning, he sets a table for us, filled with rich food. (Psalm 23:5). Every day, he sends his goodness and mercy to chase us, surround us, and keep us safe till we reach home. (Psualm 23:6).

As we entrust ourselves to this shepherd, he takes his rod and his staff, and his feelings to follow him: to love him, to need him, to fear him. He teaches us, day by day, that so long as we are near him, we shall not want. Even in discomfit. Even in rejection. Even in the valley of the shadow of death.

Scott Hubbard is a graduate of Bethlehem College & Seminary and an editor for desiringGod.org. He and his wife, Bethany, live in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Volunteer Impact Day

By Amy Ellis
Mitchell County

As part of The Quarz Corp annual Volunteer Impact Day, more than 100 employees representing the USA, Norway, France, and China volunteered throughout the community on September 5th. Employees served neighbors, schools, and non-profit organizations within Avery, Mitchell, and Yancey counties.

Projects were chosen to align with The Quarz Corp mission of making the world a better place and included:

- Deyton Elementary - led by Andrew Staton
- Gouge Elementary - led by Casey Petersen
- Genisia Academy - led by Bryan Garland
- Gresham Elementary - led by Manuel Reyes, John Stewart
- Hospice of the Blue Ridge - led by Jim Garofalo, Norris Davis, John Silver, Joe Buchannan
- Hospice of the Blue Ridge - led by Eben Concepts
- High School Bakervile - led by Anthony Paulin
- Intermountain Children’s Center - led by Chris Gentry, Blake Glenn, Blake Peterson
- Mitchell County Safeplace - led by Hogan Burrell, Andy Glenn
- Mitchell Elementary - led by Rolf Peppert
- Josh Crowder
- Mitchell High School - led by Mark Holfield, Bobby Berlese
- Riversdale Elementary - led by Ricki Ledford
- The Brian Center for Health and Rehabilitation - led by Buel Young, Bryan Burrell
- Tama Mitchell House - led by Manual Rayes, John Stewart

Community partners also donated time and materials to make this event a success. It was a day generously donated to a significant amount of rock to support the project at Micaville Elementary. Green Mountain forest contacted the installation/management of new fencing at the Interim Children’s Center in the project. Eben Concepts closed doors and empowered employees to volunteer for the day.

Sudoku

Solution on page 14

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NC Baptist Aging Ministry

Celebrates 10-Year Anniversary
By Carol Layton

It’s not often one is asked to create something from nothing. But that’s exactly how North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) began in 2009.

Rev. Milton Hollifield Jr., executive director-treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, "laid it on the heat" of Dr. Michael C. Blackwell, to create a non-residential ministry to older adults. Hollifield called Blackwell "the trusted source" in North Carolina Baptist life and said if anyone could create such a new and creative ministry — with broad-based support — it would be the long-time President of the Baptist Children’s Home (BCH).

Blackwell accepted the challenge and assembled a blue-ribbon committee of experts in all matters relating to aging adults — legal, medical, religious, psychological, social, and other challenges associated with the frail elderly.

Then, in 2009, BCH was a leader in developing family-focused Christian ministries. In addition to residential care for children, the ministry has established a Christian-focused daycare, wilderness programs for boys and girls, a ministry for developmentally disabled adults, a family care ministry for single mothers and their children, college campus ministries, and an orphanage in Guatemala. In further fulfillment of BCH’s calling to serve all of God’s children, NCBAM was born.

Blackwell chose Dr. Sandy C. Gregory to serve as director for the new ministry. At that time, Gregory was serving as the south-central director of development for BCH and had education and experience working in senior adult ministry. Blackwell connected Gregory with Bobby Boyd, then president of the BCH Board of Trustees and a retired director of Catawba County Social Services with 35 years of experience.

Gregory and Boyd spent the first year in research — traveling the state speaking to social service directors, older adults, and pastors — asking “what can Baptists do to help older adults?” Gregory remembers two key lessons from Boyd that profoundly impacted the growth of the ministry: “Relationships are key” and “Don’t promise more than you can deliver.”

With a mission statement in place (‘to help individuals 65+ maintain their independence’), NCBAM began a three-month pilot program with the Liberty Baptist Association. Working with Rev. Mike Ester, director of missions, NCBAM identified resources, established partnerships with existing services, and met individuals with needs. Gregory recalls, “The pilot program helped us determine the needs that were out there and ways that we could begin to address them.”

With the pilot program rolling, a building on the Mills Hope campus of Baptist Children’s Homes was fitted for the NCBAM Call Center. Older adults called in with needs for transportation, home-delivered meals, or require care. NCBAM staff provided callers with local numbers for existing services. It was usually only a few days before the caller would phone back to report they had been put on a one-to-two-year waiting list. Gregory remembers, “Giving out those numbers was easy. But God had another plan — for NCBAM to call on the churches of North Carolina to step up and do ministry.”

By embracing that divine plan, the foundation of NCBAM was laid — partnerships with churches and Baptist organizations ministering to the needs of the aging while encouraging and empowering well-aged adults to continue God’s call on their lives. Gregory had seen the focus of senior adult ministries changing in the years before NCBAM was born. “Senior adult ministry used to be about a monthly luncheon and a trip to see the leaves. Now, seniors want more. They want to stay involved in ways that are meaningful to them and to continue to make a difference in the world.”

Known affectionately throughout the state as “BAM,” the ministry has stayed true to its name to dream big and to act boldly with explosive energy. Gregory has seen that by developing innovative partnerships with public and private sector entities. Today, those partnerships include North Carolina’s Office of Senior Fire Marshal which has led to more than $130,000 in smoke alarms being installed in seniors’ homes and the National Fire Protection Association that has brought fall-prevention education to thousands. Other vital partnerships are those with North Carolina’s Area Agencies on Aging and North Carolina’s Department of Insurance SHIP program.

Numbers tell only part of NCBAM’s story, but each number represents a life impacted by God’s love. Since 2009, NCBAM’s Call Center has received more than 25,000 calls, served 4,000 individuals, met needs in all 100 counties, facilitated 33,000 volunteer hours, and set the world’s record for the most wheelchair ramps built in one day (212).

NCBAM currently has six regional directors who work throughout the state developing partnerships with churches and within the aging services network. They have developed ten Priority #1 Prevention programs, distributed 20,000 Red Bars for medication management, developed more than 40 educational workshops, and trained 2,000 individuals. Workshop topics include caregiving, healthy aging, and disease preparedness. They are taught free of charge to senior adult groups in churches and senior centers. Since 2009, NCBAM has received 17 state and national awards for programming and communication.

Through its AAIM outreach (Aging Adults Innovating Ministry), NCBAM provides leadership conferences for those involved in ministry to senior adults. Since 2014, a statewide event has been held each May followed by regional events in the fall.

As gratitude is its to look back on the first ten years, Gregory spends more time looking forward. “Each day brings opportunities to explore new partnerships, build new programs, and impact more lives. As a ministry working with churches, government groups and the private sector, we explore uncharted territory every day.”

As the first steps of NCBAM, the ministry’s latest venture into uncharted territory is also beginning as a pilot program — once again within the Liberty Baptist Association. Volunteers from I.B.A. churches are trained to receive calls from older adults experiencing loneliness. This NCBAM Hope Line is part of a broader “One Heart Movement,” which offers spiritual responses to the epidemic of social isolation and loneliness.

Founder Dr. Michael Blackwell uses the growth of NCBAM as a divine blessing. “The Lord has provided excellent staff and has consistently opened doors for new programs and partnerships at just the right moment. In the next ten years, as Baby Boomers continue to retire and need help to maintain their independence, NCBAM and North Carolina Baptists will be ready!”

Carol Layton is Office and Support Manager for North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM).
News from The Shire

By Nancy Malik

Avery County

It is the middle of September in the high country. Fall is starting to put on the colors that bring visitors anticipating the joy, again and again. Beauty and awe are part of God’s beautiful creation of the seasons and Autumn. Avery County is one colorful view after another as well as our neighboring counties and nearby state, Tennessee. Thank you, God, for summa in the High Country!

God opened a door for me to be able to share creation science with children on AM 1130, WECR, M-F at 9:10 am and 12:50 pm, being sponsored by Blue Ridge Christian News. The show is called Adventures in Creation.

I have had another opportunity that keeps my eyes on the heavens as I am a part of a group on Grandfather Mountain who has the wonderful opportunity to scan the skies for migrating raptors. Many raptors like coming over the Blue Ridge instead of following the coastal migration pattern, and it is a gift from our Lord to watch His birds fly overhead or catch a snapshot above us. Wasting bald eagles and hawks catch sight at Grandfather Mountain and Sugar Mountain can be thrilling. The verse in Isaiah 40:31 “those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on eagle’s wings” This verse comes alive watching these mighty birds. The last week of September and the first week of October we will be catching them and tagging them and any children who would like to help are welcome to come to the garden by the fudge shop on Grandfather Mountain.

It is a blessing that Avery County and surrounding counties in the High Country have many people who love and honor the Lord. It is a blessing living here in “God’s Country”

Nancy Malik and her husband moved to Avery County in 2017. Her husband passed in 2018. She is a member of Heaton Christian Church. Nancy taught preschool, elementary school and middle school over many years. She is the grandmother of eight.

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Summit Community Church

Jesus Calms the Storm
By Mike Stroud
Burke County

What a season we have had, unbelievable summer temperatures and devastating Hurricane. It seems that times like these are hard to deal with. We realize how frail and fragile life is. So many people affected, and lives are lost. All we can do is pray. The belief that keeps us close to our trust in the Lord when opposing circumstances and conditions confront us, show us in our face. It is true survival and belief in God that can save us. We tend to get spoiled to how well we have it and how safe we are until a storm comes along. I think about the disciples in this passage of scripture.

Mark 4:35-41 New International Version (NIV)
35 That day when evening came, he said to [the disciples], “Let us go over to the other side.” 36 Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There were other boats with him. 37 A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”
39 He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.
40 He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”
41 They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

I love this story because sometimes as Christians, we forget who we are in Christ and He is in our lives. He said they were going over to the other side, but when the storm arose (and these were big fishermen) they were terrified for their lives. What was Jesus doing? Sleeping. They woke him up, He rebuked the storm and rebuked for them their fear. We need to have the trust in the Lord completely, no matter what. If we are going down a path, we are going down trusting the Lord and praising God. Our life is in Christ eternally. We tend to hold onto this life, and that is natural, but when we love it in him, no matter what happens, Good, Bad, or Ugly. We Win. The Lord always makes things right, not only in this life but the one to come. It is hard for people to believe this, easy to say, but hard to do. He is always there to rescue us, even in our hurt and despair. Put all your cares upon Him, because He cares for you and will never let you down.
Try not to wake the Lord when he is sleeping, just take a nap yourself and believe it will all be alright regardless, and see the Miracles of God.

Mike Stroud is a member of Summit Community Church in Burke County and involved in the ministry team.

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Evergreen Church

Giving
By John McCurdy
Raan Mountain Cemetery

In 1 Corinthians 8 and 9, the Apostle Paul develops ten principles of Christian giving.

1. Christian giving is an expression of the grace of God (8:1-9). Paul begins by referring to the generosity of God, to “the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches” (v. 1). In other words, behind the generosity of Macedonia, Paul saw the generosity of God. Grace is another word for generosity. Our gracious God is not a miser! He is not miserly with his people. In fact, he is given to generosity. Thus, Christian generosity is fundamentally an outflow of the generosity of God.

2. Christian giving can be a gift of the Spirit (8:7). As the believers excel in the spiritual gifts of faith, faith, knowledge, and love, the apostle urges them not only to give, but also to give in such a way that “it will be to the glory of God and to the benefit of every one” (v. 7). The apostle stresses that every giver should “think carefully about the gift you are going to offer” (v. 11). Since all believers are God’s children, the spiritual gifts, and the responsibilities that come with them, are not just for a select group of people. All believers in the body of Christ should be involved in giving. The apostle further points out that if all believers give, “what then will be the result?” (v. 11).

3. Christian giving is inspired by the cross of Christ (8:9). The Corinthians were not being commanded, much less browbeaten, to give generously. Rather, the sincerity of their love was being put to the test by comparison with others and especially by comparison with Christ. For them to have the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ not grudgingly, but with gladness, would be a great thing indeed. The sacrifice of Christ changes our perspective (v. 9). The poverty of Christ is seen in his incarnation and especially his cross, while the “wealth” he gives us is salvation in all its glory. When we give, we give proportionately. If we give a large sum, it is proportionately more. If we give a smaller sum, it is proportionately less. The amount of giving is important, but what is more important is the proportionate giving. The more we have, the more we should give. The less we have, the less we should give.

4. Christian giving is proportionately given (8:10-12). During the previous year, the Corinthians had been the first not only in ivy but also in ding to give (8:10). Now Paul urges them to finish the task they had begun so that they could “catch up with the rest of the churches” (v. 11). The task of giving is not simply in how much is given, but in how it is given. We give according to our ability, according to what the giver has, not according to what he has not (v. 12).

5. Christian giving contributes to equality (8:13-15). Paul’s desire is not that other people will be relieved while the Corinthians are hard-pressed, for that would merely reverse the situation and cause problems by creating another imbalance. Rather, he desires that there might be equality (v. 13). He goes on to repeat his argument illustrating the principle from the supply of loaves in the desert. God provided this for everyone, and this is true of giving. Larger families gathered a lot, but not too much, for nothing was left over. Smaller families gathered less, but not too little, for they had no lack (v. 15). Thus, Paul puts the emphasis on sharing the wealth, and then called for an adjustment—that is, an easing of wealth by sufficiency. Twice he concluded that this was in line with justice.

6. Christian giving must be carefully supervised (8:16-24). The handling of money is a risky business, for, throughout his ministry experience, Paul has been witness to the dishonesty and dishonesty in churches. For this reason, he now instructs the Corinthians to appoint trusted men to receive contributions from all the churches. He then instructs them to present their offering as a sacrifice in a way that is acceptable to God and to others. The offering is to be presented with reverence and in a way that is pleasing to God.

7. Christian giving can be stimulated by competition (v. 1-5). It is easier to see how Paul plays the north and south against each other. He boasts of each other such a thing, to emphasize the generosity of both. True, competition can be a dangerous game to play, especially if it involves the payment of the names of donors and the amount they have donated. But at least these verses provide a biblical model for the concept of matching gifts. We can all be stimulated to greater generosity by the known generosity of others.

8. Christian giving resembles a harvest (8:6-11a). Two harvest principles are here applied to Christian giving. First, we reap what we sow (v. 6). Each donor should give “what he has decided in his heart to give.” Neither reluctantly, nor under compulsion, nor for that matter calculating what he will receive in return (Luke 6:34, 35). Giving is for the Lord’s sake, not our own. The effect of this harvest principle is that we reap a double harvest. It is both for eating and for further sowing. The God of the harvest is concerned not only with alleviating our present hunger, but also making provision for the future. In the same way God said “I will supply you with corn and oil and wine and make the land yield its fruit” (v. 10).

9. Christian giving has symbolic significance. There is more to Christian giving than meets the eye. Paul is quite clear about this. In the case of the Greek churches, their giving symbolized their “confession of the gospel of Jesus Christ” (v. 15). It was a declaration of faith, a conscious act of faith in the body of Christ. In similar ways, Christian giving can express teaching because our gift symbolizes our support of the cause to which we are giving. For example, when we contribute to evangelistic enterprises, we are expressing our confidence that the gospel is God’s power for salvation and that everybody has a right to it. When we give to economic development, we express our belief that every man, woman, and child bears God’s image and should not be obliged to live in dehumanizing circumstances.

10. Christian giving promotes Thanksgiving (9:10-15). Four times in the concluding paragraph of these two chapters, Paul states his confidence that the ultimate result of his collection will be the increase of thanksgiving among God’s people (v. 11-14). Christian giving leads not only to the thanksgiving to God, but also to the fuel in the sight of his—indestructible gift of his Son.

John McCurdy is pastor of Evergreen Church in Roan Mountain, Tennessee and also chaplain at Roan Highlands Nursing Center.

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Psalm 100:1-5 1A Psalm of praise. Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 3Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. 5For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

5. Our goal as Christians is to protect our health, safety, and loved ones so that we can continue to serve the Lord after the blaze of the affliction diminishes. Isaiah 43:2-3 “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.”
6. Our return to normalcy depends upon guidance from the Lord. Colossians 1:9 “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.”

The alarm’s screech fades away. The blinding lights disappear. And the children file back into the school to resume their normal schedule. When your children mention a fire drill or you see it in the safety section of your school information, remember that we, too, can practice our spiritual fire drill and teach them to our children.

Marlene Housk is a regular contributor to Blue Ridge Christian News. Her passion is to delve deeply into the truths of Bible women and to discuss those in Bible Studies called Exchange Pss to Bible Women. She and her husband discover joy, nurture, and challenge in their church. Her contact is marlenehousk@bellsouth.net

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