



BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS



Morganton Seventh Day Adventist

Name Above All Names

By Steve Bietz
Burke County



The month of August has arrived, but how did the name August become the name of our 8th month? He was born Gaius Octavius Thurinus. Historians struggled with such a mouthful, and simply called him Octavian. His Great Uncle was none other than the Dictator of Rome, Julius Caesar. Julius Caesar desperately needed an heir. He had no son. So, as was common in ancient Rome then and later, Caesar sought his closest male relative to adopt as his own son. He adopted Octavian. And when Julius Caesar was assassinated on what is now known as the Ides Of March, (March 15th) and the reading of his will was announced, naming Octavian his heir, Octavian would become the Emperor of Rome.

It would be at this time that Octavian felt he needed a more significant name. He decided on the name Augustus. In Latin, the name Augustus means "Majestic." Emperor Augustus also decides to do something that his Great Uncle, Julius Caesar, had done while he was the leader of Rome. This was to name a month after himself. Julius Caesar took the 7th month of the year and named it July, after himself. Emperor Augustus would take the 8th month of the year and name it August, after himself. Incidentally, Augustus did not want Julius Caesar's month to have more days in it than his, so he took a day from February and put it in his own month of August so that his month and Julius Caesar's month each had 31 days. Our month of August does not have a federal holiday, but that does not stop us from celebrating. After all, August 3rd is Watermelon Day and August 25th is Banana Split Day. Also, a day that is dear to my heart, since I am left-handed, is August 13th which is Left Handers' Day.

Evidently, we are ok with Emperor Augustus having this month named after him. Maybe it is because we are very familiar with things in our lives that are named after famous people. Maybe you have flown into the Kennedy Airport, named after President John Kennedy. Maybe you have visited Disney World, named after Walt Disney. When my wife and I lived in Atlanta after we were first married, we lived on Jimmy Carter Blvd, named after President Jimmy Carter. And I can almost bet that you have visited a Walmart, named after Sam Walton, or eaten a Hershey Candybar, named after Milton Hershey. And there are Trump Hotels all over the place, although I have never spent a night in one.

Yes, we know all about coming in contact with famous names. Let me refer to the name above all others. The reference is not from my own words, but from

the Apostle Paul. *"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow"* Phillipians 2:9,10. I have always enjoyed the music of Bill and Gloria Gaither. A song that the well-known couple wrote back in 1970 is entitled: There's Just Something About That Name. Have you recognized that the name Jesus stands above all others? That there is power in the name of Jesus, that there is comfort in the name of Jesus, and that there is peace in the name of Jesus. Indeed, there is something about that name. May it be a name that we each know as our Lord and Savior and even as our best Friend, Jesus.

Steve Bietz, Pastor, Morganton Seventh day Adventist Church.



“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” 1 Corinthians 2:9 (KJV)

In Memory of Joy Baldwin
Madison County

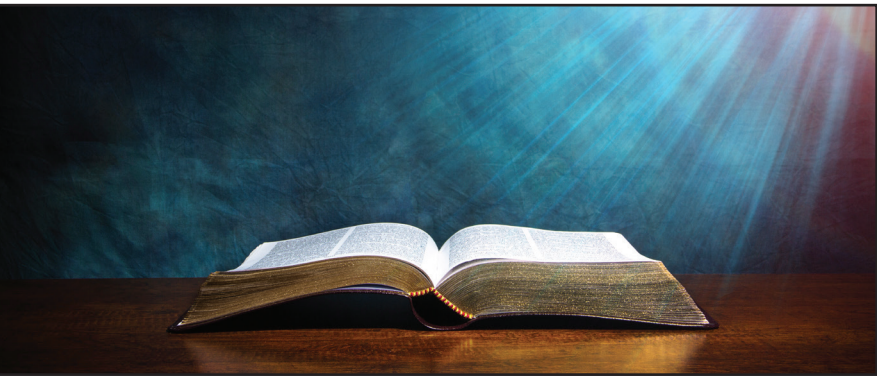
Love the Lord

Love The Lord with all your heart,
With all your soul and mind
He is our Savior The Mighty King,
Dearest friend you'll ever find.

He was there when you were born
He's watching as you grow
Sending angels from time to time
My friend He loves you so.

He smiles when you are happy
He's sad when you are blue
He shares your greatest hopes and dreams
Shouts victory as you pray through.

Dear one you'll never be alone
If you read His Holy Word
Then send up a prayer of faith
And forever Love The Lord.





The Best Mix On The Dial

Here are some of the essential elements of our faith at the Blue Ridge Christian News:

God

God is the Creator and Ruler of the universe. He has existed eternally in three persons and chooses to manifest Himself in these three ways: as God the Father, as God the Son, and as God the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal and are one God.
(Genesis 1:1, 26-27; 3:22; Psalm 90:2; Matthew 28:19; 1 Peter 1:2; and 2 Corinthians 13:14)

Jesus

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, who is fully God and fully human in His incarnation. He lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all humanity by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to heaven and will return again to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.
(Matthew 1:22-23; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-5; 14:10-30; Hebrews 4:14-15; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Romans 1:3-4; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:14-15; Titus 2:13)

The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the very Spirit of God, fully divine, manifested in the life of every believer from the moment of salvation. He is equal with the Father and the Son as God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. The Christian seeks to live under His daily control.
(2 Corinthians 3:17; John 16:7-13; 14:16-17; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:12; 3:16; Ephesians 1:13; Galatians 5:25; Ephesians 5:18)

The Bible

The Bible is the divinely inspired, authoritative, infallible, living and active Word of God to all men. It was written by human authors under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is the ultimate source of truth for Christian beliefs and living. In it we find a guideline for right relationship with God and God's creation, and a blueprint for personal, emotional, and spiritual growth.
(2 Timothy 1:13; 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:2-21; Psalm 119:105, 160; 12:6; Proverbs 30:5)

Humanity

Humanity is designed and made by God in His image. We have been created as cognitive, moral, ethical, and physical beings and have been equipped by God for both relationship with Him and with one another. Both male and female are gifted by the Creator with characteristics which equip them for the purpose for which they have been created: relationship, dominion, and responsibility. Although God designed us to have fellowship with Him, we became alienated from God through disobedience. As a result, all human beings are born with a sinful nature and choose to sin against God. We are incapable of regaining a right relationship with God through our own efforts.
(Genesis 1:26-28; Psalm 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:6; 59:1-2; Romans 3:23; 5:22; Colossians 1:21; 2 Corinthians 5:17)

Eternity & Eternal Security

Our soul, the essence of our being, was created by God to exist forever. That forever is spent in one of two places: eternally present and in union with God because of His forgiveness and salvation or eternally separated from God because of sin and unbelief. At the moment that our physical body dies, those who are saved are immediately taken to heaven. Those who have rejected God's gift of salvation will spend eternity separated from God in hell. Because God gives man eternal life through Jesus Christ, the believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and eternal power of God that gives this security.
(John 3:16; 5:11-13, 10:29; 1 John 2:25; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:15; 2 Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25; 10:10-14; 1 Peter 1:3-5)

Salvation

Salvation is God's gift of redemption and reconciliation to Himself and is offered freely to all who accept, by faith alone, Jesus Christ as God's only son and receive Him as Lord and Savior. We can never make up for our sin with self-improvement or good works. It is only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness that you can be saved from sin's penalty. Eternal life begins the moment you receive Jesus Christ into your life by faith.
(Romans 5:1; 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12; 14:6; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26)



BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS

*The Blue Ridge Christian News
is moving to 152 Summit Ave., Spruce Pine, NC*

Contents

In Every Issue

Life Lessons - p. 9
Your Government - p. 32

BLUE RIDGE CHRISTIAN NEWS

Publisher/Co-editor – Brian Barrier
828-413-0506
brianb@brcnews.com
Office Manager/Co-editor – Cathy Pritchard
828-765-6800
cathyp@brcnews.com
Sales:
Brian Barrier
828-413-0506
brianb@brcnews.com
Church Directory:
Brian Barrier
828-765-6800
brianb@brcnews.com

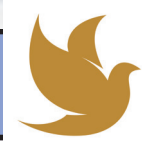
Distribution:
Deborah Slagle
Doug Braswell
Amanda Silver
Ashley Hoilman
Albert Kaylor
Graphic Design / Layout
Lynn Elliott
lynny@brcnews.com
Blue Ridge Christian News
152 Summit Ave.
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Office – 828-765-6800

“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace: that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation: that saith unto Zion. Thy God reigneth!”

Isaiah 52:7 KJV



Visit Us Online At: www.brcnews.com



Thank You For Supporting Our Advertisers!

Serving: Avery - Burke - Madison - McDowell - Mitchell - Yancey Counties

ADVERTISER CLASSIFICATIONS

APPLIANCES Jonathan's Used Appliances (35)	Spruce Pine United Methodist (4) The Rock Church (4) The Bridge (4) West Burnsville Baptist (4)	FINANCIAL PLANNING Retirement Resource Management (23)	Compassionate Care of Western North Carolina (18)	REALTORS Whitson Realty (15)
AUTOMOBILES - Dealers Jim Armstrong (29) Marion Chrysler Dodge (27) Spruce Pine Chevrolet (23)	CHIROPRACTIC Cruz Chiropractic (22)	FLOORING/CABINETS Carolina Flooring/Cabinets (18)	HOUSING Clayton Homes (34)	RESTAURANTS Abele's (6) Bantam Chef (20) Bubba's Good Eats (13) Chick-fil-a (10) DT's (35) Western Sizzlin (22)
AUTOMOBILES - Repair/Supply John's Precision Auto Body (21)	COLLEGE McDowell College (26)	FUNERAL SERVICE Beam Funeral Service (20) Heritage Funeral Home (12) J & M Memorials (36) Sossoman's Funeral Home (19)	INSURANCE Fortner Insurance (30) Life Store Insurance (15) McDowell Farm Bureau (18, 26) Miller Insurance Group (11) Mitchell Co. Farm Bureau (31) Premier Insurance (5) State Farm Insurance (8) Thrive Insurance (21)	RETAIL Grassy Creek Clothing (25)
AUTOMOBILES - Tires Buff Tire & Service (28) McCabe Tire & Service (35) Spruce Pine Tire (12)	CPA Jamie Miller (19)	FURNITURE Buck Stove (25) L&L Furniture (30)	MULCH McClure (16)	REHABILITATION/NURSING Brian Center (6)
BOOKS Ed Waters (40)	DENTIST Scott Murphy (10)	HARDWARE Three Nails Hardware (5)	PAWN SHOP Mountaineer Pawn (15)	STORAGE DR Storage (36)
CHURCHES Bear Creek Baptist (4) Berry Chapel Baptist (4) Burkemont Baptist (4) Faith Fellowship (4) First Baptist Spruce Pine (4) Grassy Creek Baptist (4) Landis Orthodox Presbyterian (4) Morganton Seventh day Adventist (4) Newland Christian Church (4) Pine Branch Baptist (4) Pleasant Hill Baptist Church (4) Plumtree Presbyterian (4)	DSS McDowell DSS (9) Mitchell DSS (19)	HEALTH CARE Carolina Home Care (34) Faith Family Health (37)	TREE SERVICE Ray's Tree Service (24)	
	EVENTS A Grateful Girl (37) Calvary Chapel Home Fellowship (26) Catawba River Baptist Assoc. (27) Freedom Life (5) Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church (7) Spruce Pine Baptist Church (40) Valdese Tourism (24) Yancey Baptist Assoc. (14) Yancey Senior Center (22)	HOME MORTGAGE Peoples Home Equity (8)	PLUMBING/HEATING Burleson Plumbing Heating (21) Benjamin Franklin Plumbing (12)	
		HOSPICE Hospice of Rutherfordton (20) Hospice of Blue the Ridge (17)	RADIO STATION WMNC (9) WSVM (2)	

Church Directory



Bear Creek Baptist Church

327 Bear Creek Road
Bakersville, NC 28705
www.bearcreekbaptist.com

Reverend Bruce Cannon

Sunday School 9:45 AM
Worship Service 10:45 AM
Discipleship 6:00 PM
Evening Worship 6:45 PM
Wednesday Worship 7:30 PM

"For God so loved the world, he gave his only Son..."

Landis Orthodox Presbyterian Church

4975 US 221
Marion NC 28972
(828)-756-7470
www.landischurch.org

Elder Mike Cloy

opcmikecloy@gmail.com

Sunday School 10:00 AM
Worship Service 11:00 AM
Fellowship Meal Following Worship
Thursday Bible Study & Prayer 6:30pm

*Come Celebrate the Glory of God in Reverent
Worship Ps. 96:3; John 17:1*

Berry Chapel Baptist Church

280 Chapel St.
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
828-765-6590
www.berrychapelbaptist.com

Pastor - Steve Williams

Sunday School 9:45 AM
Worship Service 11:00 AM
Sunday Evening Care Meal/
Ministry - 5:30 PM
Wednesday Evening
Service 7:00 PM

Where Everybody is Somebody
And Jesus Christ is Lord!

The Rock Church

4806 US 64
Morganton, NC 28655
Phone: 828-334-3193
www.trcmorganton.com

Pastor - Micah Narlock

Sunday Morning - 10 AM
Sunday Night - 6:30 PM
Tuesday Night - 7 PM

Come Join Us
Tent Revival 2020

Grassy Creek Baptist Church

793 Old NC 226 Hwy
Spruce Pine, NC
828-765-4620
www.grassycreekbc.org

Sunday School 10:00am
Morning Worship 11:00am
Sunday evening 6:30pm
Wednesday:
J.A.M. (Jesus and Me) 6:30pm
Mid-week worship 7:00pm
"That Mitchell County
may know Christ"

Morganton Seventh-day Adventist Church

2187 Jamestown Road
Morganton, NC
828-584-8212

Pastor Steve Bietz

Sabbath (Saturday)
Bible Study - 9:30 am
Sabbath Worship - 11:00 am
Vegetarian Buffet after church
Wednesday
Praise, Prayer & Proclaim -
7:00 pm
www.morgantonsda.org

Altapass Baptist Church

3631 Altapass Hwy
Spruce Pine, NC
828-765-0660
altapassbaptistchurch@ccvn.com
www.altapassbaptistchurch.org

Dr. Marcus R. Benfield Rev. Tony Lominac - Associate Pastor

Sunday School - 10:00am
Worship - 11:00am
Sunday Evening - 6:00pm
Sunday Youth Program - 7:00pm
1st & 3rd Sunday
(Conductors for Christ ages 5-11)
2nd & 4th Sunday
(Teen Discovery ages 12-18)
Wednesday - 7:00pm

Plumtree Presbyterian Church

4527 Hwy 19E
Plumtree, NC 28664
828-765-6919
www.plumtreechurch.com

Pastor Ryan Bridgeo

pastor@plumtreechurch.com

Sunday School 9:45 am
Worship Service 11:00 am
Life Groups Tuesday-Thursday evenings, 7:00 pm
Fusion Youth Wednesday's, 6:30 pm
Healing Services 2nd Sunday of each month, 6:30 pm

John 15:16 You did not choose me, but I chose you
and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that
will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you
ask in my name.

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church

2396 Enola Road
Morganton, NC 28655
(828) 437-4082

www.pleasanthillbc.church

Senior Pastor Dr. Jack Hodges

Sunday School: 9:30 am
Sunday Worship: 10:30 am
Sunday Evening: 6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening 6:00 pm

"Love All, Reach All, Teach All, Send All"

Newland Christian Church

2800 Millers Gap Highway
Newland, NC 28657
Phone (828) 260-1404
www.newlandchristianchurch.com

Pastor - Phillip Greene

Sunday School: 9:45 am
Sunday Worship: 11 am
Sunday Evening Bible Study: 6 pm
Wednesday Evening Prayer Meeting: 7 pm

"A Local Congregation of Christ's Church"

Burkemont Baptist Church

4668 Burkemont Rd.
Morganton, NC 28655
828-437-2357
www.burkemontbaptist.org

Sr. Pastor - Dr. Luke Lane

Sunday Services
8:30a - Early Worship
9:45a - Sunday School
11:00a - Worship
Wednesday Services
6:30p - Adult Choir & Orches-
tra, Adult Bible Study, Youth
Discipleship, Preschool &
Children's TeamKid

Mount Carmel Baptist Church

195 Gouges Creek Rd.
Spruce Pine NC 28777

John 3:16 says that YOU are
loved!

Find out why at
www.mcfamilyforchrist.org

Sunday School - 10am
Sunday Worship - 11am and 6pm
Mid-week Service - Wednesdays
at 6:30pm

"A Family Focused On Christ"

First Baptist Church of Spruce Pine

125 Tappan Street
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
828-765-9411
www.sprucepinefbc.com
www.spfbc.blogspot.com

Dr. Rocky Branch Senior Pastor

Sunday School - 9:30 am
Sunday Worship - 10:45 am
Sunday Evening - 6:00 pm
Wednesday Evening - 6:30 pm

*Knowing God, Seeing God, Serving
God, Submitting to God!*

Pine Branch Baptist Church

48 Church Road
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Phone: (828) 765-9101
www.pinebranchbaptist.net

Reverend Bobby Joe Greene

Sunday School • 9:45-10:40am
Worship Service • 10:45am
Sunday Evening • 6:30pm

A Bible-believing Fellowship
Loving God and Loving People



Spruce Pine United Methodist Church

11090 Hwy. 226 South
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
www.sprucepineumc.org
spumc3@bellsouth.net
828-765-7446

Pastor Richard Schilling

Sunday School - 10:00am
Sunday Worship - 11:00am
Choir Wednesday - 7:00pm

The mission of Spruce Pine United
Methodist Church is to be a beacon on
a hill spreading the Good News of Jesus
Christ through: Worship, Fellowship,
Education, and Nurturing Service

*Call us at 828-765-6800 to enroll in
this important outreach effort.*

**You can let tourists, visitors and even neighbors
know where your church is and when you meet by
listing in the BRCN Church Directory. This visible
and effective advertising is specially priced at
\$300.00 per year for our churches - approximately
\$5.75 a week!**

Romans 1: 2-4

By Terry Cheek Th.D.
McDowell County



Let's continue our study of Romans. In this article, we are going to look at the Promised Gospel. Paul testifies that God has separated him for preaching the gospel to the gentiles, which God previously promised through His Old Testament prophets (v. 2). Postmodern Christianity tends to separate the Old and New Testaments. Often, we hear the Old Testament referred to as law and the New Testament as gospel, as if there were no law in the New Testament and no gospel in the Old Testament. Paul says from the beginning that the gospel is not new. The first time we hear the gospel in the Old Testament is in the form of a curse. As a result of the Fall, God cursed Adam, Eve, and the serpent. God said that the woman's seed would crush the serpent's head, and in the process, the serpent's seed would bruise the man's heel. Centuries before Rome crucified Christ on the cross, and He crushed the head of Satan while being bruised for our iniquities, the gospel of Christ was given in the promise of the curse of the enemy. That is the first proclamation of the gospel (Gen. 3:14–19).

Paul, an expert student of the Old Testament, was aware of that, which is why he said that this gospel is what God "promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures." The "sacred writings" is the actual phrase he uses here. God has not lost confidence in the power of the sacred Scriptures. He has ordained Scripture with the power of the Holy Spirit. He declared to Isaiah, "My word.... shall not return to Me void" (Isa. 55:11). I sincerely believe there is no greater authority than the Word of God. No other source gives me more confidence or possesses more credibility. I am impressed with empirical science when it verifies hypotheses in unique ways. However, nothing is more impressive, exciting, encouraging, or inspiring than finding life's answers in the pages of Scripture. It annoys me when I see the bumper sticker that says: "God said it, I believe it, that settles it." We should remove that middle term. If God says it, it is settled, regardless of whether we believe it. There is no higher court of appeal than the voice of God. Therefore, it is necessary for the apostle Paul and anyone defending the gospel to say, "It is found in Scripture." The Lord Jesus Himself, as He walked with people on the road to Emmaus after His resurrection, "beginning at Moses and all the Prophets" (Luke 24:27), opened up the Old Testament to them, showing and teaching that they should not have been surprised by His resurrection. After leaving, their response was, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:32). Our hearts should burn when we experience the power of Scripture authenticating God's truth.

Paul continues concerning Jesus Christ our Lord (v. 3). In this brief passage, Paul calls Jesus the Son of God, and the Messiah of Israel, which is what the term Christ means. Do you realize Jesus Christ is not His name? Jesus is His name. His full name would be Jesus bar Joseph or Jesus of Nazareth. The word Christ is His title, and the title Jesus Christ means "Jesus Christos," or "Jesus Messiah." God's Son is the Christ, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh (v. 3). This is important because the Old Testament prophecies of the coming Messiah said He would be from the lineage of David. Luke gives us a great deal of information about the nativity of Jesus, bringing us to Bethlehem, the city of David because the Old Testament tells us the Messiah would be born from the loins of David. He was to be David's Son, yet at the same time David's Lord. Paul reminds the church that Jesus Christ was descended from David, "according to the flesh." Jesus being David's descendent is another essential phrase in the New Testament.

The Greek uses two different words to refer to the physical nature of our humanity. And occasionally, we seek them used interchangeably. The more common word for body, or the physical makeup of people, is the word *sōma*. When psychiatrists and psychologists talk about psychosomatic illnesses, they refer to diseases that have their genesis in some aspect of one's psychology. It is not that the conditions are not actual—they are honest and affect the *sōma*, the body. In addition to the term *sōma*, there is the word *sarx*, which also refers to the physical dimension of human life. Paul reminds us elsewhere that he did not meet Jesus in the flesh. He met Him in the power of His resurrection on the road to Damascus, but he never met Him personally during His incarnation. That is what Paul is getting at here. Elsewhere the term *sarx* is loaded with theological content. *Sarx* is being used to describe our fallen, corrupt nature. When Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6), or, "The flesh profits nothing" (John 6:63), He was talking about our fallen condition, not about our skin and bones. He was talking about our corrupt nature, which Scripture frequently sets in contrast to the spirit. There is a war taking place inside the Christian life, a war between flesh and spirit. We still battle with the flesh, but the battle is not with our physical body. It may involve our physical body, but the struggle is between the flesh and the spirit, between the old man, who is fallen and corrupt, and the regenerated person, who is now living by the Spirit of God.

We must also understand that Paul does not deny the virgin birth. Christ did not receive His deity from Mary or Joseph. He brought His deity with Him from heaven. Jesus was born of the seed of David according to the flesh and declared to be the Son of God. Paul summarizes the whole life and work of Jesus here: He is "born of the seed of David" and declared to be the Son of God with power (v. 4). When God the Holy Spirit raised the corpse of Jesus from the tomb, God was announcing to the world the sonship of Jesus. By what evidence do we believe that Jesus is the Son of God? By the testimony of God, who has declared Him to be His Son through the power of the resurrection. Paul debated with the philosophers on Mars Hill at the Areopagus, where a monument stood to an unknown

god. "These times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:30–31). As we will see later in Romans 1, Paul labors the point that God has made Himself known so clearly to every human being that nobody has an excuse for denying Him. When Jesus is declared God's Son through the power of the resurrection, that declaration may be all we ever get. We could be like Thomas and say, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe" (John 20:25). We do not want to stand before God on judgment day having denied Jesus Christ because God has made known the reality of Jesus through the power of the resurrection. That is the appeal Paul is making here. He says, "I'm not the one declaring to you that Jesus is the Son of God. God has declared that to you by the Holy Spirit is the power of the resurrection."

Works Cited
Holy Bible, King James Version. Thomas Nelson publisher. Kindle Edition
Holy Bible, English Standard Version. Kindle Edition
Sproul, R.C... Romans: An Expositional Commentary. Ligonier Ministries. Kindle Edition.
John Phillips, Exploring Romans, Kregel Publishing, 2002

Terry Cheek is the founder and broadcaster of The Inspiring Word media ministry. He and Lori are members of Blue Ridge Church of Marion N.C. You can contact Terry by email at theinspiringword@gmail.com.



FREEDOM

PRESSURE WASHING

A DIVISION OF FREEDOM LIFE

THREE NAILS HARDWARE



110 Estatoa Ave. • Newland, NC • 828-733-0408

"Where nails and seeds are still sold by the pound, and thank-you's are given by the bushel."

CASE, , , CASE XX, TESTED XX, XX, and various other marks used herein are registered trademarks of W.R. Case & Sons Cutlery Company.

Premier

INSURANCE SERVICES, INC.



Providing you knowledgeable assistance and high quality service.

Contact one of our knowledgeable agents today

Proudly serving the great citizens of Western NC for 25 years with Health, Employer Group Health Plans, Medicare Plans, Life, Annuities, 401K Transfers and Long Term Care Coverage
Now also offering Auto, Home, RV & Commercial Coverages

275 North Main Street • Marion, NC 28752
828.652.1553 local • 888.528.1553 toll free



Voted Best Breakfast & Salad Bar
in Morganton

I-40 at Exit 105

Morganton, NC
828-433-5400

By Joe Sturz
Shenandoah, Va.



A Christian's journey of faith through this life, on our way to heaven (Habakkuk 2:4; Hebrews 10:38), has been described as running a race (I Corinthians 9:24). So as a runner must do let us: --discipline ourselves to stay in good shape and be strong and healthy (I Cor. 9:25-27), --be aware that many are watching us and lay aside all sin that would be a burden to our souls and slow our running (Matthew 5:15-16; Hebrews 12:1), --not grow weary in well doing (II Thessalonians 3:12-13; Hebrews 12:12-14),) --persevere in faith through all the temptations, trials, and testing (Matthew 5:10-16; Romans 5:3-5; I Peter 4:12-14) that comes to us in this life like our forerunner Jesus did while here on earth (Hebrews 6:19-20; 12:2-4).

So let us keep our eyes on Jesus the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2) as we keep on keeping on in running our race (James 1:12). Brother Joe "running my race" Sturz Friday, July 15, 2022

I became a Christian when I repented of my sins (I John 1:9) and trusted personally in Jesus Christ's suffering and dying on the cross in my place to take God's punishment for my sin (I Corinthians 15:1-4) and secure a place in heaven for me (John 14:1-3).

I now follow Him (John 8:31-32) in praying, reading, and obeying the Bible every day, belonging to a Bible-believing church, and sharing my faith with others (Acts 2:46-47) as I seek to bring His kingdom to earth in all areas of my life (Matthew 6:33). I now see my life as running the race of this life that is described in Romans chaps 6-8). Here the apostle Paul describes the new life in Christ (John 6:3-17) then his struggle with putting off his sin (Romans 7:8-25) and then breaking through to victory over sin (Romans 8:1-19). However, the more victory he gains the greater struggle with sin then eventually occurs (Romans 7) again which then leads to greater victory over sin through the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8).

This repeated pattern in Romans 7 and 8 describes our growing in grace more and more (Hebrews 5:12-14; II Peter 3:17-18).). Let us follow Jesus Christ as He through the power of the Holy Spirit changes us (Acts 1:8; Galatians 5:22-25; Titus 3:5-8) step by step to be more like Him (II Corinthians 3:17-18).

Joe Sturz, a Christian counselor at Sturz Christian Counseling Service now living in Page County, www.sturzchristiancounseling.com ministering to people with problems and sharing what the Lord has taught me through: His Word, my mistakes, failures and successes and 47+ years as a Biblical counselor applying all of the Bible to all of life in daily messages on Facebook and email.

Check out our new Website-www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook



WE ARE
HERE FOR
YOU.



The Brian Center team wants to be
a resource to the community.

It's our goal to get community members
back home as quickly as possible!

- 24 Hour Licensed Nursing Care
- Joint Replacement Care
- Cardiac Care
- Stroke Recovery
- Respiratory Care
- Wound Care
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy

Advanced Therapy Modalities

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------|
| Ultra Sound | Heat & Cold Therapy |
| TENS | Electrical Stimulation |
| Diathermy | Mobile Swallow Studies |

Come take a tour and reserve your private room today!

Does It Seem That God Isn’t Answering Your Prayer?

By Kurt Bomar
Avery County



Maybe Paul felt the same way.
Rom 15:30 *“I urge you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. 31 Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea and that the contribution I take to Jerusalem may be favorably received by the Lord’s people there, 32 so that I may come to you with joy, by God’s will, and in your company be refreshed.”*
Paul requested prayer that he might be:
1. Kept safe from the unbelievers
2. Accepted by the believers in Jerusalem
3. And that he would come with joy to Rome.
Was he protected? Acts 21 tells us he received a severe stoning from the Jews, saved only by a rescue by Roman soldiers.
Was he accepted? The believers themselves were the underlying reason for the stoning he received. Furthermore, they never thanked him for the offering he risked his life to deliver to them. Nor are there any hints he was attended to while in prison for two years in Jerusalem.
Did he come to Rome with joy? He didn’t exactly arrive on a cruise ship. He was in the galley of a slave ship under arrest.
It seems his prayers weren’t answered, but wait!
Was he protected? Yes. He was bloodied but he didn’t die. Was he accepted by the believers? Not initially, but they eventually did. We see Peter instructing the believers to listen to what Paul had to say. Did he make it to Rome? Maybe not the way he intended or hoped, but yes he got there and was received well.
We say “pray for me, I’m going through a tough time”. And although we pray with fervency, sometimes initially it seems like just the opposite of what we hoped for happens. Often times our prayers are being answered, we just don’t see the unique and beautiful way God is working.
Hang in there, time will prove that God is working in ways we can’t even imagine. The purpose and the power of prayer is to get the Lord’s blessing on your life, not to get your way in your life. In hindsight, the prayers Paul requested on his behalf were truly answered in the best possible way.
Selah (think about it)

Kurt Bomar is pastor of Walnut Grove Church.

good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”
As Christians, God allows life’s sorrows into our lives to work out His plan for us: enlarging our spiritual borders, providing opportunities for spiritual growth, training for service, polishing our spiritual gifts, changing a bigger picture, etc. Like the School of Hard Knocks, our trials graduate us with greater wisdom.
8. Philippians 1:12 *“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;”*
We, as believers in Christ, focus on surrendering our sorrow and joys to God for Him to use for spreading the Gospel.
I’m thankful for God’s answers to my why questions, but knowing the answers fails to bring back my loved one or restore my wounded soul. However, knowing the following heal my heart and redirects my focus from within to heavenward.
1. Hebrews 13:5 *“for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”*
Jesus - Like a child who seeks solace and security within his mother’s arms, Jesus holds us close to Him always. When we journey through the valleys of life, He lives in us and walks with us through our sadness and anger.
2. Galatians 6:2 *“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.”*
Others - Jesus sends others to walk with us through our difficulties who encourage us with the warmth of goodness, practical advice, and their testimony of survival.
3. John 14:26 *“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”*
You - One of the gifts of salvation is the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, reminding us of the pleasures of eternity with Jesus, teaching us about His purpose for our lives, and comforting us with His presence.
My sweet little boy found satisfaction in knowing the answers to his questions. But, like my son who grew to adulthood, quenching the question of why during our times of distress brought information but not illumination. We both needed the inspiration of the last three: Jesus, Others, You, to quench the whys of life, replacing our why questions with the precious promises of His Word.

Marlene Houk 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 Backstage Pass to Bible Women. She and her husband discover joy, nurture, and challenge in their church. Her contact is marlenehouk@bellsouth.net. Learn more about women in the Bible at Marlene's website: www.MarleneHouk.com

Praise & Prayer on the Square

Hosted by the music ministries of
Mount Home Baptist
&
Pleasant Ridge Baptist

Join us for a time of worship & prayer
Sunday, August 21st at 7 pm
On the Historic Morganton Courthouse Lawn
Please bring a chair
rainout location – Mount Home Baptist

Bear Creek Baptist Church

The Tremendous Need For Earnest Prayer

By Bruce Cannon
Mitchell County



There are so many reasons the Church needs to earnestly pray. First, a careful study of people living around our Churches reveals that an overwhelming percentage do not attend Church. It is estimated in some western North Carolina areas the percentage of people that do not attend can range as high as 75%. When one looks at the attendance trends of all denominations it is noted that most congregations have gotten significantly smaller in size over the past decades.

A second reason for prayer concerns the rise of activities the Bible refers to as “iniquity”. In Matthew 24:12 the Scriptures state that in the latter days “*iniquity shall abound.*” This simply is a “catch-all” category for the actions we are seeing so prevalent today such as drug use, the breakdown of the home, the lack of a work ethic, criminal activities and so forth.

A striking similarity is easily seen as the smaller and weaker the Church gets, the greater influence iniquity will have over society. It is the voice of the Church preaching the Word and empowered by the Spirit of God that holds evil in check. And if the Church is frail, evil will abound.

And while all of these things are true and seemingly leave us without hope, the truth could not be further from that. God has always used the dark times to draw a remnant of believers to prayer, faithfulness, concern, and so forth. Someone has said that the darker the night, the brighter the light shines. Jesus in Matthew 5:14-16 said, “*Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*” It is time for the Church to be filled with passion for her Lord and perform extravagant displays of lavish love. What better place to exhibit boundless zeal and holy passion than in the place of prayer?

Read these great Scriptures concerning prayer and take to heart the promises made:

John 15:7 – “*If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.*”

Luke 11:9 – “*And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*”

Psalms 34:17 – “*The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.*”


The psalmist asks in Psalm 43:5, “*Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*”

It’s not time to be discouraged, defeated, or depressed! It’s time to be filled with hope because the God of the universe will hear our prayers and will answer. It’s time to let our light shine!

Pray with me that this present darkness will give way to a glorious time of revival and movement of the Lord as our King hears our prayers and will send a great revival in our land AND as we get ever nearer the coming of the Lord for His Church.

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 Bladen Baptist Association and has served on the General Board of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.





"Let's Make It Happen!"

PEOPLES HOME EQUITY

MORTGAGE LENDING

(828) 925-0634

Mine Creek Baptist Church

The Ol' Screen Door

By Chris Rathbone
Mitchell County



Many times in this life, when I slow down enough, my mind wanders back to my growing up years. “40-45 years ago,” said out loud sounds like a long time ago, but our memory of times past makes it seem like yesterday. My heart is sometimes saddened when I think of those days, the adventures that us holler kids had together, the people we shared them with, and the family that surrounded us. While I’m thankful for those times, it’s sad to know that we can’t go back and do it again and many of the people we shared those days with are gone. Don’t get me wrong, we had some really tough times growing up. Our family had struggles for sure, but many great memories still come up in my mind.

Some of you will remember the ol’ screen doors that many had on their front door. Most were wooden framed, fully screened, and had a long spring attached to the top. They had the hook and eye latch so you could lock them. My grandparents on both sides of the family had one. We had one at our house. We kids would run out of the house, push the screen door open and the long spring made that loud screeching noise as it opened. As always, we just let the door go and “bam” it would slam shut on its own. Y’all remember those doors, don’t you?

My grandmother “Mammie” lived just above us, a stone’s throw as the Bible says. You could hear her screen door slam every time one of us grandkids came running out of the house. Dad and Mom, or whichever adults were around would holler, “Stop slamming that screen door! Stay in or out, in or out!” But we usually paid no attention as we were in the middle of playing.

During those years we rode bikes, built forts in the laurel thickets, fished with the night crawlers we caught in the yard at night, and played in the dirt every day till we were filthy from head to toe. There weren’t many idle moments, we were always busy finding something to get into.

This week has brought back many memories of my dad. He is 85 years old with many health problems. Us kids have been taking turns staying with him in the hospital. Not only does he have many physical health issues, but dementia has taken its toll on his mind as well. He sometimes doesn’t even know us or remember many things. While watching dad lying there in that hospital bed, many of those memories that dad and I made during the ol’ screen door days came flooding back to me.

There was a time when my dad was much of a man! He worked at the Carbon Plant in Morganton for over thirty years to provide for his family. Drove every day and made the long ride to make a living and put food on the table. He was old-school tough and wise, more than we kids gave him credit for. He worked hard on the job and worked hard at home. Gardens were on the calendar in the spring and summer and working up firewood in the winter. When I was with him getting a load of firewood, he would stop at Newdale Grocery (Parsley’s to us locals) and get me a soft drink and creme-filled bogie pastry. What a treat for a young boy!

Dad expected us to do what he said and if we didn’t he would put us in our place if we got a little too big for our britches, if you know what I mean. He taught me how to drive, how to shoot a squirrel, and how to coon hunt. Dad never had to tell me that I was supposed to work for a living, I simply watched him get up every morning for years and go to work. His example said it all. I can still hear his whistle from the stands to let me know he was there to watch me play sports. I would turn and look and there he’d be giving me a thumbs up. He has strong old-school opinions of right and wrong and will not waver. Life for him was lived simply. The pursuit of riches never enticed him. Fancy cars and clothes were a waste of money that could be spent on necessities. A quaint house with a roof over his head and simple clothes were sufficient. He was always fiercely committed to his kids and stood by us no matter what we may have done. While we knew we would get our tails busted for doing something stupid, we always knew we could come home and he would be there for us.

There’s not enough room in this paper for me to write about all the things we shared, good and bad, over the years with our dad. While I know in my heart that his years here are winding down, we talk often of heaven and eternity that we get to see and spend together because of Jesus.

Happy Father’s Day Pops and thank you for being my dad. While I’m not sure how many more years we have left together, I’m thankful for all the memories we shared during those “ol’ screen door” years.

Preacher Chris Rathbone serves as Pastor at Mine Creek Baptist Church.

Check out our Website-www.brcnews.com

And find us on Facebook



New, low auto rates. Same good neighbor.

Here's the deal, MORGANTON. State Farm® has new, lower auto rates, so you can save more cash and get local service that's always the real deal. Call me today for a quote.

Rick Franklin, Agent
507 A Burkemont Avenue
Morganton, NC 28655
Bus: 828-437-6285
rickfranklin.bwmq@statefarm.com

Like a good neighbor,
State Farm is there®



By Doug Harrell
Mitchell County

As August is approaching I am aware that this is the month that I will be turning the ripe young age of 79. It makes me pause and give thanks for the many years of blessings I have had. There have been many challenges and struggles along the way, but the blessings have outweighed them though. There have been financial hard times, and there have been severe health challenges but, through it all, God has been so faithful.

No matter our age we all tend to struggle with determining what God’s will is for our lives. If we truly are a believer in our Lord and Savior, if we truly believe His word we will have a longing to serve him. I don’t think we ever age out of these things. In fact, with age we at times get more serious about our desire to be effective in following His will. One of the challenges of age is the mentality that we no longer matter, we are no longer able to be a servant. At times our bodies don’t have the strength or stamina to do the things we once could do and this makes us feel discarded or of no importance in the grand scheme of things. As the great theologian, C. S. Lewis once said, “You are never too old to set a new goal and to dream a new dream” and that is so true. As we get older, we need to always be looking ahead, not retire but redirect and refocus our efforts.

“I said, Days should speak, And multitude of years should teach wisdom.” Job 32:7 KJV

“The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: He shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those that be planted in the house of the LORD Shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; They shall be fat and flourishing;” Psalm 92:12-14 KJV

“Now also when I am old and greyheaded, O God, forsake me not; Until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come.” Psalm 71:18 KJV

I guess that as I write this devotion this morning I am feeling my age a little and am searching for direction in what God would have me do, how He would have me serve and be a light for Him throughout the remainder of my years here on this old earth. Maybe a little melancholy as I realize that the years are passing by. The old saying “ a rolling stone gathers no moss” should always be in our minds. Just because there is snow on the rooftop does not mean that the fire is out below. Striving to keep the fires burning as we go through the days of our lives pays big dividends to us and those around us. We never grow too old to serve and encourage those around us to follow God and to lean on His word.

“And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things.” Genesis 24:1 KJV

Letting the Lord continue to bless us and use us in our old age is critical for each of us. Don’t retire from service to the Lord. Refocus on His will for your life today. I don’t know of any time in my life that I have ever felt that it was more important to stand tall even as we get handicapped to a degree with age. Age also hopefully gives us wisdom and the ability to be an encourager to those that need it most; our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Keep on striving to have an impact for good, and shine the light of Jesus as long as He gives you breath!

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

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.
Ephesians 4:32



Hey y’all, we are Steven and Jennifer Painter. We started out as some of those folks who saw a sad story on the news about a child who had been neglected or abused and said, “why did this have to happen? We would have gladly taken that child and loved him/her!” Yet we didn’t make a move to actually BECOME that family because “it was never the right time” or “we don’t know where to start”. But really, when IS it the right time? Answer: now. How do we get started? Answer: just make the call! There are children NOW who need someone to bridge that gap. Contact McDowell DSS to learn more. 828-652-3355.

Humor

By Buddy Freeman
Madison County



An irate subscriber called her local newspaper office and loudly demanded to know where her Sunday paper was. The editor said, “Ma’am today is Saturday and the Sunday paper does not come until tomorrow.” The lady said, “No wonder there wasn’t anyone at church today.”

In a very close baseball game, the coach called a young player over and asked, “Do you know what cooperation is?” The boy said, “Yes.” The coach asked, “Does it matter that we will win together as a team?” The boy said, “Yes.” The coach said, “When a strike is called, or you’re out at first, you don’t argue or curse or attack the umpire. Do you understand that?” The little boy said, “Yes sir.” “good,” said the coach “now go over there and explain all of that to your mother.”

Senior Humor: You wake up yelling “bingo”....You forgot where you parked your car and you are at home....You get tired just waking up...You have more spots than a leopard...You sit in front of the microwave waiting for a clearer picture...Your favorite drink is prune juice on the rocks...You have to store all your medicine in a walk-in closet....You believe that your GPS stands for “Going Places Slowly”... If you men pull your pants up higher, you will have to keep the zipper open to see...You take more naps than your grandkids....You brush your teeth with Preparation H.

I am not overweight. When I wear a pair of white shorts, a white t-shirt, and white walking shoes I look just like a busted can of biscuits.

A man quit going fishing on Sundays and started going to church with his wife. The pastor noticed how regular they were coming to church. The minister said, “Walter, it is good to see you and your wife here in church every Sunday.” Walter responded, “Well, preacher to tell the truth. I figured I’d rather hear your sermon than hers.”

Dr Buddy Freeman is the former pastor of the First Baptist Church of Marshall, NC.

Check out our Website-www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook



WMNC Big Dawg 92.1
and 1430AM / 106.3FM
Family-owned since 1947
Our 25,000-watt transmitter
serves 22 counties in the
foothills of NC and beyond

Evergreen Church

Good News to Non-Religious People
Acts 14:11-28

By John McCoury
Roan Mountain, Tennessee

Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them. In the past, He let all nations go their own way. Yet He has not left Himself without testimony. He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; He provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy. Acts 14:15-17 Here is the pattern for preaching to non-religious people. If you want to know how to reach your neighbors who are not interested in the gospel, who know nothing of Scripture, who have not been to church and are not interested in it, here is the way. The approach is through nature. When Paul went to the Jews, he started with the Scriptures, the truth of God that they already knew. When he went to the Gentiles, he started with nature, the truth of God which they already knew. He points out three things that ought to have been very plain to them if they had been thinking about their contact with nature. First, he shows that behind creation there is one living God. He appeals to the fact that, if they had really observed nature, they would realize that it is not controlled by a conglomerate of separate powers, all trying to compete with one another, as envisioned in the pagan pantheon. Paul is saying, You haven't really seen nature. You haven't noticed that nature is as one; it all ties together, blending and harmonizing beautifully. It all exists and functions together because it has been made by one God, who is a living God. It is sustained and held together. It doesn't decay and fall apart but it is constantly being renewed. So there is one living God. Paul declares to them that nature has borne witness to God. The second point he makes is that the One Living God permits men free choice, and therefore allows evil. One of the problems about God faced by anyone in the world today is, Why is there evil present among men? This is a constant argument of humanists, and others. They say, If your God is such a loving God, who loves man, why does He permit suffering? Why does He allow evil, injustice, and war? These pagans argued the same way. Paul is answering by saying, What you must know is that God, in generations past, allowed all the nations to walk in their own way. In other words, He gave them free will. To permit free will, He must allow evil. Third, he says God will not allow it to go too far. He does not allow evil to engulf humanity and wipe us off the face of the earth, as human evil would do in a few months if it were unrestrained. God has restrained it. And right in the midst of it, despite all the rejection and all the rebellion and the blasphemy and hatred that is poured out against Him by these people whom He loves, God has shown His love by giving rain and fruit and harvest and gladness in the family circle and joy and happiness throughout the various moments of life. That is the God whom Paul preached. What a marvelous declaration of the gospel, that God had given all these things and thus had given witness to these people about Himself! So the first onslaught of the enemy falls back upon itself. The city is open to the gospel, and Paul can proclaim it in power. Thank you, heavenly Father, for the powerful witness you have given to all people in nature.

How did the Apostle Paul begin his witness to non-religious, non-believing persons? What are three powerful aspects of God's character revealed in the natural world?

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



Morganton Baptist Church

Lessons from a Vineyard

By Dan Qurollo
Burke County



In John 15:1-8, Jesus described Himself in the last of the seven “I AM” statements when He said, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.” The imagery of vines was quite familiar to Jews. Prior to Israel possessing the land, Palestine was known as a land of vineyards. When the spies returned, they brought back massive clusters of grapes that required two individuals to carry them. The grapes of Hebron are still today considered the finest in the Holy Land. A golden vine hung above the entrance to the temple as Jerusalem.

This statement would naturally remind the Jews of their relationship with God. Throughout the Old Testament, Jesus frequently described Israel as a vine that had been delivered from Egypt and planted by God. This is seen in passages such as Psalm 80, Isaiah 5, and Ezekiel 19 to name a few. Unfortunately, Israel failed to fulfill their God-intended purpose. Rather than being this fruitful vine, Israel was condemned as a wild vine that failed to produce what God had intended. In contrast, Jesus described Himself as the “true vine.” The word true is significant, for it describes Jesus as the real or authentic vine. As such, He is the fulfillment of the ideal vine.

The Bible also describes the Father as the husbandman, a term that describes a gardener or one who tended to the vineyard. His role is one of extreme importance. The gardener is responsible for the overall well-being of the vine; as such, He alone makes decisions for the well-being of the individual branches which then contribute to the overall health of the vine. He is responsible for the quantity of fruit. Therefore, He does all He can to enhance the life of the vine so that it might produce more fruit. He is also responsible for the quality of the fruit. He does not just desire quantity; he desires quality. From this role, two important principles emerge:

1. The gardener determines the type and extent of care the branch receives
No branch determines the type of care of receives. Though the removal of dead branches and the pruning of live branches may not be desirable, no branch is capable of dictating the level or type of care it receives. In fact, the branch must merely submit itself to the will of the gardener. Our natural instinct is to object to this. We wrongly believe that we are in control or that we know what is best. God’s way is always best.
2. The care of the vine is governed by the nature of the gardener.
Though we may often struggle with the insecurity that comes by simply trusting our care to someone else, our fears should be alleviated when we understand that the Father’s care of the vine is always governed by His nature. Consider just a few attributes of the Father and their implications for His care as the Gardener.

God the Father is omniscient; therefore, His care is always best. There is no detail about our lives of which He is ignorant. He knows all things equally and completely, including both the internal and external dimensions of our lives. He knows our thoughts as well as our actions. He knows our motives as well as our outward actions. Furthermore, He knows the end from the beginning. He knows what is best, and he knows how everything is going to work out, including the manner as well as the timing and which these things will occur (see Psalm 139:1-6).

The second attribute of God is that He is just; therefore, His care is always right. If God were capable of doing wrong, He could not be God. If God's judgments were inaccurate or partial, He could not be God. I must reach the point in my life when I conclude that everything God does is right because He is just (cf. Psalm 18:30).

God is love; therefore, His care is always properly guided. Once again, we must understand that if God were to ever act in an unloving manner, He could not be God. To be clear, we must understand that God's holiness balances His love, but everything God does is motivated by His love. It was His love that sent His Son to die on the cross for the sins of all mankind. Those individuals who have placed their trust in Him are the beneficiaries of His unending love (Romans 11:33). At times, it may seem as though God's actions towards me are unloving. Get the Bible teaches us that even His chastisement is motivated by His love for His children (Hebrews 12:5-6).

Recognizing that the Gardener always acts in a manner consistent with His nature, we must realize our responsibility is never to question the Vine-dresser. Instead, our responsibility is to willingly submit to whatever He deems best, recognizing that His will is always best and is always governed by His nature.

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

Scott W. Murphy, D.M.D., P.A

General Dentistry for the Family

We Love To See You Smile!

Always Accepting New Patients • Insurance Filed For You

Monday - Thursday 8-5
Friday 8-2
(828) 433-1223

341 East Parker Road, Morganton, NC 28655

MORGANTON, NC

1006 Burkemont Avenue • Morganton, NC 28655 • (828) 439-2373

A Standing Ovation

By Dennis Love
McDowell County



Have you ever received a standing ovation? Standing ovations are considered to be a special honor. Often they take place when the President of the United States enters the house chamber to deliver his State of the Union address to the nation. The audience members will stand when the President enters the room, and the standing ovation will continue until the President begins his speech. A standing ovation means: “An occurrence in which people at a play, speech, sporting event, etc., stand up and applaud to show enthusiastic approval or appreciation.” I have been blessed to receive a few standing ovations during pastor appreciation month in the churches I have pastored. It is indeed a very special honor to receive a standing ovation from God’s people.

Reportedly, the longest recorded standing ovation ever occurred on June 30, 1991. It took place at an opera house in Vienna. That night, people stood and enthusiastically applauded Spanish opera singer Placido Domingo during a performance of Othello. The standing ovation lasted for eighty minutes and 101 curtain calls.

In the summer of 1995, when baseball star Cal Ripken Jr. broke Lou Gehrig’s record for the most consecutive games played at 2,131, the crowd at Camden Yards in Baltimore stood and cheered Cal Ripken Jr. for twenty-two straight minutes.

It’s one thing to get a standing ovation from people, but can you imagine receiving a standing ovation from Jesus Christ? In the book of Acts, He did just that for a preacher named Stephen. Acts 7:55 says; “*But he, (Stephen) being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus STANDING on the right hand of God.*” Hebrews 10:12 tells us that Jesus sat down after He got to heaven. Hebrews 10:12 says; “*But this man, (Jesus) after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, SAT DOWN on the right hand of God.*”

Jesus gave Stephen a standing ovation. WHY? If you read Acts 7, you will see that Stephen boldly confronted the religious leaders of his day. In anger, they in return stoned Stephen to death. As Stephen was being attacked and was about to die, he looked up and saw Jesus standing up and said; “*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*” When Stephen’s spirit entered heaven, he received a standing ovation from Jesus. WOW, WHAT AN HONOR.

Whether others ever recognize what we do or not, the only accolade that will ever have any real, eternal value is the gracious approval of our Lord. It’s pretty awesome to think about when we enter heaven, we too could see Jesus giving us a standing ovation for standing boldly and firmly for Him in this life!!

Paul said in Ephesians 6:13; “*Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*” The word stand here means to remain firm and immovable, even when you are the smallest, or the youngest, or the last one standing. KEEP STANDING AND YOU COULD VERY WELL RECEIVE A STANDING OVATION FROM JESUS.

Dr. Dennis Love is the Associational Missions Strategist for the Blue Ridge Baptist Association in McDowell County. Dr. Love has been in full-time ministry work for 31 years. He and his wife, Vicki, have been married for almost 42 years, and they have lived in Marion for almost 8 years. They have two sons, four grandchildren and two step-grandchildren. He can be reached via email at: dlovebrba@yahoo.com

By Chastity Ogburn
Avery County



“*And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?*” Esther 4:14 These were the words of Mordecai to Esther when her family and people were in great danger of a plot from the king’s chief minister, Haman, to kill all the Jews. Mordecai believed Esther was placed into a royal position divinely by God to save their people. What great courage Esther had as she went to face the king. She trusted in God’s plan even if it meant death. She knew God was with her. The words “ for such a time as this” are what God has been speaking to my heart about in recent weeks. God has revealed to me we are in ministry “for such a time as this”. God called me to Anne Ministries in 2018 and now almost 4 years later I can look back and see how He has unfolded His plan and purposes for the ministry in His time and now “for such a time as this”. I was overjoyed the morning of June 24 when I found out the Supreme Court had overturned Roe v Wade. What an emotional morning. Many have been praying for almost fifty years for this day to come. It was a day of celebrating and praising God! Many lives will be saved because of this decision. Whether abortion is legal or illegal will now be up to each state. This is a huge victory for those that support life and those involved in pro-life ministries. Does this mean our work is over? Absolutely not! If anything there is now even more work to be done. Women will have a greater need for pregnancy support centers, especially those living in states where abortion has been made illegal. North Carolina will be a state that still offers abortion. The need here in our state will be to continue the work to offer support and life-saving options to women and their babies in our pregnancy centers. We saw God move and make abortion illegal on a federal level and now we need to be praying for our states. I am committing to pray for my own state, North Carolina to become a pro-life state that chooses to protect and defend the life of both mother and child. God has been blessing Anne Ministries in so many ways. We are excited to announce that God has answered our prayers by sending us a doctor that has a heart for the ministry and would like to volunteer her time to oversee the ultrasound services. We plan to begin to move forward with the necessary paperwork. We will make a more official announcement when we are ready to begin these services. We are so much closer to being able to offer this wonderful service to mothers in our community and surrounding communities. Praising God for answered prayers! God is so good and He is faithful. I can’t help but think He is bringing this all together “for such a time as this”. We want to thank those that pray for Anne Ministries. We thank the individuals and churches that help support the ministry financially. Thank you to those that donate items. Thanks to our volunteers that serve in the ministry. God has placed us all together “for such a time as this” to accomplish His plan and purpose. I thank God for all He has done and where He has brought the ministry in just a few short years. I know He has more work for us to do. I am so thankful to be serving Him and I trust Him as we move forward with what He has for us. God knew long before we knew He would have Anne Ministries and other pro-life ministries here “for such a time as this”. Trusting Him, Chastity To learn more about Anne Ministries please visit www.anneministries.com or like us on Facebook.

Chastity Anne Ogburn is a follower of Jesus Christ. She is the founder and director of Anne Ministries offering pregnancy support and recovery services in Avery County. She is the author of “His Grace Covers All”, a memoir inspired by God. Chastity and her husband, Jay, attend Emmanuel Baptist Church in Newland. They have six children and two grandsons. For more information or to contact Chastity visit anneministries.com or email anneministries@gmail.com

Check out our Website-www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook



Miller
Insurance Group, Inc.

AUTO•HOME•BUSINESS•LIFE

(828) 765-1711

WE ARE COMMITTED TO
DOING OUR BEST FOR YOU!
And Our Community

“INSURANCE is the most IMPORTANT thing
a person has because it protects him against
the loss of everything he has in the world.”
-H.O. Hirt, ERIE Founder



Erie
Insurance®

7548A Hwy 19E, Spruce Pine, NC • www.miller-insurance-group.com

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church

The Poor in Spirit

By Dr. Jack R. Hodges, Jr.
Burke County



At the very beginning of Jesus’ “Sermon on the Mount” found in the Gospel of Matthew, Chapters 5-7, you will find a wonderful and powerful introduction that has been called “the Beatitudes.” Each of these simple declarations begins with the word “blessed.” If you look carefully, you will see eight “Be” attitudes which Jesus declared are eight godly and spiritual attitudes that manifest both the working of the Holy Spirit and the characteristics of someone who is sold out to Jesus, His calling and His mission.

Jesus began His powerful sermon with these words, “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.*” Would you pause and consider who is the “poor in spirit” to which Jesus is referring? One might quickly assume that Jesus is referring to the poor, downtrodden, poverty-stricken, and war-torn people of this world. Truly, the Lord God cares for the ones who are forgotten and forsaken; for those cast-off, manipulated, and misused; or for those who find themselves with little or no resources on which to live. God will, without a doubt, be merciful to them—for He cares for every one of us.

But the phrase that Jesus uses gives us a clear hint of whom He is speaking to. One who is “*poor in spirit*” is the one who has recognized that they are poverty-stricken, helpless, and hopeless without God. This is none other than one who has relinquished and turned their lives over to Jesus. You are one of the “poor in spirit” when you have truly heard the Lordship claim of Jesus over your life and you have responded by faith, giving your heart and life to Jesus as Savior, Lord, and Master.

In ancient Israel, the term “Lord” (adonai in the Hebrew and rabboni in the Greek) was used often, signifying and declaring that one was relinquishing or deferring to the wisdom, power, or position of another. The two terms, lord and master, were almost synonymous with each other. A master was one who rightly claimed ownership or dominion over another. And in a world of slavery, a master or lord literally owned the individual and was given the right to determine everything that a slave did.

Godly people continue to work to remove the blight of human bondage and slavery in our world. But make no mistake! God claims ownership over His creation. Jesus Christ, God’s Son, and His sacrificial Lamb or Messiah, rightly claims ownership over us. But unlike ancient times, He draws near to us and invites us to willingly give up ownership of and sovereignty over our lives. He demands the position of Lord and Master because He is our only Savior. And to all who come to Him in simple, childlike faith and invite Him to be Lord, Savior, and Master, He claims as a spiritual child of faith. You are not His slave, but rather His spiritual child. And He invites and implores His beloved to serve Him completely and fully.

So when Jesus proclaimed, “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,*” He is not talking about poverty or lack of money or financial resources. He is referring to those who know just how spiritually bankrupt and empty they are without Him as Lord, Master, and Savior. The poor in spirit are those who know their need for God and are hopelessly dependent upon Him. The poor in spirit are those who realize that everything in their lives, their past, their present, and their future depends upon their absolute reliance upon the grace, mercy, and love of Christ Jesus. And because of that understanding, they choose to live each day; each moment under the absolute, comforting, loving, and powerful Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Jesus declared that those who are spiritually bankrupt and poor in spirit will “*inherit the Kingdom of God.*” Imagine that! The kingdom promises (salvation, forgiveness, reconciliation, freedom, and eternal life) are for anyone and everyone who knows how inadequate they are on their own; who throw their lives upon the mercy of the Lord; and who live out of desperate dependence upon the Lord. Blessed are you who choose Jesus!

Dr. Jack R. Hodges, Jr. is the Senior Pastor at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Morganton, Burke County. He has served as a pastor, a biblical counselor and a International Mission Board missionary.

Heritage

FUNERAL SERVICE &
CREMATORY

Service with Dedication & Compassion



Helping Families & Friends Honor Their Loved One.

With over 165 years of combined experience serving Burke, Catawba, and Caldwell County families, the owners and staff of Heritage Funeral Service and Crematory are committed to helping families plan a personal and meaningful ceremony that celebrates life, and begins the much-needed healing process.



Get in Touch
Our Team of
Professionals Are
Standing By to Help

We are now the new owners
of Mackie Funeral Service in
Granite Falls, 35 Duke St.

1507 E. Main St.
Valdese, NC 28690

Phone: (828) 874-0411
Fax: (828) 874-5390

Business Hours
Mon -Sun: 9am – 5pm
24 Hour Availability

Spruce Pine Tire Service

Since 1959

977 Oak Avenue

Spruce Pine, NC

828 765 2186

Quick and Quality Tire Service!



KUMHO TIRE



Benjamin Franklin
THE PUNCTUAL PLUMBER

If there's any delay, it's you we pay!

Servicing the Morganton Area

828-544-1776

www.benfranklinplumbingmorganton.com

100% Satisfaction Guaranteed

Straightforward Pricing® • Same Day Service

Fully Licensed and Insured • Drug Tested, Background-Checked Employees



CHECK OUT THESE GREAT OFFERS!

\$75 OFF

New Water Heater
Installation

\$50 OFF

ANY Drain Cleared

\$25 OFF

Any Repair

Benjamin Franklin
Plumbing, Inc. is a service mark of Benjamin Franklin Plumbing, Inc. ©2019 Benjamin Franklin Plumbing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Benjamin Franklin
Plumbing, Inc. is a service mark of Benjamin Franklin Plumbing, Inc. ©2019 Benjamin Franklin Plumbing, Inc. All rights reserved.

Benjamin Franklin
Plumbing, Inc. is a service mark of Benjamin Franklin Plumbing, Inc. ©2019 Benjamin Franklin Plumbing, Inc. All rights reserved.

License # BFO241

Each location independently owned and operated.

©2019 Clockwork IP, LLC

If there's any delay, it's you we pay!

By Steve Carter
Tupelo, Mississippi

With the regular baseball season over for the 12-year-olds, today’s outing featured the “cream of the crop.” One of my grandsons put up such good statistics, at all positions, (little bragging there) that he received invitations to play in these games.

The blistering temperatures waiting for the stalwart fans turned out to be of the record-setting kind. Stepping out of my truck in the parking lot caused me to stumble a little while pulling my water cooler with me. According to the thermometer on my dash, I headed into about 98-degree misery with no reason to doubt it.

Before I could reach the baseball diamond, I became a little “lightheaded.” This dizzy spell was brought to me courtesy of that day’s blistering heat and a recent concussion. About two weeks before the game, I wrecked my bicycle and landed, headfirst, on some good Mississippi asphalt. No serious or permanent damage. But thankfully, after watching me bounce off the road, a man pulled over to check, called for help, and stuck around until I became stable. But regardless of all that, my son and grandson expected me to be there, and it would have taken more than heat and concussion to keep me away!

After reaching the diamond, I set up to watch a little baseball. The opposing pitcher started the game with a fastball down the middle, and my grandson smacked it into the outfield for a leadoff double. The game turned out to be fast-paced, and the temperature rose just as quickly.

Despite my steady intake of water and staying in the shade, the lightheaded feeling soon returned, and I started to think about going to my truck and cooling off. Not wanting to miss any of the game, I held off taking a break while chatting with a lady sitting off to my right and a man slightly behind me. Conversation soon played out and I noticed them getting a little red in the face! The ball players were wilting and moving slower by the minute, as the heat wore them down as well. No doubt about it, we were getting into some dangerous temperatures!

Finally made it through the first game of the “double header” and both teams headed for their dugouts and some shade. While I walked around trying to feel better, I noticed the lady sitting to my right struggling to pull up from her chair, before walking toward the concession stand. The man sitting behind me continued to look at his phone and drink water while I paced.

About ten minutes into the break, I slumped back into my chair, just as movement off to my left caught my eye. I looked around and saw my son running by. I started getting up while asking, what’s going on? Making no effort to move, the guy behind me said, “I think somebody fell.” Never having been the type to idly stand by and expect “someone else” to handle problems, I started chasing my son around the building.

I soon rounded the corner to find the lady who had been sitting next to me, lying flat on her back, apparently passed out. A nurse from the crowd, applied ice to the victim while my son (a very experienced sports trainer) and I checked for blood or broken bones.

After a few minutes, she regained consciousness and had been propped up against a wall. With most of her color regained, I made sure she had plenty to drink, before hanging around a while to make sure she didn’t fall over again. We just chatted about the game and how strange it had been trying to regain consciousness. She thanked me to the point I became a little embarrassed about it and told her “You would have done it for me.”

Small acts of kindness like this, come naturally to me. I’ve always been quick to lend a hand, and I thank God for putting that desire in me. Many times, I have been plastered to the pavement after crashing my bicycle, or in need of help due to the inherent danger of living in a fallen world. I know how it feels to be ignored after a quick dismissive glance from people who apparently didn’t want to get involved in my problem. Less often, I experienced the wonderfully thankful feeling when people are front and center for me by dragging me and my bicycle out of the road or simply being there to help me through a tough day.

A scripture that’s especially near and dear to me comes to mind whenever I think about “letting someone else take care of it.” Matthew, the former tax collector, records how Jesus views those in need and how he would have us react to their problem. In the Gospel of Matthew 25: 35-40, Jesus makes it very simple to understand. “*Do kind stuff to stranger and friend alike, just like you were doing it for me.*”

Here are some questions worth considering the next time we are trying to decide if we want to get involved with something outside our “comfort zone”. What would we do if Jesus were bleeding on the road? Or maybe flat on his back passed out by the concession stand? Have a tough day Jesus? How can I help? Want to talk awhile?

Lend a hand, buy a meal, speak kindness to the downhearted. Go out of your way to ease someone’s burden. In your mind, put Jesus in the place of whoever can use your help. It will make your decision a lot easier. Be like Jesus.

Steve Carter is entering his 5th decade of Christian ministry. Steve has peddled across the continental United States twice. Mr. Carter's email is: Msroadkill@bellsouth.net Steve's email address is steve.parker@fochus.org.

Check out our Website-www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook



Hotter than Hell - No Regrets

By Dean Honeycutt
Mitchell County

My dad grew up in Burnsville and he told me the winters were a lot colder when he was a child. And he had to walk to school barefooted in three feet of snow. Well, that may have been an exaggeration. This is what our parents tell us when we complain about how difficult life is. We listen carefully to those stories that start, “when I was a kid.” All jokes aside dad did say the creek in front of his home would freeze over during the winter and stay frozen. They were able to take a team of horses and sled across the creek and the ice did not break and they never had an air conditioner because they did not need one. Needless to say, a lot has changed since then.

I live at nearly 3500 feet and most of the time it does not get very hot at our home. However, this summer has been hot. We did not have an air conditioner until a few years ago and we recently bought one for our son’s room because of the heat. I also did not burn as much wood this past winter. Across the Midwest, record-breaking temperatures have caused fires and warned people to avoid being outside during the hottest part of the day. People can have heatstroke when they are not hydrated and are exposed to extreme heat. Older folks around here say the rain does not soak into the ground like it used to. A lot of this seems to indicate that the weather patterns have changed.

We hear a lot about global warming causing the earth’s temperature to heat up. Global warming has been blamed for extreme heat, catastrophic storms, fires all over the world, and the ice caps melting in the Arctic. Whether we agree or disagree with global warming we can see a change in the weather.

I do not worry about global warming because God has promised us there will be seasons on earth until the end of time. Genesis 8:22 “*While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter; and day and night shall not cease.*” Global warming could be a cycle the earth goes through over a period. We can only measure the earth’s temperature as far back as we have the instruments to do so and the recordings of that information. However, according to the Bible diseases and catastrophic weather (the birth pains of Matthew 24:8) will be a part of end time events. So, could this extreme heat and global warming be connected to end-time events?

Absolutely, end-time events connected to the return of Christ, the rapture of the Church, and the end of time will include extreme heat and fire. God is a consuming fire. Every day we live we are one day closer to end time events. We certainly do not know the day or the hour Christ will return to earth, but we do know He is coming soon. Jesus said, “*Surely, I come quickly.*” Peter said the Lord promised His return but is patiently waiting for people to repent and be saved. And then the Lord will come in a day as a thief in the night.

It is interesting to me in this same passage in Second Peter chapter three that Peter describes how the elements (earth, air, water) will melt with fervent heat, and the present earth will be burned up. This is describing the final conflagration that will usher in the new heaven and new earth. This earth is cursed with sin and the Bible teaches it awaits its final judgment.

Yes, it is hot! But this is nothing compared to the judgment God will bring upon this earth. One day the unrepentant will stand at the great white throne their names are not found in the Book of Life and they are cast into the Lake of Fire experiencing a second death and forever separated from God. Man desires to preserve this earth, but that will never happen. The only way to avoid God’s judgment is through a relationship with Jesus Christ. Repent of your sin and trust in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross that paid the penalty for your sin. Follow Him as your Lord and Savior. I thank God for the new heaven and earth, and I look forward to living there one day soon.

I love you. In His name the amazing, wonderful name of Jesus.

Pastor Dean Honeycutt shepherds Snow Hill Baptist Church in Bakersville, NC. He may be reached at 828-385-0213, snowhillbaptist@gmail.com , or visit their website at www.snowhillbaptist.com.





CHOOSE BUBBA'S FOR ALL YOUR CATERING NEEDS



Inside dining with limited seating

- Churches
- Reunions
- Holidays
- Family Gatherings

828-678-3388

394 East Main St. Burnsville, NC

Sudoku Solution

1	4	7	2	6	9	5	8	3
2	8	6	1	3	5	4	7	9
3	9	5	7	4	8	2	6	1
9	2	8	6	7	4	3	1	5
7	3	4	5	2	1	6	9	8
5	6	1	8	9	3	7	4	2
4	5	2	9	8	7	1	3	6
6	7	9	3	1	2	8	5	4
8	1	3	4	5	6	9	2	7

Crossword Solution

M	A	S	T		D	A	T	E	S		L	A	N	D
A	B	L	E	M	I	S	H		P	O	O	R	E	R
J	O	E	L		S	H	A	D	Y		R	E	B	A
O	N	E		W	H	A	T			A	D	D	O	N
R	E	P	L	I	E	D		F	A	S	T			K
			A	L	S	O		I	M	P	O	S	E	
B	E	R	Y	L		W	A	R	E	S		E	L	I
O	W	E	S		U		S		N		R	E	S	T
Y	E	A		G	R	A	S	P		D	A	R	E	S
	S	P	R	I	G	S		L	A	I	N			No.277
S			A	R	E	A		A	R	E	G	L	A	D
H	A	D	I	D			U	N	I	T		E	R	E
A	M	O	S		W	A	N	T	S		A	P	I	N
M	A	L	I	C	E		D	E	E	P	N	E	S	S
E	D	E	N		T	H	O	R	N		T	R	E	E

COPYRIGHT 2022 BIBLEWORDGAMES.COM ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Obedient Heart Fellowship

Whence the Constitution?

By Jim Huskins
McDowell County



Certain activists who grew up enjoying the protections of the United States Constitution seem bent on discrediting and destroying everything that makes America unique. Others among us are determined to highlight and celebrate those delightful peculiarities of our government and culture which have made our system the envy of most of the world for generations. At the top of this list of oddities stand two documents that have been precious to true Americans for nearly 250 years: The Declaration of Independence and The United States Constitution. Apparently, reverence for these foundational expressions of what it means to be an American is no longer taught at any level of our education system. I view this as a fundamental failure and a threat to everything good about Western Civilization in general and the American Experiment in particular. I have lately been curious about the sources of the Declaration and the Constitution. Were our Founding Fathers so smart that they were able to craft radical departure from established governance through mere imagination, or were they able to draw from some pattern or guide? The surprising answer is that Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison, et al. read the Bible.

Fortunately for the diverse population of those Thirteen Colonies and related territories, our Founders did not view Bible study in the manner prescribed by almost every modern church faction. My understanding of their specific religious convictions is not clear, but I see evidence that they did not approach Scripture from the perspective that the “meat” of God’s Word begins with the book of Matthew. They apparently understood that the inescapable context for the final one-fourth of the Bible—that portion that begins with Matthew and ends with Revelation—is the first three-fourths of the book. They began at the beginning. Otherwise, they might never have been exposed to the concept of God-given, unalienable rights. They read in the Torah—the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy—God’s guidelines for living with each other and for approaching an unapproachably holy Creator. Jefferson and his compadres recognized that procedures that enable people to “love God and their neighbor as their self” represent an ideal framework for personal and civic life. They did not have to invent some remarkable pattern for human interaction and governance. That work had been done. God revealed through Moses that His systems are both perfect and permanent. All the Founders had to do was distill God’s instructions for living into some format that could be embraced by people of every religion and no religion. They performed that task with remarkable grace and clarity.

Early Americans including the Pilgrims, legislatures of most of the New England colonies, and the founders of every Ivy League university held up the Torah and the rest of the Hebrew Scriptures as a divine pattern for life and liberty. Many of those once-revered institutions of higher learning adopted a Hebrew phrase as part of their official seal. The website, aish.com, points out that Yale’s seal includes the inscription “URIM V’TUMMIM.” This was taken from the description found in the book of Exodus of the breastplate worn by the Levitical High Priest. Historian Abraham Katsch says that interest in the Hebrew Language was widespread at the time of the American Revolution. Several of the Founders were aided in their exposure to Torah by having a working knowledge of Hebrew. The Liberty Bell inscription, “Proclaim Liberty Throughout the Land unto all the inhabitants thereof” is taken from Leviticus 25:10. If Ben Franklin and John Adams had gotten their way, the Great Seal of the United States would have presented Moses parting the Red Sea. The inscription on that seal would have read, “Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God.”

Though many have tried, it is impossible to deny that the foundational principles undergirding American Democracy are taken directly from Torah. I cite aish.com for three unmistakable Hebrew contributions to America’s founding.

First is the aforementioned recognition that human rights are God-given and, therefore, immune to human revocation. The rights to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” are enshrined in Torah. Those are the conditions described in Deuteronomy 28:1-14. Such “rights” under the Sinai Covenant are contingent on obedience to God’s instructions. The Constitution includes similar strictures regarding our Civil Legal Code.

The second tenet adopted from Torah is the still-radical concept of limited government. One of the core threads of the Hebrew Exodus is that God hates tyranny. He wants all His children to live in freedom and enjoy the fruits of their labor. Thomas Paine quoted the Hebrew Prophet, Samuel, when claiming that God opposes governments based on the monarchy. Hebrew history affirms that humans are not capable of wielding unlimited power. Torah teaches that if the members of a society will conduct their lives in the manner taught by God, then their nation will require little that could be described as “government intervention.”

The third Torah-inspired tenet is the notion of a social contract. The Mosaic Covenant only works when both God and Humankind hold up their respective sides of the arrangement. God promises blessings and protection; but in return, He expects obedience to His moral code. John Locke articulated the idea of a “social contract” as an agreement of the populace to grant limited, government power in exchange for a guarantee that government will protect certain rights.

We owe a national debt to the Hebrew Scriptures. Our second president, John Adams, claimed that the Hebrews have contributed more to human civilization than any other nation. The American Revolution and the establishment of our Constitutional-based Democratic Republic represent the second-most-radical departure from the status quo in all of history. I am grateful that those who shepherded the establishment of our Great Nation were wise enough to find inspiration and guidance in that most blessed redirection of the course of human events which is detailed in the first five books of the Bible.

Obedient Heart Fellowship meets at 10:00 each Sabbath (Seventh Day) in the facilities of New Covenant Church in Christ. 2460 US 221 Business N. In Marion, NC. Call for info. 828-460-7913.

Jim & Beverly Huskins are members of Obedient Heart Fellowship.

FM 104.7

REAL COUNTRY

WICYK

AM 940 • WKYK.COM

LISTEN: 11A.M.
EVERY SATURDAY
GOSPEL PREACHING

Brought To You By:
YANCEY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
Burnsville, North Carolina 28714

Roan Mountain Baptist Church

“God’s Tear Bottles”

By Russell McKinney
Mitchell County

“You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?” (Psalm 56:8 N.K.J.V.)

Life can sure make us cry. We lose loved ones. Disease strikes. Tragedy occurs. We suffer setbacks. We get our hearts broken. Sometimes we bring the hurt on ourselves because of our poor choices, but other times we get hurt through absolutely no fault of our own. Regardless of how our hurts come, though, oftentimes they result in tears.

That’s why it’s so wonderful to know that we have a God who loves us enough to not only collect our tears and put them into His bottle but also somehow record them in His book. If God doesn’t do these things, why would He have inspired David to pen the words of Psalm 56:8? The clear implication is that God wants us to know that He does these things.

Before David says, “*God, put my tears into Your bottle*” he first says, “*God, You number my wanderings.*” The Hebrew word translated as “number” is *sapar* and while it can mean to proclaim, declare, or tell, its primary meaning is to number or count. For example, it is first used in Genesis 15:5 when God tells Abram to count the stars to see if he can “number” them, and it’s also used in reference to the census whereby David “numbered” the people of Israel (2 Samuel 24:10). Therefore, the teaching of Psalm 56:8 is that God was numbering (keeping count of, keeping a record of) the events of David’s life. Furthermore, since the heading over the Psalm tells us that David penned the Psalm when he was in a very unpleasant situation in the Philistine city of Gath, the “wanderings” of which he speaks surely include times of trouble.

As for David asking God to put his tears into His bottle, did you know that archaeologists have unearthed bottles from the ancient world that were actually used as “tear bottles”? In Biblical times in the East, when a person was sick, in pain, or distress, that person’s friend could visit him and bring along a tear bottle. If the person being visited started crying, the friend would open up the tear bottle and catch some of the tears in it. Later on, whenever the visited person died, the friend would take the tear bottle to the grave site and leave it there as a memorial to commemorate the sad event that had produced the tears.

This is the custom that David has in mind when he says to God, “Put my tears into Your bottle.” In the word picture that David is painting, he is the one who is crying and God is the one who is visiting him. David says to God, “*Put my tears into your bottle*” because he wants God to remember the moment that life reduced him to the tears. Again, in the specific context of the Psalm, that moment came when David found himself in perilous trouble in Gath (1 Samuel 21:10-15).

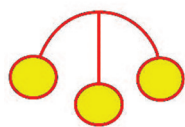
Now, as beautiful as this picture of God collecting His peoples’ tears is, it gets even better. I say that because Revelation 21:4 tells us that in eternity God will wipe away the Christian’s every tear. I’ll admit that I used to read that verse and was puzzled by it. What puzzled me was the whole idea of tears having any part of the blissful afterlife the Bible promises Christians. Surely we won’t be shedding any tears of pain in eternity, right? Well, how then will we have tears for God to wipe away?

The answer is that they will be tears we have cried during our earthly lives. You see, God will pull out all those tear bottles that He has for each of us, the bottles in which He has captured the tears we cried on earth. Then He will open those bottles, set those tears free again, and once and for all wipe them away as we stand there and watch Him do it. Isn’t that one of the Bible’s most beautiful promises for the saved believer?

Like David, we’ve all shed some tears at various times in our lives. Some of the tears were tears of joy, but most of them were tears of pain. Many of us have even asked God during our times of pain, “Lord, don’t You care?” But the words of Psalm 56:8 are the Bible’s proof that He does care. As a matter of fact, He cares enough to collect our tears and save them for that eternal day when He will wipe them away for good.

I don’t know about you but that helps me. It encourages me, comforts me, and makes me long for the afterlife all the more. It also makes me wonder just how many tear bottles God has with my name on them. I’m guessing there are more than I know because He has bottles to commemorate times that I’ve forgotten about long ago. Weirdly, the more bottles He has for a person the greater the celebration will be when all those tears get wiped away. So, if you know Jesus as your Savior, and you’ve done some crying in your life, hang in there. One day you and the Lord will have your own private party as all those tears become mere memories of painful times the likes of which you will never experience again.

Russell McKinney lives in the English Woods area of Spruce Pine and serves as the pastor of Roan Mountain Baptist Church in Bakersville



Mountaineer Jewelry



12513 226 HWY Spruce Pine,
NC 28777 • 828-765-7651

Mon-Fri

9-5pm

Saturdays

9-2pm

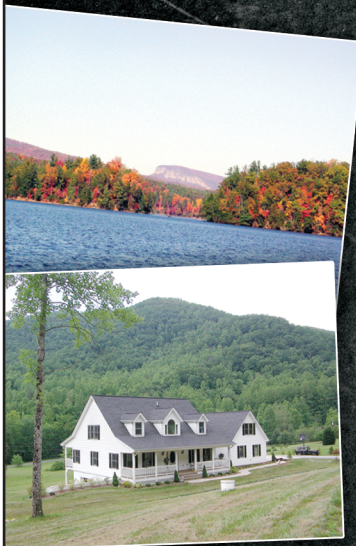
- Gold, Silver, Diamond, Gemstones
- Bracelets, earrings, rings & necklaces
- Showcases full of fine jewelry
- New, pre-owned, Estate, GIA certified diamonds
- We also offer In-house jewelry repairs and custom Jewelry
- Gently used luxury handbags....Louis Vuitton, Gucci, YSL... with certificates of authenticity



Like us on facebook
@ Mountaineer Pawn Shop

WHITSON REALTY

"The Broker That Gets Results"



HOMES • FARMS
LAKEFRONT • LOTS
ACREAGE • COMMERCIAL



South of 1-40
3800 Sugar Hill Rd.
Marion, NC 28752

Dennis J. Whitson, Broker | 1999 Realtor of the Year

(828) 738-3540



More Choices, Less Hassle!

LifeStore MEDICARE
INSURANCE & health benefits

151 Cranberry Street, Newland • 828-737-0679 • lifestoreinsurance.com

How to Pay for Long Term Care

By Steve Gaito
McDowell County

I specialize in retirement planning and one of the greatest risks that people face is a Long-Term Care event. The Chance of needing Long-Term care is 70%. Think about this if you were getting on a plane that had a 70% chance of flying most would not get on that plane. For that matter, if it were 30% most would not. The reality is that most people just don't think about it. I have had to work with many of my clients that are dealing with their parents and the cost of care. With inflation out of control so is the cost of care for Long-Term Care. Most people cared for a family in the home and today it is still the most common form of care, but that does come with a cost. Home health care is up 15% from a year ago and to have even homemaker services exceed \$52,000 in NC. A semi-private (fancy word for roommate) room is almost \$90,000 a year and in 10 years is expected to be more than \$120,000. With many people needing 2-4 years of care it is easy to expect that you will spend between \$250,000 and \$500,000 for your care in retirement. The question is how you will pay for this. In the past Long-Term Care has been like your homeowner's insurance. It is a use it or lose it plan. You pay into it until you either can't afford it or you pass away. There is also a huge risk of your premium increases when you can least afford it. Today I see Long Term Care being funded in two different ways depending on the resources and needs of my clients. The first way is asset-based Long-Term Care. This is a Life insurance policy that earmarks and leverages money for your care. It can be anything from 2 years of coverage to a lifetime. It can be for a single or a married couple and if you do not use it the death benefit which is usually like the premium paid is disbursed to the beneficiary tax-free. As an example, a couple of 65 and 64 can fund their plan with 5 payments of \$50,000 and have around \$72,000 each for life to cover Long Term care expenses and if they never lose it the death benefit would be almost \$300,000. Some people do not have the resources or there is a need for income now. Some indexed annuities provide current income and if you have 2 of the 6 qualifying activities of daily living your benefit may be increased. So, if the same couple put \$200,000 in an annuity and they were receiving \$10,000 in income they could see a benefit near \$15,000 for up to 5 years. It is not as great of a benefit as asset-based care but is still more income which will help in a time of need.

What I have found is the best way is to look at all your retirement needs and resources and plan according to what you need and can afford. Having some long-term care protection is better than none. I provide a free no-obligation consultation and will help you understand what your best option is for covering the cost of care. To schedule, your appointment contact Morgan at morgan.wylie@retireerm.com or (828) 559-0299.

Steven W Gaito is a certified financial planner, owner of Faith Based Health Care and Retirement Resource Management, National Speaker on the topic of Social Security optimization, quoted 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. Has provided financial planning for missionaries through the International Mission Board.



Reaching the Unreached:
Going into All the World

By Rev. John B. Sorensen

Have you ever wondered why Jesus told us to go into all the world and preach the Gospel in every nation? Every day, we encounter people in our own communities who need to hear the hope that we have – the hope in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Isn't the task to reach those in our hometowns large enough?

The truth is, both are equally important. The Great Commission, as outlined in Matthew 28:19-20, includes people as close to us as our families and friends and it includes people on the other side of the globe. Jesus told us in Acts 1:8 that we are to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the earth. This covers our hometown (Jerusalem), our region (Judea), regions closest to us but of a different culture (Samaria), and the rest of the world.

No place and no one may be excluded. We don't have the option to choose one or the other. God's command covers both, and our responsibility is to share the Gospel with people at home and around the world.

A 2015 Pew Research Center study estimated about one-third of the population (2.3 billion people) claims to be Christian. But most of these believers are concentrated in certain regions. The Joshua Project estimates that 3.29 billion people (42%) still live in areas that are considered unreached – that means, less than 2% of the population claim to be Christian (www.joshuaproject.net).

The bottom line is...we still have work to do. Most people in these unreached regions simply will not hear about the hope they can have in Christ unless someone goes to them. There are too few Christians within their region for the Good News to effectively spread. If the Gospel is to be shared with every nation, tribe, and tongue, we must go.

Now, not everyone is called to be an overseas missionary. But that doesn't mean we aren't called to share the Gospel. We are all called to share with those in our network of relationships. Next, we are all called to give and support those who go to places we cannot go. And ultimately, all of us are called to pray for the work of the Gospel.

With our transient society, many of the nations are right in our own backyard. They are coming to us. We can be ready to share with them the best news they have ever heard!

What are you doing to reach the world with the Gospel? Begin today by praying for those who do not have the opportunity to hear. Then ask God how He would like you to respond. Are you called to go? Are you called to support those who go? Maybe you called to train others? Get involved in evangelism in your local church. Reach out to internationals in your local community. Maybe someone you meet has been praying for someone to share how they can have hope for eternity. Perhaps God wants to answer that prayer through you!

Rev. John B. Sorensen, D.D. is the President/CEO of Evangelism Explosion International, headquartered in Arden, N.C. EE has been a leader in equipping Christians to share their faith for more than 50 years. For more free tips and resources, visit evangelismexplosion.org.



Check out our new Website-www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook

See Us on Facebook

McClure Construction

GRAVEL YARD.



Dyed Red Mulch
Pine and Hardwood Mulch
Top Soil
Now Offering Wood-waste
Recycling Stumps, Limbs, Brush
Call for Dump Fees



Delivery Available



Decorative Gravel
Washed Stone
Sand
Commercial Gravel
Public Welcome

12715 Hwy 226 S., Spruce Pine
(828) 766-6169

It Was One of Those Naughty Flings

By Dr. James L. Snyder
Ocala, Florida



Busy weeks seem quite the norm for me. When I think things have slowed down, I turn a corner and things speed up again. So it seems like I never really get a break.

This past week, for instance, was quite busy, and it was even busier because The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage was sick and could not go anywhere. Not even shopping!

That was no problem. I just stepped up and took the week as it came.

It was Thursday when things began to catch up with me. By afternoon, I thought I had finished all my tasks and was on my way home. Then, I passed Publix and remembered I was to pick up something for the wife.

I turned around and went back, parked, and went into the store. I was dragging my feet a little and thought it would be nice to sit down and relax with a cup of coffee.

Then I remembered this store had free coffee, so I went and got a nice cup of hot coffee. I headed to the pharmaceutical area, where they had a couple of chairs snuggled back in the corner so nobody could see me. I thought it would be a great place to go, take a breath and drink some nice hot coffee.

On my way, I passed the bakery, and lo and behold; there were some fresh Apple Fritters. I have never seen Apple Fritters look so delicious in all my life. But, because of my strict diet, someone in our house has restricted this in my diet. I looked at them, and I just felt them looking back. I could feel them smiling at me, and I must say, I tried to walk away. I really did try to walk away, but I could not.

Finally, out of desperation, I purchased two Apple Fritters. After all, nobody would know, and I could sit back in the corner and enjoy coffee and Apple Fritters. Who would ever know about this naughty fling of mine?

Then, out of the clear, I heard somebody say, "Hello, Pastor Snyder. I haven't seen you in a while. How are you doing?"

Oh boy, my fling has been unflinged. This woman was one of my wife's friends. "I hope you're enjoying your Apple Fritters. Tell your wife I said hello."

At the time, I did not know how much trouble I was in. I just may forget she ever told me to say anything to my wife.

"Is that you?" I heard someone else say. "Is that you, Pastor Snyder?"

Once again, someone saw me.

"Haven't seen you for a long time. I hope you're doing well."

I smiled back and said everything was going okay.

She smiled and said, "Enjoy your Apple Fritter; it looks very delicious. By the way, tell your wife I said hello."

Two in a row has to be the limit. So, I sat back in the corner, sipped my coffee, and took another bite of that delicious Apple Fritter. I was convinced that my incognito was well guarded at this time.

For my wife's friends to catch me eating an Apple Fritter is quite dangerous. I finished my Apple Fritters, got up, went out to my vehicle, and started on my way home. What a day it turned out to be.

I went into the house, put the groceries on the table, and headed for my easy chair. As I got to my chair, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage stepped in, greeted me, and said, "Did you have a good day?"

One thing I know about my life is that she always asks "loaded questions." I never know exactly what is behind any of these questions, so I need to tread very softly.

"Yes, my dear," I said as cheerfully as I could muster at the time. "I think I had a good day even though it was rather busy." So I flashed a smile back at her and thought it was over.

I got situated in my chair, and she came back into my room in a few moments and said, "Did you see any of my friends at Publix today?"

Now I was on edge. No matter what I say at this point, I will be in trouble.

"Yes," I said. Then I mentioned the two women I met at Publix. "They all asked me to tell you they were thinking about you."

"Is that all they asked?"

Being a little nervous, I did not quite understand what was behind that question. "We just greeted each other, and that was about it."

She then left the room and went back to the kitchen, and I sighed a profound sigh of relief. I honestly believed that I had got away with it.

Then I heard her say, "Both ladies texted me and told me they saw you at Publix."

The way my wife looked at me, I just knew she knew my secret. My problem was, how would she use this secret against me, and when?

As I was pondering my current dilemma, I thought of one of my favorite scripture. Proverbs 3:5-6, *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."*

I have faced many situations where I certainly needed God to direct me out of a problem.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, 1471 Pine Road, Ocala, FL 34472. He lives with his wife in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 352-687-4240 or e-mail jamessnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com

**Check out our new Website-www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook**

Why Do We Need Each Other

By Christopher L. Scott
Moses Lake, Washington



Late one Sunday evening I heard a loud hissing sound coming from my garage. As I walked into the garage I saw water pouring from the corner of the ceiling onto the garage floor. The hissing sound became louder as I entered the garage so I walked outside and saw that a sprinkler valve had broken loose. Water was shooting straight up out of the valve and was contacting the underside of my roof, which happened to be the same location where an air vent was placed to allow for the attic airflow.

Water was gushing from the sprinkler valve, into my attic, and from the attic into the garage. I frantically tried to turn the water valve off that was on the side of the house, but the water valve didn't work. So I went to the street water valve and tried to turn it off there. But the valve was rusted and I couldn't move it. I didn't know what to do. I was new to the area and had no family that lived nearby.

But I had been meeting people at church each Sunday. A regularly attending church member, Sharon, lived several blocks away from me. She was riding her tricycle down my street when she recognized me from church and saw me frantically trying to stop the water from damaging my home!

She called her husband and asked him to come over and help me. He arrived with the biggest pipe wrench and crowbar I had ever seen. He used his tools and the leverage provided by them to turn off the water at the street.

The lesson I learned is that as a body of believers we can help each other if we meet together. And we are told to participate in community together in Hebrews 10:23-25, *"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together; as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near"* (NASB). By meeting together we can *"encourage one another and build up one another"* (1 Thessalonians 5:11). And that only happens when we see one another in fellowship.

Who knows how much damage would have been done to my house if I hadn't been attending church each Sunday and getting to know people there. It was because of the few Sundays I had been attending church in our new city that I had met Sharon. And because I had been attending church I was given help when I desperately needed it.

Christopher L. Scott, a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary, is a pastor and freelance writer. Learn more about his writing ministry at ChristopherLynnScott.com.



Services Offered

- 24 Hour Nursing Support**
- Pain and Symptom Management**
- Certified Nursing Assistant Services**
- Respiratory Therapy**
- Social Work Support**
- Bereavement Services**
- Palliative Care Program**
- Volunteer Support**
- Chaplain Services**
- Physician and FNP Visits**
- Ongoing Education**
- Support and Education for Loved Ones**

**For more information about our services or if
You would like to make a referral call 828-765-5677**

CAROLINA



FLOORING

A Christian Owned Business

TILE • LAMINATE • HARDWOOD

LVT • LINOLEUM • CARPET

906 W UNION ST

MORGANTON, NC 28655

Telephone: (828) 475-1192

Voted...

2020's FAVORITE FLOORING DEALER!

Now Selling CABINETRY!

SPEND \$4,000

WHICH INCLUDES INSTALLATION

GET FREE TV

FINANCING AVAILABLE*

WITH ANY CARPET PURCHASE

WHICH INCLUDES INSTALLATION

Get FREE Pad

* Choice of FREE TV or 0% for 12 Months. Not valid with any other offer. Mention this ad Expires 12/31/2021

Can not be combined with any other offer or special installation must be included in purchase. Mention this ad Expires 12/31/2021

FARM BUREAU

INSURANCE

Auto • Home • Life • Health • Banking

#1

AUTO INSURER

IN THE

NATION

Again!

CRASH NETWORK

INSURER

Per CRASH Network's 2020 & 2021 Insurer Report Card's Polling of Collision Repair Shops



828-652-4525

Kenneth W Day

FSS, LUTCF

Agency Manager

ncfbins.com

*North Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company "Farm Bureau" Insurance of North Carolina, Inc. "Southern Farm Bureau" Life Insurance Company, Jackson, MS *An independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Out of town? You can still check out our new Website www.brcnews.com And find us on Facebook



Compassionate Care

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

Managing your illness so you can manage your life.

828-682-9675



A Lighted Pathway-Life’s Light

By Glenda Ward
McDowell County

God repeatedly revealed Himself with a resounding “*I AM*”. “*I AM hath sent me unto you*” (Exodus 3:14). Jesus also describes Himself as the “*I AM*” (John 4:26; 13:19-20). Jesus proclaimed His unity of nature and equality as that with God. “*I and my Father are One*” (John 10:30). Every good gift and every perfect gift are from above and comes down from the Father of Light which is who He is. Subtle but powerful. Light is required for anything to grow, and Light clarifies the human Spirit. Jesus saying, “*I Am the Light of the World*” (John 8:12), is the outer recognition of His Father’s creation and presence, and the inward dwelling of the Holy Spirit. This is how we know our Father and why we can walk and follow Jesus. It is through Jesus we are exposed to the Light of our sins. Christ Jesus is the Light of the World. God is Light, and Christ is our Lord, the image of our invisible God – in human form. One sun in our universe lightens the whole world; so, does One Son, Christ, enlighten the whole world. God never changes.” “*I WILL ALWAYS BE WHO I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN.*” (Referencing Exodus 3:14).

Wouldn’t it be grand to have a Lighted Path in front of us that shows us where to go, what to do, and what to say? Do you know we do? Anyone can have that Lighted Path! Jesus is the Light of the World and the closer we stay to Him studying His Word and talking to Him through prayer; the brighter our Lighted Pathway shines. If this is done regularly daily, our pathway is lit. This does not mean we always know exactly what to do at any given time. What it does mean is, that if we wait on Him, He will guide us into the path of His Will. If we move ahead of Him and do not seek His Will – if we make decisions and choices on our own – we will end up in darkness. Whoever will follow Jesus will not walk in darkness, but will have the Light of life (Reference John 8:12). It takes our Lord to keep our lamp burning and our pathway lit. Our God turns our darkness into Light. Only Jesus can line up our life with God. This is the most important thing that is granted in life. We should put Jesus Christ above all else.

When we accept Jesus Christ as God’s Son, that He was crucified on the cross at Calvary and died for our sins, there becomes a change in us. A new transformation overcomes us. We are transformed from the inside out, being made a new creatures in Christ. In this, Jesus becomes our Lighted Path. He moves us in God’s direction to wash our minds and soul of all life’s impurity. He eases all our fears. Take Heed to God’s call; take advantage of God’s gift to love. Love the Giver more. Come to know Jesus; give up your problems to the One who solves them all. In Scripture Jesus speaks from God, for God, and as God. If we do not come to Jesus knowing Him as God’s Son and accepting Him as the One and Only Savior of the world ...apart from Jesus, we live in darkness. Jesus is not of this world. He did nothing of Himself; but only as God the Father taught Him. To a world stumbling about in the darkness of sin, Christ offers Himself as a constant guide. Light is also symbolic of holiness.

In John 8:29 Jesus says, “*I do always those things that please Him*” (The Father). When this was said to the Jews, Scripture says many believed in Him, and in verse 31 He is saying, “*If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed,*” meaning we shall know the Truth. If we believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, then the Truth will make us free. We are to do and follow that which has been seen with the Father. Jesus’ apostles saw, followed, and knew Jesus. As authors of Books in the Bible, they had first-hand knowledge and experience of knowing Jesus. Chapter 8, verse 42 of the Book of John Jesus says, “*If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but He sent Me.*” The Light of Christ is the brightness of God shining through on the innermost part of the human soul. People see us following Jesus’ teachings in our life. They see that we know God. Only through a relationship with Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior can the dark parts of our hearts beam bright. The Light of the World paid for our freedom. He died on the cross so we can go free and not be held accountable for our sins we committed.

Light prevents aimless drifting. Boat captains need navigational lights to avoid running into shore or other vessels at night. A lack of preparation could be deadly. Just as ships follow lights from the lighthouse to ensure safe passage, so do we rely on The True Light. Jesus’ death broke through the darkness, lighting the way for us. God’s Word, enlightening us through the Holy Spirit helps us to understand and remember when we need His wisdom to steer us in the right direction. Prayer serves doubly as a lifeboat and lighthouse. Throughout our everyday lives is an open line of communication that was not available to Old Testament believers. From the beginning The Light has been present, He is the Word. Everything Light touches, He is a part of.

John was Jesus’ best friend, “the one Jesus loved.” He was the only one of the twelve disciples at the cross when Jesus died. John knew who Jesus was, both on earth as his friend and as his God made in the flesh. Jesus The True Light that gives Light to everyone was coming into the world, He was in the world, and even though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognize Him! Do you know Him?

“*If we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin*” (John 1:7). Through Christ, we have access to the Father. Our perspective brightens when touched by the Light – Jesus Christ. Jesus shines His Light into the cracks of our hearts that harbor sin. And once revealed, the conviction of the Holy Spirit instructs and guides us to repent. We grow in the knowledge of His Truth as He sanctifies our hearts to reflect His Light. Jesus came so we could experience the



power of the Holy Spirit. God’s loving embrace through the wisdom of His Word and our relationship with Him sheds His Light through us onto others living in darkness in the world. It means being so taken with Him that we join ourselves to Him. Light affects everything. It permeates Truth into every situation. It is True Love. Ruth Graham-Lotz once stated, “Only God can empower us to love, the people He purposefully places in our lives, well.” We as Christians are a Light in the darkness – a servant of God who is being watched, who gives off Light ...a very distinct message in which hardly a word needs to be said. How we live our life says a lot about what we understand and believe are most important.

Glenda Ward is a member of Grand View Baptist Church in McDowell County. She is the mother of five grown children. Glenda is a Christian writer/author of “*Something to Think About*” – weekly Christian Articles. She writes Church Programs & Bulletins, VBS Material, Christmas and Easter Programs; all material based on the KJV of the Bible. Also testing the field in tributes, individual memorial writings, etc.

Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:17-21



Rick Hood Lisa Hood Dotty Kirksey Jimmy Kirksey

Our Family Serving Yours Since 1949

1011 South Sterling Street • Morganton, NC 28655
(828) 437-3211 • www.Sossomanfh.com



Help Keep Siblings Together While in Foster Care

There’s nothing like childhood memories made with siblings.

Call for more information on becoming a Licensed Foster or Adoptive Parent in Mitchell County
828-688-2175
Mitchell County Department of Social Services



Jamie Miller, CPA

Jamie M. Miller, CPA, PLLC

1136 Greenwood Road
Spruce Pine, NC 28777

phone: 828.765.4400
fax: 828.765.4880



30 Fleming Ave
Marion, NC 28752

phone: 828.652.6777
fax: 828.652.6755

jamie@highcountrycpa.com
www.highcountrycpa.com



THE HOSPICE YOU
CHOOSE MAKES
A DIFFERENCE.

Choose the one with:

- Local staff
- Hospice and palliative care trained staff
- Admissions 24 hours a day every day
- Same-day admissions
- Hospice inpatient unit
- Palliative care in all settings
- Grief counseling provided through Blue Ridge Hope
- Kids Path™



GIVE US A CALL TODAY! (828) 245-0095
YOU WILL BE GLAD YOU DID! (800) 218-CARE (2273)



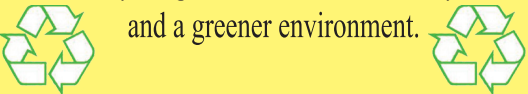
1116 Rutherford Road • Marion, NC 28752
(828) 652-7023

Open Monday - Saturday
6:30 - 11am Breakfast
11am - 9pm Lunch & Dinner
(Winter Hours - Close at 8:30pm)
Since 1971, Serving Marion
and the Surrounding Communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you!!

Bantam Chef proudly practices and promotes
recycling for a cleaner community
and a greener environment.

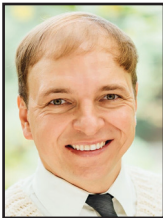
Ask about our ongoing *recycling* program
and how you can participate in our contributions
to *Hospice of McDowell County*.



We serve
SOFT ICE CREAM
Cones • Shakes • Sundaes
Floats & Boats

The Most Creative Creation

By Art Dmytriyeu
Yancey County



What if someone said that the Earth came to exist because of the creative power of supernatural intervention? Due to the variety of different theories of the creation of the world and the whole Universe, the subject of the origin of our existence creates confusion in the minds of millions. However, the fact that there was a beginning for the world today has a point of no argument. Let's check some facts about the creation of the world, and humanity in particular. The foundation for this topic will be the book of origins in the Bible called Genesis.

The Bible's account of God creating the Earth is more than just a documentation of the Earth's divine beginnings. It tells us who we are, where we came from, and what amazing things God has planned for humanity. The very first verse of the Holy Bible says: *"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth"* (Genesis 1:1 KJV), and *"the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."* (Genesis 1:2 KJV). The very next phrase, *"God said"*, is mentioned in this chapter ten times! Later in the Bible, the psalmist will confirm it with the words: *"He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast."* (Psalm 33:9 KJV).

As we follow along the narrative of the first chapter of Genesis, we read through the days of Creation, first, second, third, and all the way to the sixth, where God created something different. *"God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:"* (Genesis 1:26 KJV), *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* (Genesis 1:27 KJV). Further, we read: *"... the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."* (Genesis 2:7 KJV). So, God made us: with consciousness; to be creative; to exercise authority and with the ability to choose. Because of this, today, we are free moral beings. It is also the reason why the whole human race is corrupt today. They had made, and they keep making the wrong choices.

One thing that God did not create – is evil! The Bible calls it *"the mystery of iniquity"* (2 Thessalonians 2:7 KJV). So, everyone decides today either for good (or for God) or for evil. However, Lord Jesus has redeemed human nature and He gives us help to overcome in time of need. Everyone who lives and believes in Him will not die but will have eternal life (John 11:26; 3:16)!

Finally, let's look at one more important element of Creation – the Sabbath Day! The Bible says that *"on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."* (Genesis 2:2–3 KJV). He not just rested but He blessed the Sabbath day. Later, Mark will write the famous Words of Jesus: *"The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore, the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."* (Mark 2:27–28 KJV). Praise God for the Sabbath!

It is so important to know God as our Creator. The entire week of Creation portrays the divine plan for humanity. The Lord wants relationships with His creation. So, that all creatures of our God and King lift up their voice and sing: Alleluia! It is amazing, that individually we can understand our place in the complete design of the Divine Providence!

Dear reader, it's up to you what to believe: the Big Bang theory, or evolution from monkeys, but the Word of God, that never changes, calls you and me to come to the Lord of Love who created you for Him and His Glorious Kingdom! Will you accept His invitation and receive His story today? May the Lord Bless you as you do!

Pr. Art Dmytriyeu is originally from Siberia. He has traveled the world in Evangelism and pastoral ministry. He serves as a pastor in North Carolina, holds a Master of Divinity degree, and is currently a Doctor of Ministry candidate. More information at: <https://burnsvillenc.adventistchurch.org/pastors-blog>

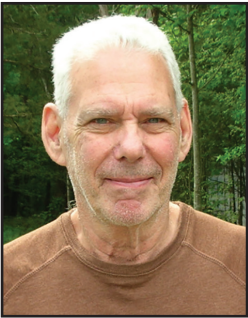
Beam
FUNERAL SERVICE
& CREMATORY



2170 Rutherford Rd. • Marion, NC 28752
828-559-8111 • Fax 828-559-8112
www.beamfuneralservice.com
beamfuneralservice@gmail.com

God Called His Son Israel

By Robert Garner
Rutherford County



God calls His Son, “Israel”. Hosea 11:1; “*When “Israel” was a child, then I Loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.*” An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream giving him a message to take the young child Jesus and flee to Egypt. This was to escape the order by Herod to kill all the children two years old and younger. Mathew 2:14, 15; “*when he [Joseph] arose, he took the young child and his mother by night into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.*”

National Israel came out of Egypt as did Christ Jesus. Isaiah 49:1-3, “*listen, O isles, unto me; and harken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name. And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword *,in the shadow of his hand he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me; and said unto me, Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.*”

Christ Jesus is He that spiritually has a sharp two-edged sword* out of His mouth referenced in Revelation 1:16 & 19:15. The sword is the Word of God, the Gospel.

Abraham was the father of many political nations including National Israel to which salvation would come. Genesis 17:4, “*my covenant [promise] is with thee, and thou shall be a father of many nations.*” This promise of salvation was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Romans 4:13, “*for the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.*” The righteousness of faith is given to those in every nation who believe salvation can only be given and “*justified by the faith of Christ*”, Galatians KJV 2:16.

Romans 4:23-25, “*now it was not written for his [Abraham] sake alone, that it was imputed to him; But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him [God the Father] that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.*”

The promise of Abraham was guaranteed by God the Father to the Lord Jesus becoming the Savior of the Gentiles, Greeks, and Jews; a remnant or part of the people from every nation of the world. Romans 11:5, “*Even so then at this present time is a remnant according to the election of grace.*”

Jesus was a Jew, true believers are Jews and the House of Israel includes all those saved Jews, Greeks, and Gentiles. All saved and washed by the blood of Christ Jesus from every nation worldwide. What exactly is a Jew? Romans 2:28 & 29, “*for he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*”

All those in the whole house of Israel are in the house of Christ which is a spiritual house. The elect of God are referred to as spiritual stones; Jesus is the chief cornerstone.

1 Peter 2:5 & 6, “*ye also, as lively [alive] stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices [a work of prayer, a gift], acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scriptures, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.*”

When his disciples were showing him the buildings of the temple in the city of Jerusalem; “*Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verly I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down,*” Mathew 24:2. The City of God that is existing in heaven, founded by Christ is the perfect kingdom of Jerusalem above. “*The Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all,*” Galatians 4:26.

Romans 1:16, “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*” Romans 3:29, “*Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also.*”

One thousand-year premillennial reign of Christ Jesus on this immoral sin-cursed planet earth is impossible. This faulty doctrine of misunderstanding Revelations 20 as it relates to one thousand years is a metaphor, not a factual period. One thousand years is spiritually defined as the completion of time to whatever is in view.

A future “Bible Brief” study will show that the 1000-year reign of Christ returning to the political nation of National Israel on earth is a faulty premillennial doctrine. That study will include the following verses below for the “lost sheep of the house of Israel”, helping to “feed my sheep” and to consider these verses in the meantime.

Mathew 15:24, “*But he [Jesus] answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.*” Psalm 90:4, “*for a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night.*” 2 Peter 3:8, “*but, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*” John 21:16, 17, “*Jesus said, “Feed My Sheep”*; that’s the Scriptures, not cake!

This “Bible Brief” has only “briefly” addressed the very basic principles of scripture which pertains to Abraham’s seed, the father of many nations. His seed of the land, [earth] for an everlasting eternal possession will be accomplished only by Jesus Christ; his coming on the final Day of Judgment is when He creates a

new heaven and earth. Political nations worldwide, including the political nation of National Israel, decedents of Abraham’s seed of Ishmael, progenitor of the Arab nations, and Esau’s bloodline require a broader range of study. Romans 9:13, “as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

Your comments are always appreciated. Contact email; valleygravel@outlook.com

All scripture from the Authorized KJV, Inspiration/research/credit, Blue Letter Bible, “The Fig Tree” H. Camping 1983; A Biblical Analysis of National Israel

My name is Robert W. Garner; my wife and I live in Union Mills, Rutherford County, NC. I’m a Christian Bible study researcher/writer/coach allied with other Biblical Scripture investigators unaffiliated with any church denominations. Our Scripture research spans 600 years of Christian Bible languages which include English, Hebrew, and Greek. As God Almighty commands in 1 Corinthians 2:13 we search the scriptures; “not in the words which man’s wisdom teaches, but what the Holy Ghost teaches; comparing spiritual with spiritual”; which is a scripture with scripture.

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. Matthew 18:15

John’s Precision Auto Body



Experienced Body Tech Needed



1385 Rutherford Road
Marion, NC 28752

(828) 652-2018
Fax (828) 652-4896



HVAC MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

WHY ENROLL IN OUR MAINTENANCE PROGRAM?

- ★PREVENT COSTLY REPAIRS AND BREAKDOWNS
- ★CORRECTION OF DEVELOPING PROBLEMS
- ★LONGER EQUIPMENT LIFESPAN
- ★SAVE 10% ON REPAIR PARTS
- ★FRONT OF THE LINE SERVICE
- ★REDUCE ENERGY USE

141 HIGHLAND AVE
SPRUCE PINE, NC 28777
828-765-4042
BURLESONPLUMBING@GMAIL.COM
BURLESONPLUMBING.COM



Burleson Plumbing & Heating



STARTING AS LOW AS \$129
OR \$12 MONTHLY

One-on-one help with your Medicare questions.



Ellen Hobson

Licensed Sales Agent

828-442-9681, TTY 711

Thrive Insurance Solutions

551 Burma Rd. West
Marion, NC 28752



Y0066_21SPRJ55188_C

**Check out our new Website-www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook**

Marlene's Meditations

Quenching Why Questions and Beyond

By Marlene Houk
Burke County



Years ago, my five-year-old asked questions relentlessly. He realized I couldn't escape his questions while driving and peppered me constantly during errands. "Why do the big trucks drive slowly?" "Why do I need to take a bath?" "Why can't I have another cookie?" Although answering constantly demanded my full attention, I nurtured his reasoning skills. Why questions involve deeper thinking on my part too as a mom because the answers hopefully redirected his thinking to God's viewpoint. However, quenching his questions only opened the door to more!

Like my son, one of the first questions I ask when life descends into a pit is the "Why?" question. We, as humans, naturally ask why, beginning in childhood. We explore our emotions through the question and allow ourselves to think about life and God. During our journey through our troubles, knowing the answers to why questions offer valuable foundational insight. The sure and steady answers to my why questions from my Father assure me that He always responds to my questions.

For years I asked why and listened to the same desperate need for answers in my friends and family's sorrow-filled conversations, I realized at least nine Scriptural reasons that answer the why questions we ask in our darkest times.

1. Genesis 45:8 *"So now it was not you that sent me hither; but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt."*

Genesis 50:20 *"But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."*

What others mean for harm, God pivots to provide the greater good. Joseph's brothers meant him harm when they tossed him into a pit and later sold him to Midianite traders. They were traitors to their brother and their God. We see clearly in Scripture, though, that God actually sent him to Egypt, not his brothers. The Lord needed Joseph to save His people, the growing nation of Israel, and Joseph would be the fulcrum to make it happen.

2. Exodus 9:16 *"And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth."*

Others see God's power shining through the cracks of our broken lives as we focus on Him and praise Him through the storm. They see our focus on the Lord and know that He can be their God too.

3. Psalm 119:71 *"It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes."*

Being afflicted drives us to the Bible to search for answers and draws us closer to the Lord."

4. Matthew 5:45 *"That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."*

We can expect to experience good and bad along with unbelievers.

John 9:3 *"Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."*

God fits our problems into His plan to help us reveal Him to our friends and family. Why do we fall into the pits of life? Our trials reveal God at work, showing His love that desires a relationship with all who meet Him at the cross.

5. 2 Corinthians 1:4 *"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."*

We sail on life's stormy seas, not knowing the size of the waves or the hail. But God always thinks beyond us; providing purpose for our pain and a plan that includes being with Him for all eternity.

6. 2 Corinthians 1:9 *"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:"*

One of the reasons we experience tragedy arises from living in a corrupted world. Its stench sometimes steals our joy.

7. Philippians 1:6 *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a*

continued on page 7

WANTED

THE WESTERN SIZZLIN STEAK OF THE WEEK



- NOTORIOUS FOR BEING A GREAT VALUE •
- KNOWN TO BE "FLAMEKIST" TO LOCK IN THE JUICES •
- LEGENDARY FOR A BOLD AND DELICIOUS FLAVOR •

828.765.9151

South Hwy 226
Spruce Pine, NC
Spruce Pine Shopping Center



YANCEY SENIOR CITIZEN CENTER

COME JOIN US FOR LUNCH
SERVED MON-FRI 11:30am-12:00
60 AND OVER EAT FREE

828-682-6011
503 MEDICAL CAMPUS DR.
BURNSVILLE, NC

Low Back Pain We Can Help You



Laser Therapy

- Promotes Active Lifestyle
- 95% Success Rate
- Improves Natural Healing
- Affordable
- Scientifically Proven
- Safe and Effective

A POWERFUL TOOL THAT HEALS

**We Are Open, Taking New Appointments,
Following all CDC Guidelines**

**CRUZLife
CENTER**

*Natural Health Care
Solutions for Your Life*

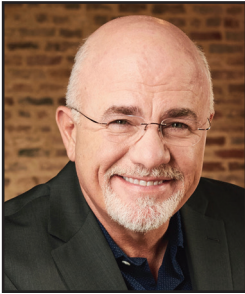
- CHIROPRACTIC
- HEALTH COACHING
- LASER THERAPY

Burnsville, NC • 828-682-6157 • 800-772-7955
cruzlifecenter.com

By Dave Ramsey

Dear Dave,

My father-in-law passed away earlier this year. Since then, my wife and I have faced a dilemma because of the inheritance. Her dad had several life insurance policies, and he left one to her and one to each of her siblings. The one he left my wife was bigger than the one he left to the others, and now her sister who received the smallest settlement is angry about the situation. She wants more, and it's causing a real dilemma within the family. I told my wife I am okay with doing what she feels is best. What are your thoughts? Daniel



Dear Daniel,

So, your wife's sister feels like she's entitled to something their dad didn't want her to have? The arrogance of your sister-in-law is appalling. If their dad had wanted her sister to have a different policy, he would've put her name on the other policy. I mean, it was his decision, not hers.

Giving someone money because you think it will enhance or save a relationship is a really bad idea. A relationship that's purchased isn't a real relationship—it's prostitution. If giving this sister money is the only way she'll act right or ever speak to you guys again, then she ain't worth having. That's no longer someone you should feel the need to impress, and it's not on you guys if she decides to pitch a fit or sever the relationship.

This is a heart decision, a conscious decision. I would advise you and your wife to make it together and be in full agreement. I'm sorry you two are going through this, but the idea her sister deserves more just because she wants more? Sounds like their dad already made his feelings known on that subject.

Dear Dave,

I don't like admitting this, but I absolutely hate my job. Last year, I almost cashed out part of my 401(k) to start my own business or open a franchise, and doing something like this is still on my mind. Considering how I feel, do you think this would be a good idea? Kurt

Dear Kurt,

In your current state of mind, this entire idea is a trap. Don't misunderstand, I love the idea of someone living their dream and owning their own business. But you just mentioned starting your own business in the same breath as opening some sort of franchise. That tells me you don't really know what you want to do.

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](https://twitter.com/DaveRamsey).

BEAR CREEK BAPTIST
CHURCH

Welcomes You to

Celebrate Recovery

Thursdays at 7:00pm

Hope & Help from

Addiction Through Christ



Do you know how
Legislative Risk will
impact the taxes you
pay in Retirement?

Find out now!
Free Analysis!
www.retirerm.com

68 South Main Street, Suite 200
Marion NC 28752
Steve@retirerm.com,

ALL
NEW!

Spruce Pine Chevrolet Buick GMC!

We are working hard to provide the best customer experience EVER!

- Factory Certified Personnel in every Department
- Genuine GM Parts
- Growing Inventory - New & Pre-owned
- Facility Upgrades Underway
- Factory Certified Service Technicians

We are upgrading the facility, filling the lot with New and Pre-Owned inventory, and adding staff, All to provide the best customer experience for **YOU!**

36 Chevrolet Boulevard, Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Phone: (828)765-4234

Steven W. Gaito
CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™
Less Taxes / More Retirement

Social Security Analysis / Long Term Care Planning
Tax Efficient Retirement Planning



Mt. Carmel Baptist Church

What Is The Church . . . To You?

By Toby Crowder
Mitchell County



Col 3:15 *“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.”*

“Here’s the house... Here’s the steeple... open it up and see the people!” How many times in youth did we play this simple game without ever considering the truth that a church is just that... people. It is not a building of brick, wood, or other materials... the church is comprised of people. The true church is made up of all those who have been made a new creature in Christ and have accepted Him as their Lord and Savior. Matt 16:18 is the first mention of the church when Jesus told Peter that *“...upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”* And then we see the beautiful example of the formation of the New Testament church in Acts 2:47b ... *“And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”*

Even though we know what the Bible says about the church, what would be our personal definition? I asked several folks to define what church meant to them in just a few words, and I found some great responses such as: “family & faith” ... “serving the Lord together” ... “God’s people gathered” and other great thoughts. My own brief description was this: “The church is a group of saved believers united as a family that God has placed together to shelter and serve one another; providing a spiritual home while we are at work for Christ in this world.” While there is much truth in all these definitions of the church, notice that all of them involve OTHERS. In today’s society, many folks do not want to be a part of the local body of Christ. They feel that they can worship independently and never see the need to associate or align with a local church body. The church is something that was never meant to be experienced alone! The church is meant to be a family, and a place of involvement, worship, fellowship, and love.

It is up to each of us to decide what the church is and what it means to us individually. To some, it is only a building; It is a structure... and nothing more. To others, it is only a spot on the map or a geographic location... How sad! And even sadder still, in this day and time of constant activity, to some the church has become nothing more than a bother or an imposition. Unfortunately, this is where some church members find themselves... weary of the work and tired of all the activity. The church has become to some just another date on the calendar or another “place to be.”

If all this sounds familiar, can I give you a word of encouragement? The church of the living God is more than just a building, or a belief, (or a bother.) It is a BODY of believers, united in the fellowship of Jesus Christ. Paul uses the word “body” many times in his writings to describe the church and it is a fitting description. Regardless of where we assemble or how scattered it may seem at times, it is this body of Christ that we were born into upon our conversion. The one true body of believers is an example of the several local bodies... which covenant together as they believe. While some would argue a difference between the universal church and the local church, notice that many of the books of the New Testament are written either about or directly to the local church. The book of Acts lists or mentions at least 19 different local churches and we can consider the books that are specific letters to local churches such as Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Phil, Colossians, and others. The fact that a person is saved into the larger body, does not mean that they are excused from being a part of the local body where they can grow, exercise their spiritual gifts, fellowship with other believers, and worship the Lord.

To be a part of the body of Christ is a blessing...and it only comes through Him! To be a part of a local body of believers is a blessing...and it only comes through Him! How do you define church... is it a building, belief, a bother...or is it a blessing for which you are thankful?

Toby Crowder serves as Pastor of Mt. Carmel Baptist Church in Spruce Pine. He and his wife, Leslie, have been married for 26 years and have two daughters, Emilee and Katy. He can be contacted via the church’s website MCfamily-forChrist.org or mtcarmelsprucepine@gmail.com

47th ANNUAL

WALDENSIAN

Festival

VALDESE, NC

AUG. 12 & 13, 2022

- FREE KIDZ ZONE
- 150 UNIQUE VENDORS
- BOCCE TOURNAMENT
- ATTRACTION TOURS
- LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
- BEER & WINE GARDEN
- CLASSIC CAR CRUISE IN
- WALDENSIAN FOOTRACE
- OPEN ART COMPETITION

Fri. 7pm

Cat 5 Band

Brown Away

Sat. 7pm

The Catalina

Since 1976, on the 2nd Saturday in August, Valdese hosts an annual festival to celebrate the “Glorious Return” of the Waldenses from exile in Switzerland to their native valleys in the Cottian Alps of Italy in 1689. This celebration is mirrored around the world by other Waldensian communities.

The Waldenses founded the Town of Valdese in 1893 and each year on this special weekend Valdese welcomes visitors and locals alike for a weekend full of special festivities. Join us for outstanding entertainment, food, tours, bocce & fun for everyone! We invite you to come dance in our streets!

WALDENSIANFESTIVAL.COM

VALDESE WEAVERS

MERIDIAN

SPECIALTY YARN GROUP, INC.

UNC HEALTH

Blue Ridge

FARRIS

INSURANCE AGENCY

UNIX-PACKAGING

UNIVERSAL PACKAGING SOLUTIONS

MEARS

INSURANCE GROUP

CASE FARMS

CHICKEN

Edward Jones

FINANCIAL SERVICES

PARAMOUNT

1-800-EXIT-113 • Valdese

Faith

COMMUNITY CHURCH

First Citizens Bank

forever first

Heritage

FUNERAL SERVICE & CREMATORY

shenandoah

furniture inc.

DIGITAL EYES

SURVEILLANCE

Check out our Website-www.brcnews.com
And find us on Facebook



RAY’S TREE SERVICE

- **Hazardous Tree Removal**
 - **View Clearing**
 - **Pruning**
 - **Chipper Service**
 - **Bucket Truck Service**
- **Hedge Trimming**
 - **Hemlock Wooly Adelgid Control**
 - **Landscaping & Grading**
 - **Retaining Walls**
 - **Stump Grinding**

Certified Arborist • Insured • Free Estimates
Serving This Area 10 Years
(828) 467-1113

Pleasant Hill Baptist Church

An August Anniversary

By Caron Cline
Burke County

August 19th, 1990 is the most significant day in my life. It is the day that I died. I was a 28-year-old professional who gave almost no thought to God or anything spiritual. Life was sweet, or so I thought. Although I was raised in a Christian home, I chose a different path in my late teens and felt that I was much more enlightened than my parents. Until...

On August 2nd, 1990, Sadaam Hussein invaded Kuwait. Normally, I would have paid little attention to this world-shaking news but at this point in my life, I was trying to impress a young man with my knowledge of world events. Therefore, I spent extra time reading the paper and watching the nightly news. As all eyes turned toward the Middle East, I overheard several different people discuss the fact that these happenings were prophetic. Could this be the sign that Jesus was coming again soon to rapture His people? This thought terrified me because deep inside, I knew I was not ready! For a solid week, I could not get these thoughts off my mind. Unbeknownst to me, the Holy Spirit had His hooks in my heart and mind and was shouting truth over the lies of the enemy. Finally, on a Sunday afternoon, I confessed my sin and asked Jesus to be my Lord and Savior. In the words of the Apostle Paul, 'I was crucified with Christ and the old me no longer lived'. Not only did I die on August 19, 1990, but I was also raised to an entirely new life. I became a new creature in Christ and the old things passed away... everything became new. The most astounding discovery came when I realized my entire way of thinking had shifted. The old Me had a liberal mindset concerning everything from A-Z. Suddenly, I found myself desiring to read the Bible, understand what it said, and obey God's instructions. The new Me suddenly had a desire to please the Lord. My friends and family hardly recognized the new Me, wondering what in the world could bring such transformation. I have been walking with Jesus for 32 years and He is even more exciting today than the day I invited Him into my life. His patience, grace, and mercy never cease to amaze me. After all, every morning that I step out of bed, I have new mercies for a new day of challenges and opportunities. Serving the Lord through teaching His Word, encouraging His people, and showing compassion to those in need is the desire of my heart. The most incredible experience of following Jesus is the promise that He will never leave or forsake me, but will finish the work that He started on that fateful day in 1990. As a guarantee of that promise, I was given the Holy Spirit on the day of my salvation as a continual witness that I really am a child of God, an heir and a co-heir with Christ. Come quickly, Lord Jesus.... I am ready! How about you??

Caron 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.



Danner Mountain 600 Boot

Danner
SINCE 1932

Grassy Creek
CLOTHING

12451 Hwy 226 S., Spruce Pine (828) 766-7502

www.grassycreekclothing.com

Mon-Sat 8:30am-5:30pm

Closed Sunday
-Go to Church



Thank you for 50 years!
Heating Hearts And Homes

WWW.BUCKSTOVE.COM

Unmatched People, Unmatched Product, Unmatched Pride



**Manufacturer of Wood Stoves, Gas Hearth Products, and Outdoor Leisure Items
to include a full line of Outdoor Furniture, Fire Pits, Grills and More!**

Find the dealer nearest you by using our Dealer
Locator on our website, or Visit our showroom located at:
200 Ethan Allen Drive • Spruce Pine, NC 28777
828-765-6144 • info@buckstove.com

A Grateful Girl

Grateful Girl Gathering Christian Women's Conference Announces Speakers, DIY Sessions and New Features for This Year's August 27th Conference

By Patti Jensen
Mitchell County



The Grateful Girl Gathering Christian Women's Conference returns August 27, 2022, bringing an event to encourage women with great speakers, amazing worship music, fun DIY sessions, and a time to connect and be encouraged.

The Grateful Girl Gathering will be held Saturday, August 27th at the Cross Street Commerce Center in Spruce Pine, NC. In its 2nd year, the conference team is planning for a great day for women of all ages! In 2021, women from all across WNC as well as other states attended the conference. "The planning team for the Grateful Girl Gathering is made up of women from different area churches and are of different ages and stages in life," said Patti Jensen, one of the team members. "We hope that women make plans to attend this year to hear the speakers, experience the worship, and enjoy the fun activities allowing them to connect with other women from our area."

The conference will welcome three amazing Christian speakers this year. Those who were at the Grateful Girl Gathering last year will be thrilled to hear that Jill Dasher will be with us again this year. At the 2021 conference, Jill told us about her new book coming out soon after the conference. Jill is back this year after the launch of her new book "Shallow" to share with us about overcoming the need for approval from others, perfectionism, and our longing to be free of the burden of pretending. Jill Dasher is the author of the brand new book SHALLOW, drowning in the shallow end of people's approval. She is a blogger and Christian speaker who is passionate about sharing the freedom that exists when you refuse to live in hiding & freely submit all of your fears, flaws, & failures to the God who made you. Jill and her husband Zach are partners with Willie and Korie Robertson in Tread Lively, a fully integrated production company focused on film, TV, podcasting, and digital platforms. She resides in the mountains of NC with her husband and five children.

We are excited to have Candice Coffey, founder of a Christian cosmetics company, Everbe Cosmetics with us this year! EverBe was founded by Candice Coffey, a former elementary school teacher and mom of two beautiful daughters. One night, in a dream, Candice was shown a makeup counter where she picked up a black and gold tube of lipstick with the inscription "Psalm 34". She wasn't familiar with Psalm 34, but read it the next morning in The Passion Translation. Psalm 34 describes how our very appearance changes when we focus on God and give Him our praise. Candice felt the Lord calling her to pioneer a new thing-to disrupt the messages of popular culture cosmetics and develop a line of makeup to remind women who they are called to be. We look forward to hearing Candice's story of God's calling in her life and how listening to God's call can lead you to unexpected and amazing places.

From college Bible studies to speaking events, Betsy Bolick's "Small Enough Ministries" has boldly reached many with a message of encouragement — God is big enough for whatever we face! We are excited to have Betsy Bolick with us at the Grateful Girl Gathering! Betsy is a Christian Speaker and is the Founder and Director of Small Enough Ministries. Betsy is passionate about reaching all women with the gospel of Jesus Christ. She desires to make disciples for the Kingdom of God and to fulfill the mission Christ has called her to fulfill for His glory. Betsy Bolick lives in the beautiful mountains of North Carolina and is thrilled to serve at Perkinsville Baptist Church as the Collegiate Minister. She received a degree in Religion with a specialization in Women's Ministry from Liberty University and a Master's in Church Leadership and Ethics from John Brown University. She is currently enrolled at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary in the Master of Arts in Christian Counseling program.

One of the unique and fun aspects of the Grateful Girl Gathering is the DIY break-out sessions. The DIY sessions are a fun way to learn something new while fellowshiping with new and current friends. The conference this year has three awesome DIY sessions to choose from presented by leaders in their field.

Do you see those beautiful hand-lettered signs in boutiques and stores and love them? We are excited to have Katelyn Brewer with us to teach a DIY session on creating simple modern calligraphy while learning how to give it your own unique style! Katelyn was born in Burnsville, NC, and moved back to the area in 2020 after her husband left the military. Katelyn lives in Spruce Pine with her husband and two daughters.

Another DIY session offers the opportunity to create something unique with The Quill and Honey owner Kendall Chandler. Join Kendall in a DIY session where you will create a perfume roller using many of the essential oils mentioned in Old Testament scriptures, as well as gain a deeper understanding of the significance of each oil. "Each woman will walk away with a beautiful, fragrant perfume oil that will serve as the perfect reminder of this wonderful conference."

Kendall Chandler is the owner of a small, local soap shop called The Quill and Honey." She was born and raised in Candler, NC, and was blessed to grow up in the beautiful mountains of western North Carolina. "My parents and large extended family instilled a love in me for mountain heritage, mountain music, loving your neighbor, and most importantly, loving Jesus."

Beautiful floral arrangements bring a smile to everyone's face! Join Loretta Ball, owner of The Neverending Flower Farm, to learn how to create beautiful flower arrangements for your home and use those lessons to create your own floral arrangement in a vintage tea cup to take home.

The Neverending Flower Farm is owned by Loretta and her family in the Big

continued on page 28

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN.

BECOME AN APPRENTICE.



For More Information or To Register,
Call Thomas Champ at 828-659-0454

Calvary Chapel Home Fellowship Spruce Pine

Meeting Sunday Mornings at 9:30
In the Riverside Park

Join Us As We Journey Through The Bible
Book By Book, Verse By Verse!

For More Information Call:
Peter Albini (828) 747-2354 (Pastor)
John Jackson (760) 793-3799

Auto Insurance Made In North Carolina

828-652-4525

Kenneth W. Day
FSS, LUTCF
Agency Manager
kenneth.day@ncfbins.com

Real service. Real people.

An Authorized Agency for
BlueCross BlueShield
of North Carolina



Auto • Home • Life • Health • Bank

NC040903611
*North Carolina Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company
*Farm Bureau Insurance of North Carolina, Inc.
*Southern Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company, Jackson, MS
*An independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Notes from the Shire

A Very Special Place

By Nancy Malik
Avery County



Years ago, the Lord called my husband and me to North Carolina for a Day of Prayer on a mountain west of Murphy. We were sent to a special Bible Park, Fields of the Woods; an amazing testimony to God's Living Word. It is called Fields of the Woods in honor of the place King David had the Ark placed before it was placed in the temple of Solomon. The park is full of The Word, everywhere within its boundaries.

Our family came on vacation the year before to take time to visit this very holy place. It is a beautiful area with low mountains providing perfect acoustics throughout. The park includes a Christian Bookstore and Café, a baptismal pool, and a hillside replicating Golgotha, the mount where Jesus died on the cross. It also includes a Ten Commandments hillside with letters that are quite large. A stairway goes up between the commandments with a beautiful view from the top.

There is a stairway to the top of Prayer Mountain with 300 steps. On each step, a tenant is written from Psalms, Proverbs, and other biblical literature. At the top is the world's longest altar, where a sign announced that a young man had prayed on the very spot where the altar is and asked God why the Body of America was so divided. The Lord told him it was because the Civil War divided it between North and South and after the war, denominations were created. The young man was brokenhearted. He found a small church in the area and lived there for many years. In the early fifties, the Church of God started planning a place for families to come and be blessed with beautiful surroundings.

It took a few years to put together the special places of these two mountains. There are perfect acoustics, and beautiful music was played by a youth group from Atlanta of Spanish-speaking young adults. After a powerful prayer time with us (in both Spanish and English), their beautiful music was heard playing quietly all over the park that day. My family enjoyed the park and while I watched the delicate, layered Blue Ridge Mountains to the west with sunlight filtering through clouds of white and dark blue, the Lord asked for my husband and me to have a Day of Prayer there. We knew we had plans when we got back to Florida for him to have an operation. We did not know it would be the first of ten and most did not go well. After the first surgery, he underwent chemo and radiation. But by the following September, we were able to have a Day of Prayer at Fields of the Woods Bible Park. We were told not to advertise at all. God was going to call those who were coming to it for His purpose for them. A young missionary couple we had met came to help us.

It started a very rainy day, and we prayed that even if we were the only ones there, we would pray for the body of Christ. Nagmeh Abidini, a young Christian wife of a godly American Iranian, had asked for prayer for the release of her husband from prison in Iran. He had spent a decade going back and forth from the US to Iran to help build churches and Christian camps. Saeed had been kidnapped by the government and imprisoned. Nagmeh was asking the UN for his release. She was having a weekend seminar at a large church in Florida and I had bought many tickets for it. She emailed me and said she had to cancel her weekend seminar because of the opportunity to ask Iran for help. I told her about the Day of Prayer in NC and asked her to pray for the body of Christ that day with her group that prayed for her often. That day, over 1,000 prayer groups were praying for Saeed's release and for the body of Christ to come together.

We knew God had something special planned. There was a gentle rain, but every time someone else climbed the stairs to the top, a work of Christ was done. Broken marriages restored, strongholds of drugs and life choices healed seemed holy!

In 2018, three years after this amazing day of prayer, Tommy Burleson, at the Singing on the Mountain, asked the churches of Avery County to come out of their buildings and become the Body of Christ. A prayer and a confirmation that many are praying for this very thing is 'such a time as this!'

If you haven't met Jesus personally yet, and want to do that please reach out to a Christian in your area. Avery County is part of the bible belt and there are believers and churches everywhere. Let the Lord lead you to one. We have Prayer on the Square on Friday nights at 9:00 pm being let by Phillip Green. All are welcome and praying for this special county and country is a blessing. Also, Victory Baptist will have its revival again this fall near Pineola! God bless you in your amazing walk with Him!

Nancy Malik moved to Avery County six years ago. The past few years have been a journey of learning how to be a widow and loving the county the Lord led them to on an amazing journey for The Safe Place for the ends times many years ago. She has a precocious black cat, Midi, who always lets her know when something exciting is happening outside. She prays for the readers of the Blue Ridge Christian News to be blessed by God's goodness.



It's that time of year again, and we need your help!

Need: Christmas fabric and Volunteers to sew stockings

Goal: 500 stockings

Please contact the CRBA office for more information at (828) 437-0137 or online at www.crbanc.org

MAKE THIS THE SUMMER EVENT





NEW 2022 Ram 1500 Big Horn Crew Cab 4X4

5.7 Liter HEMI V8 Engine, Night Edition, Trailer Tow Group

HURRY – WON'T LAST LONG!



NEW 2022 Ram 2500 Power Wagon Crew Cab 4X4

Leather, Off-Road Group, Navigation, 6.4 Liter V8

HARD TO FIND – DON'T LET IT GET AWAY!!

Pre-Ordering YOUR Vehicle NOW

1. Customize a new vehicle to your liking
2. We will place your order
- 3 You pay a risk-free & refundable \$4 Deposit
4. Factory will build the vehicle and ship to us
5. You take delivery of your beautiful new vehicle or Can complete the purchase remotely and we will Ship to your home or office
6. Bonus: Free Shipping within a 150-mile radius!





**44 Worley Road
Marion, NC 28752
(828) 559-9014**

I Buy Vehicles

828-413-0506 or

Christiancarbuyer@gmail.com

Check out our Website-www.brcnews.com

And find us on Facebook

Ivy Community of Barnardsville, NC. The farm offers you-pick flower opportunities, wedding floral design, preserved wedding bouquets, and micro-weddings and elopements on the farm. Loretta is married to her husband Kurt and they have two wonderful – full of life – boys, Quinn & Ledger. Loretta says “the Lord is blessing our business and family and I am forever grateful!”

“For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” Jeremiah 29:11.

A delicious lunch is included in the conference activities and for this year’s lunch, the conference is honored to have singer Maria Anglin provide a special program. Maria and her husband Ryan pastor The Bridge Church in Spruce Pine. Last year’s conference attendees will remember Maria as a part of the praise and worship team. This will be a special lunch program that you won’t want to miss!

The conference also features another unique addition, a boutique area with pop-up shops from area businesses. From jewelry to clothing to spa products and more, this is a fun addition to the conference for the attendees to mingle, shop, and meet new people.

The conference has been blessed this year with an overwhelming response from area businesses to support the conference. Conference sponsors are listed on the conference website and featured on the Grateful Girl Gathering Facebook page. When online purchasing tickets, be sure to check out their Sponsors page.

The conference is a great way for churches to organize a special outing with their ladies’ groups. Churches are encouraged to bring their women’s groups and there is a new group registration process this year that makes registration much easier. There is also a new feature to gift tickets to women in order to bless them with an opportunity to attend. Group leaders can simply choose Group Tickets on the ticket registration page to begin a group registration.

Tickets are on sale now at www.gratefulgirlgathering.com. For updates and notices, those interested are encouraged to sign up for the conference newsletter on the website.

For more information visit www.gratefulgirlgathering.com and follow along on Facebook and Instagram at [@agratefulgirlgathering](https://www.instagram.com/agratefulgirlgathering)

Patti Jensen is a contributor to Blue Ridge Christian News. She lives in Spruce Pine, NC with her husband Jack. She has two daughters and sons in law and three grandchildren who call her Lovie.

Buff's Tire & Service

**YOUR ONE-STOP
TOTAL CAR CARE
EXPERTS!**



FOR ALL THINGS AUTO, TAKE IT TO BUFF'S!
Check Engine Diagnosis • Alignments • Brakes • Oil Changes • Inspections

1211 BURKEMONT AVE., MORGANTON, NC
Located in: Magnolia Plasa • 828-438-3800
“We’ve Moved Across the Street next to Rural King. Come See Us!”

Sudoku

Solution on page 14

		7		6	9			
	8		1	3			7	
3					8	2		
					4	3	1	
	6	1	8					
		2	9					6
	7			1	2		5	
			4	5		9		

Pause . . . and Consider

Tuned In

By Jan Merop
Cleveland, Tennessee



In each location we have lived in, we get in touch with various services to be in sync with our new location. But it is also important to us to be in tune with Christian radio, a church and church family, and some areas of ministry/volunteering.

By establishing ourselves with local ministries, we become part of the community. We get to know people and they get to know us. It is nice to know and be known.

Then when we tune the radio to the blessing of biblical teachings and music, life just gets sweeter. Whether encouragement or simply joyful praise, it is a balm to our souls.

This new adventure in Cleveland, Tennessee of being in sync is making our new location feel more and more like home. It is a delightful and satisfying experience to get tuned in to all the area has to offer.

I recall back in 2004 when I ventured to adapt about one hundred of my columns to create a self-published devotional book, I entered into an adventure of a lifetime.

So much to learn and obstacles kept popping up. There were times I felt like quitting.

I recall how my husband Ken and I took a few days away in the mountains to reflect on why I was doing this. One morning, I stepped out on the porch to look at the mountains and Psalm 121 NKJV fed my soul. By tuning into the Lord, I was refreshed, renewed, and ready to move forward.

“I will lift up my eyes to the hills from whence comes my help? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper; The Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul. The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore.”

When I set out to put together the book, the title was the column, Pause . . . and Consider; with a subtitle that said, Keeping in step with life while in tune with heaven.

Whether in moving, a new school, a new job, or anything else that requires persistence and fortitude, keep in step with this life while being in tune with heaven; and be refreshed! Selah

LIVING ABOVE THE CLOUDS
*Observe the ever-moving clouds.
Their formations don't stay the same for long.
Clinging to circumstantially cloudy days
is to ride a non-supportive vapor.
But to let God's joy lift us above the clouds,
is to look down upon them from His perspective...
living above the clouds.*
*“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord.
For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
So are My ways higher than your ways;
And my thoughts than your thoughts.”*
Isaiah 55: 8 & 9, NKJV



Ken and Jan love residing in the mountains of Avery County. Visit Jan's new blog [@pauseandconsider.net](https://www.pauseandconsider.net), Journeying with Jan. Ken's photos can be seen at [kenmeropphotography.com](https://www.kenmeropphotography.com).

What Do You Think?

By Toddy Abraham
Athens, Tennessee

Do you check it all throughout the day? Do you talk on it incessantly? Do you scroll for hours on it? Is your mind geared 24/7 for those dings, alerts, notifications, and bells from that little device? Do you neglect your children because of it? Do you shove it in your kid's face like some kind of electronic babysitter so you don't have to put up with them at times? Do you depend on it to teach your kids things? Do you endanger yourself and others while driving because you are distracted by it? Do you and your spouse neglect each other because of it? Does it separate you and your family at your dinner outings? Do you ever use it to help in your efforts as a Christian to win souls, praise God for His goodness in your life, and learn more about the scriptures? Do you sleep with it? Do you check it first thing in the morning before thanking the Lord for opening your eyes and giving you another day on this planet? Do you notice yourself getting entranced by it and losing track of time? Has the Lord convicted you of this little device because you and Him both know it has become an idol to you? Have you had the audacity to lie to God and yourself and others around you saying you can't live without it? How many times during your work day do you check it and how much has it decreased your productivity? Have you figured out by now what I'm referring to?

How 'smart' actually is your phone? Well, it can't do one wit more than any other computer such as a laptop or desktop with very few exceptions. But laptops and desktop computers don't keep your mind in a 24/7 constant state of distraction either. What exactly can a smartphone do? It can take pictures, right? Researchers have proven that people suffer from image overload because of smartphones. It can let you communicate with so many people on different platforms 24/7. And what good is that? More useless information overload. True friends are few and far between and those we call friends in most cases on social media are nothing more than acquaintances; if that. How much useful information that is actually fruit-bearing do you actually glean from your 'smart' phone? How many times have you almost wrecked and died because of it? How much has it increased your anxiety because of all that extra interaction you've taken on that is completely unnecessary? What could you accomplish with a laptop and digital camera that you couldn't with a smartphone? But without the 24/7 pull, it creates in your mind. Have you ever truly prayed earnestly and asked God Almighty, whom you say is your Father in heaven, if your smartphone is indeed an idol to you and be willing to accept the truth? And if He shows you that it is, be willing to repent and get rid of it and go back to a basic phone.

A lot of questions eh? Only questions God put on my heart to ask you. Remember, Todd's Techy Tips is for those of you who say you are Christians, and only you! Personally, I say do what you want to. But if you claim to be a Christian and truly desire to live in total obedience to the Lord, then I earnestly exhort you to listen to every word and prayerfully consider it. Because God Almighty is Who laid it on my heart to preach against smartphones. And no I do not own one myself. You can get mad at me if you want to and personally, I don't care. My obligation as a preacher of the gospel is to tell you THE truth and not to be afraid of your faces (i.e. countenance). Meaning what you think. The simple truth is that smartphones are sending many a soul to hell and a great many of those are Christians. It's the number 1 idol and addiction in the world today by far. However, you would do well to remember that God is NO respecter of persons no matter what you profess to be. I also know that not everyone who owns a smartphone is idolatrous of it but that number is very few and far between. Exodus 20:3 *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."* If the shoe fits, wear it. Or in this case, take it off.

My name is Todd Abraham. I'm an evangelist of the gospel of Jesus Christ and publisher of Heartbeat Christian News which has been in publication for 9 years now by the grace of God. You can read all about it at www.HBCNewsMonthly.com.



Founding Fathers and other Influencing Citizens.
How They Served Our Country—Robert Morris

By David Streater, Ph.D.
Burke County



This is an American history educational moment of those who made a difference during the Revolutionary War era and how they served our Country.

In 1734, Robert Morris was born in Liverpool, England. When he was four, Robert's mother died, and he was raised and educated by his grandmother. Then, at 13, Robert joined his father in America.

While attending school in Philadelphia, Robert was not fond of structured education. Hence, quitting school, Morris was assigned to the counting room, keeping the financial books for the Charles Willing Company. This experience led him to work in banking, international trade, and government finance. As the Declaration of Independence was being debated, Morris kept hoping for a settlement with England. However, when it was Robert's turn to sign the Declaration, he did so without hesitation or reservation.

Morris excelled as an entrepreneur, becoming the owner of many ships and merchandise. His outstanding reputation earned Robert the exclusive command of controlling finances during the Revolution. Congress named Morris the Superintendent of Finance because of his astute monetary and business knowledge. As a result, he could supply patriots with food, ships, and military matériel, while dodging British obstacles.

Robert cared about America so much that he gave three of his ships to help create the US Navy. As the metal was scarce, Robert had 90 tons of steel ballast removed from another of his ships to make bullets. Morris also loaned the government \$10,000 for the War effort, conceived a plan to establish a federal banking system, and served in additional regime positions. President Washington asked Robert to be Secretary of the Treasury; he refused and recommended Alexander Hamilton.

Morris returned to private life, lost his fortune in land speculation, and was sentenced to debtor's prison in 1798. Robert was released in 1800 because of newly passed bankruptcy laws and died on May 8, 1806.

Robert was one of two Founding Fathers who signed the Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, and the United States Constitution. Morris, a dedicated patriot, gave all of his loyalty, knowledge, assets, and freedom to the making of the United States of America.

Please visit your Charters of Freedom setting in most western North Carolina counties. A Charters of Freedom setting consists of the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. They are on permanent display analogous to the Charters of Freedom in the National Archives, Washington, DC. Please visit our website (FoundationForward.com) to learn more about our existing settings.

All teachers are encouraged to contact Dr. Streater for information and complementary student education materials to enhance experiential field trips to a Charter of Freedom settings. Everyone is welcome and urged to obtain a personalized engraved legacy paver for placement at their local Charters of Freedom setting. Please contact Dr. Streater (david.streater@gmail.com) for engraved legacy paver information and complementary educational materials.

Dr. David Streater is the director of education for Foundation Forward. He is a retired college instructor and administrator, and a retired probation and parole officer/administrator. David is a criminologist who has an acute history interest, served in the Navy, and is a resident of Burke County, NC.

JIM ARMSTRONG SUBARU
2321 HWY 70 WEST • HICKORY • 828-322-9372 • WWW.JIMARMSTRONGSUBARU.COM



NEW 2022 Subaru Ascent Premium



NEW 2022 Subaru Outback Limited

2022 MODELS ARE HERE!

We do have select Amish Poly in stock; come in the store and custom order your Poly today in time to have it by summer! Many colors to choose from!



Brands We Carry:

- Ashley

Lazboy

Serta

Beautyrest

England

GE

Whirlpool

Frigidaire
- Coaster

Vaughn Bassett

Vermont Casting

Buck Stove

Outdoor Poly Furniture

Riverside

Kodiak

ZLine

Ultra Comfort



274 Oak Avenue
Spruce Pine, NC 28777
Phone: (828) 765- 5557

Check out our website that is now live at www.L-Lfurniture.com

Senior Celebration at Camp Truett
By Carol Layton



North Carolina Baptist Aging Ministry (NCBAM) will partner this fall with Truett Conference Center and Camp in Hayesville for a two-day celebration for senior adults (October 24-25). The theme of the camp is “Be Bold” where seniors will be encouraged to live boldly for the Lord in the latter half of life.

Keynote speakers will be Dr. Al Hood, associational missions strategist for the Truett Baptist Association, and Dr. Sandy Gregory, ministry director for NCBAM. Hood will share wisdom for our journey, Growing Old and Being Bold. Gregory will share steps and practices for Adding Life to Your Spirituality.

Be Bold will include bible studies, times of worship in a joyful assembly, easy, hands-on craft activities to enjoy while making new friends, and a multitude of games and activities to choose from. Truett Conference Center & Camp features hotel-style accommodations with a lounge for games and relaxing with others. The Truett dining staff offer entrees, sides, a salad bar, and of course, sweet tea! Anita Davie, far west regional director for NCBAM, is excited about the plans for Be Bold. “We were working together in 2020 to plan a senior adult camp and the pandemic interrupted for two years. We’re thrilled to be a part of seniors coming together again for fellowship, education, and encouragement. I may be biased but I don’t think there is a more beautiful setting than the Blue Ridge Mountains for a fall retreat!”

Davie and other NCBAM team members will offer four workshops at the Senior Celebration.

Identity Theft: A personal Story Amy Burns, administrative assistant for NCBAM, will share a personal and uplifting story of her family’s experience with identity theft. Attendees will learn how to recognize the warning signs of identity theft, review tips for protecting senior friends and loved ones, and examine the steps necessary for recovery when identity theft has occurred.

God Has a Job for You! Be Bold Anita Davie, far west regional director for NCBAM, will take a look at senior adult ministries in our churches and explore how we can do God’s work as individuals or in small groups.

Home Safe Home Angie Gregg and Charity Johnson, regional directors for NCBAM (central west and southeast), will share how to gain greater peace of mind as attendees learn how to implement and maintain a plan to prevent a home invasion or burglary. This session also covers who is most vulnerable to home invasions, how to avoid being targeted, and what to do in the event of a home invasion.

ONE HOPE and the NCBAM Hope Line Melanie Beeson, NCBAM’s Call Center director, will provide an introduction to the ONE HOPE ministry and the NCBAM Hope Line. The Hope Line provides a spiritual response to social isolation and loneliness among aging adults in NC.

The program fee for the Be Bold celebration is \$45 per person for the first day or \$75 for both days. Overnight lodging is \$119 for two people or \$139 for single occupancy and includes the program fee.

Space is limited. Reserve yours soon at truettcamp.org.

Carol Layton is the Director of Communications and Administration for NCBAM at Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina



we have life insurance.
so you can enjoy all
of life’s moments.

simple human sense.

"Serving our Mountain Communities for Over 100 Years"



www.fortnerinsurance.com



MITCHELL CO. FARM BUREAU
Spruce Pine
828-765-9678
Bakersville
828-688-3745



An Authorized Agency for



BlueCross BlueShield
of North Carolina

NCSP#042786
*North Carolina Farm Bureau® Mutual Insurance Company *Farm Bureau® Insurance
of North Carolina, Inc. *Southern Farm Bureau® Life Insurance Company, Jackson, MS
*An independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

The Breastplate of Righteousness

By Dr. Tom Walker
McDowell County



The Bible says, “*Having on the breastplate of righteousness*” (Eph. 6:14). We need to remember the context of this statement we are considering in this study. The Apostle Paul points to the matter of standing. It is so important in an age of ungodly pressure that we do not give in to Satan and his instrument called sin. Because so many give in to evil pressure Paul under the direction of the Spirit of God calls us to stand in a day of sin and apostasy.

In the out text, he refers to the “*breastplate of righteousness*.” When you consider the armor of the soldier in the days of Rome, you will discover the breastplate was an extremely important dress for warfare.

The person who is at war, especially in a spiritual war between good and evil, God and Satan, we must never give in to falsehood and never compromise the blood-stained banner of the cross. You and I should firmly hold our ground and be prepared for the next assault from Satan.

How should we stand? We should stand with a spirit of victory, faith, courage, assurance, and conviction. Christ actually shares with His born-again people the power over the enemy of our souls. It is essential, and it must be enforced while the spoils of Christ’s victory claimed.

Never forget what Christ did on the cross of Calvary. Jesus spoiled principalities and powers and triumphed over them. We must strip evil power over all the authority they used to exercise over us.

If you are going to go to battle, you need the proper equipment, both offensive and defensive. Ukraine has been at war with Russia, but it seems the Soviets have a more sophisticated array of weapons. It must also be considered that the Russians have a larger quantity of weaponry than the Ukrainians. If you go to war in aggression or defense, it requires preparation.

Let’s learn more about how we fight the good fight of faith from Paul in the last chapter of the Book of Ephesians.

Description of the Breastplate

Soldiers in many nations of the ancient world wore the defensive breastplate. It can be used as a protective device either of thick leather or metal. It was generally a wide piece of metal that protected the soldier’s lower trunk and stomach. The main function of the breastplate was primarily to protect the vital organ called the heart.

We see this in the coat of arms of Goliath in I Samuel 17:5. Although little David faced a giant, the giant had adorned his protective gear. 1 Sam 17:4-7 says: “*And there went out a champion out of the camp of the Philistines, named Goliath, of Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver’s beam; and his spear’s head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him.*”

This giant was dressed up for battle. David seemed to be small and insignificant to him, but that did not keep him from being adorned with full battle gear. Sometimes we get careless and fail to use the battle gear the Lord has given us to fight successfully in life.

Remember, Goliath was a giant who stood approximately 6’ 9”. He wore a bronze helmet and full body armor. He carried a javelin, a spear, and a sword. He also had an attendant who carried a large shield for him. We could liken the shield to a breastplate.

Goliath was fully prepared for battle but there was one big problem. The Lord was on the side of Israel and David, not the giant of the Philistines. When they attacked Israel, they had superior weapons of iron when they attacked God’s chosen nation in the 12th century before Christ came. The people from Gath worshiped three main false, non-existent gods: Ashtoreth, Dagon, and Baal-Zebub. Philistine soldiers carried images of these false gods into battle. When they offered sacrifices to Dagon, they had an image with the hands and head of a man and the tail of a fish.

“It may be noticed that this passage in 1 Samuel 17, contains the most complete inventory of the furniture of a warrior to be found in the whole of the sacred history. Goliath was a Philistine, and the minuteness of the description of his equipment may be due either to the fact that the Philistines were usually better armed than the Hebrews, or to the impression produced by the contrast on this particu-

lar occasion between this fully-armed champion and the wretchedly appointed soldiers of the Israelite host, stripped as they had been very shortly before both of arms and of the means of supplying them so completely that no smith could be found in the country, nor any weapons seen among the people, and that even the ordinary implements of husbandry had to be repaired and sharpened at the forges of the conquerors” (1 Sam 14:19-22) (Nelson’s Bible Dictionary).

We are told to put on the armor of God, every part of it. Each piece we put on is a picture of the strength God has available for all of his children.

Protection of the Breastplate

I have already mentioned that the breastplate is usually a piece of metal strapped around the body that protects the vital organs. Before it can be held up the belt of truth must be put on first. We must decide between putting on all of the armor of God. If you leave out the truth, righteousness will be based on the wrong thing. It will be based on our effort to impress God.

Picture of the Breastplate

What does this speak of spiritually? It points us to the righteousness God gives to us when we receive Christ as Savior and Lord. When a person is saved, a breastplate is given to every sinner who is saved by God’s grace. Jesus obtained righteousness for us when he died and shed His blood on the cross of Calvary.

2 Corinthians 5:21 is directly related to what God does for the repentant and believing sinner. It says, “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” I see things as I consider this verse.

First, I see a partaking. Our sins were laid upon Christ at Calvary. No one but Jesus could pay the sin debt for lost, helpless, condemned sinners. Isaiah 53:5 tells us: “*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.*” It is important to notice He was “*bruised for our iniquities.*” Your sin and my sin were laid upon Him. By all rights, we should have had to pay for our own sins, but our sins were laid upon Jesus Christ. Jesus had no personal sins to die for because He was perfect, sinless, and holy. But that is not true of me and you. We have a sinful nature that tends to depart from God. The Bible is clear that He “*knew no sin.*”

Secondly, I see a proclamation. The Bible clearly says He knew no sin. One of the most vital doctrines of the Christian faith is that Jesus knew no sin. If He could sin, He could not have been our Savior. Christ was altogether perfect and flawless in His purity. Hebrews 7:26 affirms what I have just written. It says, “*For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.*”

Thirdly, I see a plan. God’s plan with Calvary was that we “*might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*” This happened through something that we call imputation. That occurs when Jesus’ righteousness is put on our account. When does that happen? It happens when we repent of our sins and put our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Instantaneously when that happens, we are made the righteousness of God in Him.

Putting on the Breastplate

How and when does this occur? There are several things I would propose to you that will work in having the breastplate.

The first thing is to see the Lord first, above everything else. Matthew 6:33 Affirms that we are to: “*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*” We get overly concerned over things, we should have God and His things on our minds first and foremost.

You should also live, move and have your being in Him. Acts 17:28 states: “*For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.*” Your life must revolve around the Lord if you are to properly wear the breastplate of righteousness.

In addition, you should seek to obey Him in daily life. When we put on the breastplate of righteousness, we put into practice what we believe in the depths of our innermost being. We consult the Word of God and come to the same conclusion the psalmist did in Psalms 119:24: “*Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counselors.*” If you put on the breastplate of righteousness, you cooperate with and are deeply involved with the plan of God in your life. The life of overcoming victory can be yours.

It will take the use of every piece of the Christian armor to live a successful Christian life.

Tom Walker is President of Foothills Baptist Bible College and Pastor of Zion Hill Baptist Church in Marion, NC.

Thou Shalt Laugh

By John Martin

ADAM...DO YOU LOVE ME?

WHO ELSE IS THERE?

JOHN MARTIN

YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

NC Senate District 47



Sen. Ralph Hise
Ralph.Hise@ncleg.net
919-733-3460

For the second time in less than three years, Gov. Roy Cooper has vetoed a bill that would halt the release of convicted felons, subject to ICE detainers, back into communities. Senate Bill 101: Require Cooperation with ICE 2.0 would have required an administrator of a local confinement facility to query Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the US Department of Homeland Security when an individual, whose legal residency or US citizenship status is unknown, is charged with homicide, rape, kidnapping and abduction, human trafficking, gang activity, felony assault, assault on a female, or violating a domestic violence protective order. The bill also would have required that a prisoner subject to a retainer and administrative warrant be held in custody for 48 hours or until ICE resolves the request.

Sen. Chuck Edwards was the primary sponsor of this bill which I co-sponsored. Sen. Edwards had this to say regarding Gov. Cooper's veto:

"With the stroke of his pen, Gov. Cooper just gave sanctuary sheriffs permission to shield an illegal immigrant who rapes or murders a North Carolinian. Keeping violent criminals off our streets should be a shared priority, but this veto proves that Gov. Cooper isn't interested in increasing public safety if it goes against his liberal donors' wishes."

I am thankful that sheriffs in my district, and almost everywhere else in the state, cooperate with ICE and are not releasing illegals who have committed crimes back into the local communities. Unfortunately, in Buncombe, Durham, Forsyth, Mecklenburg, and Wake Counties, the elected Democrat sanctuary sheriffs, in lockstep with Gov. Cooper, have refused to cooperate with federal immigration authorities when dealing with suspected illegal immigrants.

As always, please share your thoughts with me about this or other issues related to the state government by emailing me at ralph.hise@ncleg.gov or calling me at 919-733-3460.

NC Commissioner of Labor



NC Commissioner of Labor
Josh Dobson
1-800-625-2267

I hope you are having a wonderful summer and finding a way to stay cool! Hopefully, you and your family have had a chance to enjoy a vacation or break from your everyday routine.

As I mentioned in last month's column, I recently attended the National Association of Government Labor Officials (NAGLO) Conference in National Harbor, Maryland. NAGLO was formed more than 100 years ago for the purpose of representing and collaborating with state departments of labor. Although no state labor department is identical to another, most states share certain responsibilities such as occupational safety and health, wage and hour enforcement, an inspection of elevators and amusement devices, unemployment insurance oversight, etc. At this year's conference, I had the pleasure of meeting the labor commissioners, directors, and administrators from a dozen states across the country. We discussed relevant current events and issues in our states and covered topics including newly adopted legislation, lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, funding and staffing concerns, OSHA state-plan coverage, and wage and hour policies. Thank you to the Maryland Department of Labor for hosting an informative and worthwhile meeting.

I am pleased that N.C. General Assembly passed the 2022 Appropriations Act (state budget) with overwhelmingly bipartisan support. The budget, which the Governor signed into law on July 11, includes a total salary increase of 3.5% for state employees as well as additional funding for labor market salary adjustments to address staffing issues in hard-to-recruit positions across NCDOL. Our state employees serve in critical functions throughout state government, and I am thankful that the budget recognizes their hard work. The budget conference report also includes policy changes to the Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Act that were requested by my office. One significant change is to extend the statute of limitations for issuing citations that result from OSH inspections.

August brings with it the unofficial start to the local fair season. I am excited to kick off the season at Drexel Community Fair's ribbon-cutting ceremony on August 22. Over the next few months, I'll visit fairs around the state and I look forward to enjoying all the fun traditions that these local events offer. I also want to thank my elevator and amusement device inspectors who are responsible for inspecting all the rides at the fair and ensuring the safety of fairgoers.

Enjoy the remainder of your summer, and I hope to see you at one of our local fairs!

NC Senate District 46



Sen. Warren Daniel
Warren.Daniel@ncleg.net
919-715-7823

I am glad to let you know that the 2022 state budget was recently signed into law by Gov. Cooper. The budget increases funding for school safety initiatives and prepares our state to weather a potential recession. Republicans in the General Assembly have spent the last decade ensuring our state would be on a sturdy financial footing to avoid making the same mistakes the Democrats did during the last recession. This revised budget continues that preparation by establishing a new "State Inflationary Reserve" in anticipation of a recession.

The budget increases most state employee salaries by 3.5%. Over the biennium state employees will receive a 6% raise. The budget increases the salary for entry-level teachers, and on average teachers will receive a 4.2% pay raise. Noncertified public school employees, like bus drivers, will receive either a 4% pay raise or an increase to \$15/hour, whichever is greater. To address school safety concerns the budget provides an additional recurring \$15 million for the School Resource Officer Grant program, specifically for elementary and middle schools. The budget allocates \$26 million more to the At-Risk allotment to help school districts meet the average salary of school resource officers. It also provides an additional \$32 million for the School Safety Grant program for student support, school safety training, and safety equipment in schools. Some highlights of the education budget include \$3.9 million to cover the copays for students that qualify for reduced-price lunches and a \$431 million transfer over the biennium from N.C. Education Lottery to the Needs-Based Public School Capital Building Fund. Over the next 6 years, a projected \$2.6 billion will be spent on school capital. It includes expanding the income eligibility for the Opportunity Scholarship Program so more families have the chance to send their child to a school that best fits his or her educational needs. The new income eligibility level is equal to or less than 200% of the amount required for free or reduced-price lunch. Additionally, the 2022 budget allocates an additional \$56 million in recurring funds to the Opportunity Scholarship Grant reserve, for a total of \$150.8 million that can be awarded to families that qualify for the scholarship. It provides an additional recurring \$16.3 million to the Personal Education Student Accounts for Children with Disabilities Program, to clear the program's waitlist. The program's total funding in FY 2022-23 is \$47.9 million. Critical capital and infrastructure needs are being met through the updated spending plan as it redirects 2% of sales tax revenue -- approximately \$193.1 million -- to the Highway Fund to support a variety of transportation purposes. This is the first step to addressing declining transportation revenues to keep up with population growth. It provides an additional \$5 million for GREAT Grants to expand broadband access in underserved areas which increases the amount for GREAT Grants to \$20 million recurring. The state expects to receive at least \$100 million from the federal Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act for broadband. Finally, there will be transfers of \$950 million to the State Emergency Response and Disaster Relief Reserve, with \$215.8 million of that allocated for disaster recovery efforts from previous events and mitigation efforts to prepare for future flooding and natural disasters. Projects funded for Avery, Burke, and Caldwell counties include \$16.9 million for local water and sewer projects and \$11 million for in-kind grants to non-profits. As always, my staff and I consider it an honor to represent the citizens of the 46th District in the NC Senate. Please contact my office if we can ever be of assistance.

YOUR GOVERNMENT PAGES

NC 11th Congressional District



Rep. Madison Cawthorn
828-808-2148

This nation is facing many challenges, however, I have never been more convinced that our best days lie ahead of us. I am honored to continue working hard to represent you here in Washington. Thank you for your kind words over the last few weeks! I wanted to update you on what we've accomplished over the past few weeks.

Congressman Cawthorn Introduces Legislation to Improve Anesthesiologist Assistant Treatment Within the VA
I was honored to introduce H.R. 8225, a bill to improve the treatment of anesthesiologist assistants in the Veterans Health Administration of the Department of Veteran Affairs. This legislation requires a reevaluating of the grade and classification of CAAs (Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants) to accurately reflect their level of education, skill, responsibility, and direct patient care. Through this legislation, CAAs will be effectively compensated and brought in to pay parity with CAA's in the private sector. I will always work to make sure that our nation's bravest defenders are receiving top-notch care from well-paid, qualified, professionals. Ensuring our healthcare providers' correct evaluation and classification is incredibly important, especially for those treating our veterans. One of the most important ways we can provide quality care to our servicemen and women is by providing pay parity, in line with private-sector levels, to the healthcare professionals serving them.

Promoting Energy Independence

I was honored to have introduced H.R. 8002, The Energy Independence Task Force Act to establish the Inter-Agency Task Force on Energy Independence. This task force will examine whether the Russian Federation funded activities of non-governmental organizations in Western countries, which limited the ability of those countries to achieve energy independence, and made them more reliant on energy exported from Russia, and for other purposes.

The main objective of this legislation is to convene a task force to determine if Russia-Funded NGOs in western countries have limited their country's energy independence and made them more reliant on energy exported from Russia.

Congressman Cawthorn Directs the Commissioner of Social Security to Conduct a Comprehensive Study on Administrative Costs
I was also proud to have introduced H.R. 8101 which would direct the Commissioner of the Social Security Administration to conduct a comprehensive study relating to administrative costs. The real enemy of efficient government is the administrative state and this legislation works to streamline our bulky bureaucracy.

Standing up for the Unborn and Protecting Pregnancy Care Centers

I was honored to sign on to Congressman Ken Buck's letter with 40 of my Republican colleagues to Attorney General Garland regarding the recent spate of attacks against pro-life organizations and churches after the leak of the Dobbs' draft opinion. Specifically, the letter notes that during the 1990s all three branches of the federal government sought to proactively protect abortion providers, through the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act and Supreme Court case law and that this same law is presumptively content-neutral. My fellow colleagues and I demand that Attorney General Garland immediately and aggressively take steps to stop the violence by drawing on these existing means.

Stopping The Radical Woke Biden Agenda

I was proud to have been one of the 14 cosponsors of my fellow Republican colleagues The Stop W.O.K.E. ("Wrongs to Our Kids' Educational") Meals Act introduced by Representatives Harshbarger and Glenn Grothman. This important legislation would block President Biden's U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) from moving forward with a new interpretation of Title IX anti-discrimination laws that could potentially strip federal funding for K-12 meals/nutrition assistance from schools that do not let transgender students use their preferred bathrooms or play on preferred sports teams.

What this really means is that any recipients of the USDA's Food and Nutrition Services child nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program, could lose federal funding if they do not comply with President Biden's new transgender ideological interpretation of Title IX. I will always stand against any attempt by the Biden administration to destroy biological gender. I always will stand up for students, so they are not going hungry in our schools. I look forward to getting answers from the Department of Agriculture regarding this letter.

Service Academy Applications

The honor of attending a service academy comes with the obligation and commitment to serve in the military for a minimum of five years upon graduation. The mission of the U.S. service academies is to provide instruction and experience to all cadets so that they graduate with the knowledge and character essential to leadership and the motivation to become career officers in the U.S. military. To request a Military Academy Nomination from our office, please complete the following form below using the link provided. The deadline to submit a service academy application is October 31st and the application form can be found on cawthorn.house.gov. If you have any questions, please contact my District Director Brianna McMinn through her email which is Brianna.mcminn@mail.house.gov, or through our Hendersonville District office phone number 828-435-7310. Best wishes to you as you pursue your goal of attending one of the U.S. Service Academies and serving our country.

NC House District 86



Rep. Hugh Blackwell
919-733-5805
Hugh.Blackwell@ncleg.net

First, no one can now be surprised that censorship on Twitter is alive and well. Second, it is even more demonstrably clear that the nation's largest teacher's union, the National Education Association (NEA), is mostly concerned with pushing progressive social agendas and only incidentally with students' academic success.

Most recently, Twitter blocked tweets from Dr. Terry Stoops, director of the conservative John Locke Foundation's Center for Effective Education. Dr. Stoops had the temerity to make public the discussion topics of the National Education Association's annual meeting. The meeting is attended by thousands of teachers and public-school education advocates from across the nation. Faced with student achievement having collapsed under the weight of pandemic public-school closures, the NEA's focus is nevertheless on proposals for advancing social justice, gender identity, teacher autonomy, abortion access, and publicizing the "struggle of the Palestinians." It appears that the NEA wants teachers to be highly politicized, social justice warriors first and, if there is time, educators second or not at all.

Dr. Stoops obtained the meeting agenda with the discussion topics from a publicly accessible website. The NEA information was not private. However, one can assume that once Dr. Stoops released the document contents on Twitter, the NEA told Twitter to cancel Dr. Stoops. The NEA's actions were so outrageous that it came to the attention of Fox News' Laura Ingram, who featured Dr. Stoops on her show, "The Ingram Angle." This incident involving Dr. Stoops should make us all clear that Twitter is an unreliable, biased source and that those who care about our children and grandchildren should turn a deaf ear to the NEA when it purports to tell us who the true friends of education are or what our educational system's real needs are.

God Bless America

The Orchard at Altapass

First Apples Arrive at The Orchard at Altapass

By Kate Groff
Mitchell County



The first heirloom apples of the season are ripe and ready for purchase by the bag or U-Pick at the Orchard at Altapass. They're available at the new adjunct—behind the red barn under the back deck. Folks can purchase by bag or opt for a U-Pick experience that will guide them to the ripe apples where they can pick their own. "We'll be adding more days when the season gets going, said store manager Alicia Sillman, "but for now, U-Picking is Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday on the hour from 10 until 4."

Apples at the Orchard are heirlooms, which are older apple varieties passed down from multiple generations and characterized by their diversity of tastes, textures, sizes, and shapes. Varieties are usually over five decades old—before the onslaught of commercial production. Once there were 17,000 heirloom apple varieties grown in North America; it's estimated that only 4,000 remain, down 75%.

Although not organic, very few sprays are used on Orchard apples, just enough to quell insects but allow the unique tastes to come through.

Located at 1025 Orchard Road near Spruce Pine at mile marker 328.3 on the Blue Ridge Parkway, the Orchard is a not-for-profit working, small batch heirloom apple orchard and educational venue. Hours are 10 AM to 5 PM, Wednesday-Sunday. Family-/pet-friendly. Wheelchair accessible. For information, please visit www.altapassorchard.org



Appleshed, from left: Johanna Schlabach, Jamie Shriver

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

Carolina Home Care Specialists, INC

Excellence in Personalized Care

Medicaid Covered Services

- In-Home Care for Children & Adults
- CAP for Disabled Adults & Children
- CAP Choice
- Pediatric Nurse Aids

Other Services

- Private Pay
- Insurance
- VA Homemaker Service
- Companion/Sitter
- Respite

Now Hiring CNAs

Our In-Home Aides are supervised by a registered nurse who is available during all hours worked by the aide.

Phone (828) 765-4343 • (866) 765-4340

clayton[®]
homes

(I-40 Exit 103)
1276 Burkemont Ave
Morganton, NC
828.433.8455

www.claytonmorganton.com

Smart
Savings
Event

NEW HOMES DISCOUNTED UP TO
\$2,500*



*Restrictions apply. Click [here](#) for complete terms & conditions.

Sibling Love

By Christy Lowman
Burke County

If you have read my past articles, you may be wondering what happened to the feral kittens and their momma we found under our building. One of the kittens ended up getting a bot fly larva in its skin. It was eating away his flesh and muscles so we had to take him to the vet to have it removed. We ended up naming him Chip. When we caught him for his emergency vet visit, one of the other kittens was out there and ran off. We must have accidentally scared him because we haven't seen him since, unfortunately.

Hornets decided to build a nest under our building forcing the remaining kitten out from under the building, so we caught him and brought him inside to be with Chip, we named him Dell.

Their mother hung around for about a week more, she quit eating and drinking the milk we were feeding her for the most part and then disappeared. I still look for Momma and the other kitten, I hope they are both okay.

We named the two kittens we rescued Chip and Dell after the cartoon, and because Chip's back is striped like a chipmunk. They both love laying on computers so their names also come from Chip, as in computer chip, and Dell, as in Dell computers.

Chip and Dell are a mess! They have very different personalities. Dell is very rough and tumble will eat everything in sight, and is very loving and sweet. Chip is a little shy, a dainty eater, and looks for anything and everything to get into.

They love each other so much and spend most of their time together. They are the best of friends most of the time. But occasionally they get into it and have a little fight.

Do you have a sibling? Do you get along?

I have one sibling, my brother Jeremy. He is six years younger than I. We spent most of our younger years fighting and bickering. He loved to get under my skin especially when I was dating. We were never very close. However, if anyone mistreated him, I was ready to go and beat them up. Because you do not mess with my little brother!

One August evening in 2000, Mom, Jeremy, my husband, Don, and I decided to go out to eat in Morganton when Quincey's Steakhouse was still open. We were going to ride together but for some reason, Mom decided to drive and Jeremy rode with her. On the way back they went home ahead of us while we drove up to Walmart. Walmart was closed, so we headed home and were a few miles behind them. One mile from our home we came to stop. There was a line of traffic at a standstill due to a horrific car wreck. God let me know immediately that it was my mother and brother. Scared, worried, and regret overwhelmed me and I got sick to my stomach. I started praying to God and pleading for my family's lives. I also begged for a second chance to get things right with my brother. I knew if I lost him, I would regret the way our relationship was. I needed a chance to better that relationship and to show him how much I did care and love him even though he drove me crazy.

God answered my prayers. Both my mother and brother survived which was nothing but a miracle. My brother stayed one night in the hospital. He was banged up and had lots of cuts from the broken windshield. My mother was flown to Baptist Hospital in Winston Salem. She had countless hours of surgeries and spent months in the hospital followed by months in a nursing home until she was well enough to come home.

I try to thank God often for my answered prayers. I also try to keep my promise to Him and have a good relationship with my brother, which I think I have. We are a lot closer and spend supper together almost every evening. He supports me in whatever adventure I am in. He is a wonderful uncle and invests time into having a relationship with my children. And if someone mistreats my brother, I still want to beat them up!

Of course, we still get under each other's skin, that's part of having a sibling but we make up afterward instead of letting hard feelings build up like before.

So, if you have a sibling or multiple siblings that like to drive you crazy, remember that God gave you your brother or sister for a reason. He hand-picked them to be a part of your family while you navigate this crazy life while here on earth. So, love them and cherish them and try to have the best relationship possible with them. That is how God wants it.

Dear Lord, help us see why it is important to have a good relationship with our siblings. Help each one of us grow that relationship to how you would want it to be. Thank you for the brother/sister you have blessed us with in our earthly family. In Jesus's name, I pray, Amen.

"If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother; he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen." 1 John 4:20

Christy Lowman 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 HCI.. Christy gives all the glory to God in everything she does. A portion of every book sold from the Small Bible Character Series will be donated to battle human trafficking. You can buy her books at https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=dp_byline_sr_book_1?ie=UTF8&field-author=Christy+Lowman&search-alias=books&text=Christy+Lowman&sort=relevancerank. You can reach her at <https://www.facebook.com/authorChristyLowman/> or christyssoaps@yahoo.com.



Words

By Chrys Wimer
Fresno County, California

There are so many times I cannot express the words in my heart. Sometimes they beat with a fierceness deep within, trying to come out, yet halted and unsure. So many times, my words are just a whisper. They are so quiet I can barely even breathe. Then some words tumble around and get scrambled in my head, and they make no sense. Harsh words pop in my head and then fly out of my mouth only to desire to be hidden by shame and guilt. The most complicated words are words of love and peace. They often hide deep within, wanting to come out yet afraid they will get trampled on. Yet, no matter what words roll around inside my head, they are all known and understood by my Creator King. The Holy Spirit takes the words, unscrambles them, and then presents them to the Father, who lovingly and patiently replies, "I know."

Chrys Wimer is a children's book author and semi-retired teacher. She also suffers from Irlen Syndrome which makes it difficult to read unless she wears her Irlen Filters (glasses). Chrys is a resident of Fresno County, California. I attend Foundation Church in Clovis, California



Jonathan's

USED APPLIANCES

NEW LOCATION!

Cash it, Don't Trash It!
We buy your used appliances!

560 Oak Avenue • Spruce Pine, NC
828-766-9005 • (Cell) 828-766-9389

• Come and see the friendly staff at Jonathan's for all your appliance needs.

• We repair all major brands of appliances.

We Deliver!

- Washer
- Dryers
- Stoves
- Refrigerators

DT'S BLUE RIDGE JAVA COFFEE SHOP & CAFE'

Breakfast • Lunch

Deli Sandwiches
Hamburgers
Hot Dogs
Soup & Salad
Ice Cream
Pastries

828-766-8008

169 Locust St. (Lower St.)
Spruce Pine, NC

Daily: 7:00am - 5:00pm
Closed Sunday
Go to Church

Don't Forget Gift Cards!

McCabe's TIRE & SERVICE

NOW OPEN!!!

A family owned & operated business
(an entity of Buff's Tire & Service)
Located at 303 Burkemont Ave,
Morganton, NC
(across from Freedom Insurance)

We offer multiple services including:

- New Tires
- Brakes
- Alignments
- NC State Inspections
- General Repairs

The Best Way to Love Others and Yourself

By Joyce Meyer



I believe that other than the gospel regarding salvation through faith in Christ, learning to walk in love is the most important lesson in God's Word. Jesus says that love is the most important commandment (Mark 12:28-31). The apostle Paul writes that love is the greatest thing (1 Corinthians 13:13), and he tells Timothy that the purpose of their instruction is love that comes from a pure heart (1 Timothy 1:5).

If I were only allowed to teach three messages for the remainder of my life, the first would be that we are saved by grace through our faith in Jesus, and by it, we are justified and made right with God. The second would be the importance of spending regular quality time with God. And the third would be receiving God's love, loving Him in return, and walking in love with other people.

Thankfully I don't have to limit my teaching to three subjects; I share this only to show you how important I believe walking in love is. After we are saved by grace, if we were to focus on this alone, we would avoid most of our problems.

Love does not harm anyone. And people who walk in love cannot be unhappy, because they don't have their minds on themselves but on what they can do for God and others. I have often said that we cannot be both selfish and happy at the same time.

The kind of love I'm talking about is not carnal love. It is not a feeling, although it may include feelings. It is the same kind of love God gives to us—unconditional, everlasting, and powerful. It is called the "royal law" of liberty (James 2:8) because the person who truly loves others will not break any of God's commandments.

If we love God as we should, we will happily obey Him, and one of His commands is that we should love one another. As a matter of fact, Jesus says, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another" (John 13:34-35 NIV).

In Galatians 5:13-15, the apostle Paul says, "You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other."

Love is something that can be seen and felt. It is displayed in a variety of ways. Love is patient, and it always believes the best. Love helps others, it gives, and it is quick to forgive. This is a very basic list, but just those five qualities of love are plenty to think about and ask God to help us do.


I highly recommend that we all major in walking in love. This requires intentionality and saying no to self regularly, but the rewards of peace, joy, and greater fulfillment will always outweigh the sacrifices we make. Let us remember that Jesus said what we have done to others, we have done to Him (Matthew 25:40, 45). That is a thought-provoking statement and one that we should take time to meditate on.

The last few verses of Galatians 5 give us a warning from Paul that if we bite and devour (fight and argue with) one another, it may consume us. It seems today that a large percentage of the population is angry or resentful about something, and Christians are certainly not immune to these negative feelings.

Anger is dangerous because it can devour and consume us, and it often becomes all we think about. The truth is staying angry with your enemies is like taking poison and hoping it will hurt the person who hurt you. I like to say, "Do yourself a favor and forgive." And Ephesians 4:32 says, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you"

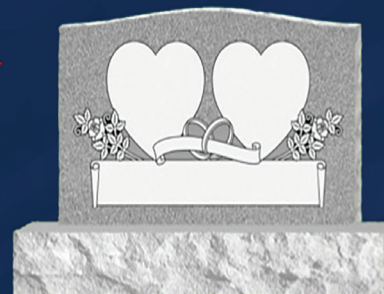

This is the best way to live. And when we do, we're following Paul's instruction in Galatians 5:13-14, to "serve one another humbly in love" and to love others as we love ourselves.

Joyce Meyer is a New York Times bestselling author and founder of Joyce Meyer Ministries, Inc. She hosts the Enjoying Everyday Life radio and TV programs, which air on hundreds of stations worldwide. For more information, visit www.joycemeyer.org.



JULY SALE 2022

J&M MEMORIALS



2703 RUTHERFORD COLLEGE RD.
CONNELLY SPRINGS, NC 28612

\$50 Off for Markers \$100 Off for Double

EMAIL: [JNMMEMORIAL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:jnmmemorial@gmail.com)

TEL. (828) 368-0242

WWW.JNMMEMORIALS.COM



DR. MINI STORAGE

14307 Hwy 226 • Spruce Pine, NC

Camper & Boat Storage

828-260-3396 • 828-766-4585

www.drstoragenc.com

Freedom: From Whence it Comes and Its True Nature

By Rev. Mark Creech

Freedom. We love it. We're jealous and protective of it. We demand it. We'll fight to defend it. Still, few people know from whence it comes or its true nature. Contrary to popular opinion, freedom is not the liberty to do whatever we want. In the natural order, specific parameters prevail. We are free to function and flourish within those boundaries, but if we violate them, freedom suffers loss.

In For Women Only, Gigi Graham Tchividjian explains the nature of freedom, saying:

"When God gave us the gift of freedom. He placed it within a framework. He also gave us a well-defined guideline for the effective use of the gift.

"A fish is free as long as it stays in the water. If it suddenly declares that it wants the freedom to fly in the air like a bird, disaster occurs. A train is free as long as it stays on the track. However, if it demands freedom to take off down a major highway, the result is devastation and destruction. We, too, can only experience true freedom to its fullest if we remain within the framework of freedom. Often this requires accepting responsibility and practicing discipline."

At the beginning of time, humanity lost the freedom it had initially. Life was paradise within God's limit, not to partake of the forbidden fruit.

But after humanity's rebellion in Adam and Eve, the freedom to converse with God was lost; the freedom to work and eat without sweat and drudgery was lost; the freedom to live forever gave way to death; the woman was reduced to subservience to the man and pain in childbearing; the beautiful serpent lost its attractiveness and was cursed to hideously slither upon the ground.

Whether we take the account in Genesis as historical (which I see no reason to take it otherwise) or allegorical, the principle is rock solid: Cooperation with God's established order is the only means to sustain freedom. This principle is also seen throughout the Old Testament in the rise and eventual captivity of God's chosen people, the Hebrews.

In the New Testament, true freedom intrinsically relates to a person's relationship with Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul said, "*It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery*" (Galatians 5:1).

Paul's teaching had its roots in the teachings of Jesus, who said, "*If you abide in my word, then you are truly my disciples; and you shall know the truth, and the truth will make you free*" (John 8:31). In other words, in its essence, freedom is spiritual, and only those who are disciples of Jesus and follow his ways can know the truth and be free.

This spiritual freedom can be experienced despite outward circumstances of social bondage. Nevertheless, when society generally applies the doctrine of the great deliverer, Christ, social freedom also results.

Embodied in the churches, this Gospel of freedom in Christ started spreading throughout the world. Over time, it headed westward through various means. It was spread by the likes of Wycliffe, Tyndale, Luther, Knox, Calvin, Wesley, Cartwright, and others.

It came to the shores of America by the Pilgrims, the Puritans, the Quakers, the Huguenots, the Catholics, the Dutch Reformed, the Lutherans, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Baptists, and the Anglicans of Virginia.

Its reach was broadened by the pens of Locke, Montesquieu, Sidney, Blackstone, Mason, Paine, Adams, Franklin, and the impassioned words of a young clergyman, Patrick Henry. The Black Robe Regiment consisted of preachers like Henry who proclaimed God's gift of liberation in Christ from their fiery pulpits.

In his book, One Nation Under God, Russ Walton eloquently states from whence our country's freedom derived. He writes:

"Free! Christ died and rose to make men free.

"Whosoever will! Praise God!

"Through Christ, we are freed from the wages of sin. Eternal freedom. Free if we choose to be.

"Free from the bondage and ravages of appetite and self. Internal freedom. Free if we choose to be.

"Free from the savagery of demagogues and the tyranny of kings. External freedom. Free if we choose to be.

"Just as Christ Jesus brought us internal freedom (and a rebirth into a new life in him), so He also brought us a new direction for our external freedom (and a new purpose for our civil government).

"Internal and external freedom. Self-government with the union in Christ.

"For if Christ would die to make men free, how dare Caesar to force men to live or die for him?

"There! There was the spark, the flame, the beacon light of the American idea. The power of the great American Republic. The sense and the spirit of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of these United States of America." On that blessed day, when the Declaration of Independence was signed in Independence Hall, Samuel Adams, the firebrand of the American Revolution, stood and declared:

"We have this day restored the Sovereign to whom all men ought to be obedient. And, from the rising to the setting of the sun, let His kingdom come."

Freedom comes from God. A right relationship with God sustains freedom.



Reverend Dr. Mark Creech is Executive Director of the NC Christian Action League. You may contact him at rev.markcreech@christianactionleague.org or 919-787-0606



Faith Family Health

*New primary care for all ages.
Let our family take care of your family!*

Looking for trustworthy, convenient care? We are now accepting patients of all ages.

We pledge to take time to listen and be attentive to the needs of the patient. We will offer same-day appointments most days, however, subject to limited availability.

Local, personable care from the youngest patient to the youngest at heart! We provide primary care needs including wellness, disease management and minor acute care. We offer affordable cash pay options for uninsured, competitive Commercial License physical exam rates, as well as try to accommodate most acute needs on the day of contact.

Accepting all major insurances, Medicare, Medicaid.

Call 828-536-5125 for an appointment.

PROVIDERS: Karen B. Peterson | FNP-C |
Misty Peterson Dotts | FNP-C |

14 Academy St. Burnsville, NC 28714 • Hours: 8:30 AM - 5 PM • Monday-Friday
Office - 828-536-5125

BLOOM

Grateful Girl Gathering Christian Women's Conference 2022

August 27
Spruce Pine, NC

Get information at www.gratefulgirlgathering.com

CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Come and gather with us!

Great speakers!
Amazing Worship Music!
Boutique Area!
Fun DIY breakout sessions
Lunch included

DON'T MISS IT!
CROSS ST CENTER
SPRUCE PINE, NC

REGISTER ONLINE!

FOR MORE INFORMATION gratefulgirlgathering@gmail.com www.gratefulgirlgathering.com

Crossword

Crossword 277

ACROSS

1 The ____ is not held secure, the sail is not spread (Isa 33:23)

5 he gave a loaf of bread, a cake of ____ (2 Sam 6:19)

9 Then God said, "Let the ____ produce vegetation (Gen 1:11)

13 whatsoever hath _____, that shall ye not offer (1,7) (Lev 22:20) KJV

14 But if he be ____ than thy estimation, then he shall present (Lev 27:8) KJV

15 The twenty ninth book of the Old Testament.

16 The _____ trees cover him with their shadow (Job 40:22)

17 Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and ____ the five kings of Midian (Num 31:8)

18 I came near unto ____ of them that stood by (Daniel 7:16)

19 ____ man can live and not see death? (Ps 89:48)

20 they which went up also from Telhairesha, Cherub, ____ (Neh 7:61) KJV

21 They ____, "The Lord needs it." (Luke 19:34)

23 I hold ____ to your statutes, O LORD (Ps 119:31)

25 "You ____ were with Jesus of Galilee," she said (Matt 26:69)

26 know that you have no authority to ____ taxes (Ezra 7:24)

29 topaz, and the diamond, the ____, the onyx (Ezek 28:13)

32 their sailors came alongside to trade for your ____ (Ezek 27:9)

34 saying, ____, Eli, lama sabachthani (Matt 27:46)

36 you must cancel any debt your brother ____ you (Deut 15:3)

38 ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you ____ (Matt 11:28) KJV

39 the hour cometh, ____, is now come, (John 16:32) KJV

40 from the hand of the wicked, from the ____ of evil (Ps 71:4)

43 lies down, like a lioness who ____ to rouse him? (Gen 49:9)

44 a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth ____ (Ezek 17:6) KJV

46 Saul and Abner son of Ner had ____ down (1 Sam 26:5)

49 he entered the temple ____ and began driving out those who were (Luke 19:45)

50 We _____ whenever we are weak but you are strong (3,4) (2 Cor 13:9)

54 in ____, Zeboim and Neballat (Neh 11:34)

57 The body is a ____, though it is made up of many parts (1 Cor 12:12)

58 Sir, come down ____ my child die (John 4:49) KJV

59 30th book of the Old

Testament

60 If anyone ____ to be first, he must be the very last (Mark 9:35)

61 will men take _____ of it to hang any vessel thereon (1,3) (Ezek 15:3) KJV

62 rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, ____, slander (Col 3:8)

63 forthwith they sprung up, because they had no ____ of earth (Matt 13:5) KJV

64 You were in ____, the garden of God (Ezek 28:13)

65 the most upright worse than a ____ hedge (Mic 7:4)

66 Likewise every good ____ bears good fruit (Matt 7:17)

Down

1 You will overthrow every fortified city and every ____ town (2 Kings 3:19)

2 a gentle tongue can break _____ (1,4) (Prov 25:15)

3 Multitudes who ____ in the dust of the earth will awake (Dan 12:2)

4 exiles who lived at ____ Abib near the Kebar River (Ezek 3:15)

5 make its plates and ____ of pure gold (Ex 25:29)

6 The law is only _____ of the good things that are (1,6) (Heb 10:1)

7 let them also ____ love thy name be joyful in thee (Ps 5:11) KJV

8 David sent them to you to explore the city and ____ it out (2 Sam 10:3)

9 Teach me, O ____, ____ follow your decrees (4,2) (Ps 119:33)

10 there before me was a man riding _____ horse (1,3) (Zech 1:8)

11 Bel bows down, ____ stoops low; their idols (Isa 46:1)

12 by us who ate and ____ with him after he rose from the dead (Acts 10:41)

19 Therefore disaster ____ overtake him in an instant (Prov 6:15)

20 the poison of ____ is under their lips (Rom 3:13) KJV

22 The good shepherd ____ down his life for the sheep (John 10:11)

23 king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and _____ trees (1 King 9:11)

24 To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever. ____ (Phil 4:20)

27 with the words of David, and of Asaph the ____ (2 Chr 29:30)

28 he himself gives all men life and breath and everything ____ (Acts 17:25)

29 "All these I have kept since I was a ____, " he said (Luke 18:21)

30 twenty he goats, two hundred ____, and twenty rams (Gen 32:14)

31 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor ____ (Luke 12:24)

33 he was riding upon his _____,

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8		9	10	11	12
13									14					
15						16					17			
18					19						20			
21				22				23	24					
				25				26				27	28	
29	30	31				32	33					34		35
36						37					38			
39					40		41		42		43			
	44			45				46	47					
48				49				50				51	52	53
54	55	56					57					58		
59						60					61			
62							63							
64						65					66			

COPYRIGHT 2021

BIBLEWORDGAMES.COM

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

and his two servants were with him (Num 22:22)

35 seven of every kind of clean animal, a male and ____ mate (Gen 7:2)

37 I particularly ____ you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon (Heb 13:19)

38 "At midnight the cry ____ out: 'Here's the bridegroom!' (Matt 25:6)

40 ____ your sword upon your side, O mighty one (Ps 45:3)

41 gather your children together, ____ hen gathers her chicks (2,1) (Luke 13:34)

42 the reaper will be overtaken by the plowman and the ____ (Amos 9:13)

43 there was a continual ____ given him of the king (Jer 52:34) KJV

45 here were plentiful supplies of flour, fig cakes, ____ cakes (1 Chron 12:40)

47 wicked men have ____ among you (Deut 13:13)

48 In you, O LORD, I have taken refuge; let me never be put to ____ (Ps 71:1)

51 Jesus was in Bethany in the home of a man known as

Simon the ____ (Matt 26:6)

52 angels hastened Lot, saying, ____, take thy wife (Gen 19:15) KJV

53 the ____ forest has been cut down (Zech 11:2)

55 As ____ man who casteth firebrands (1,3) (Prov 26:18) KJV

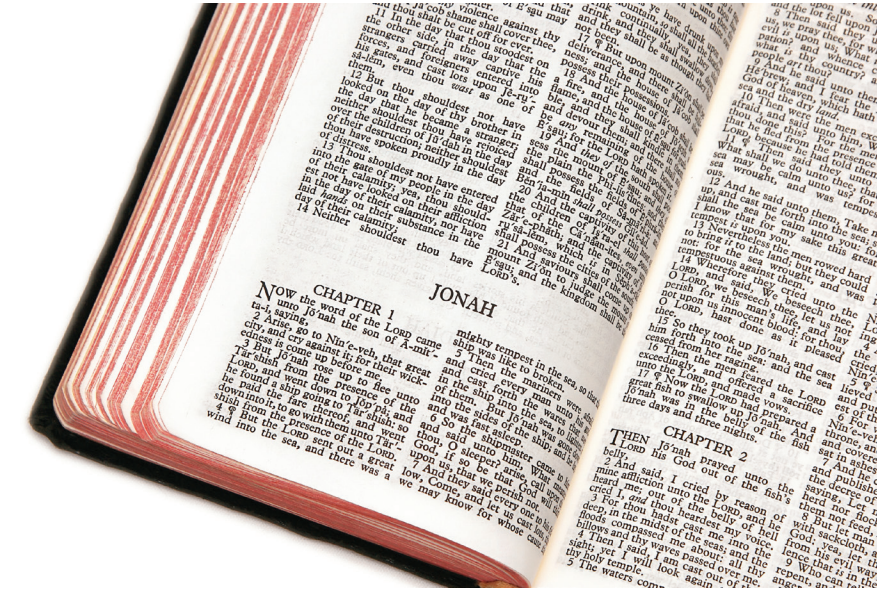
56 they will ____ out the bread by weight (Lev 26:26)

57 loose the bands of wickedness, to ____ the heavy burdens (Isa 58:6) KJV

60 she began to ____ his feet with her tears (Luke 7:38)

61 picnic pest (Prov 6:6)

Solution on page 14



Brighter Days

By Tim Tron
Burke County

"Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new;" – 2 Cor. 5:17

You know the feeling. We've all had them at one time or another. It had been one of those spiritual dry spells where it felt as if God was not listening to your prayers. Reading the word seemed difficult. Nothing seemed to be sinking in. It was as if there was a disconnect between Heaven and Earth. Searching for something, a sign, a voice, anything that would awaken the spirit within, my hand reached for the radio dial and tuned to a Christian music station. The gray morning landscape passed by the car windows – looming mountains shrouded in misty somberness slept peacefully.

The coffee had yet to sink in when something on the airwaves caught my ear, "I know there's gonna be some brighter days," the voice sang.

Within an instant, my thoughts turned toward today's youth and how they faced a seemingly uphill battle. For some, they have yet to know brighter days. For the collegiate individual, their time has been spent since their youth in scholastic endeavors, some now in their early twenties, still seeking to find themselves in an ever-increasingly dark and bitter world. But, then, at the same time, in a parallel stream, my mind thought of the elderly and how they, if allowing themselves the pity of afterthought, began to dwell on what once was comparing it today, would likewise find themselves seeking brighter days ahead. It was then the comparative contrast of the two was born and how each should hear of the other and be reminded that they are not alone.

And the song continued, "I swear that love will find you in your pain. I feel it in me like the beating of life in my veins. I know there's gonna be some brighter days."

When we think about it, we find two vastly separate age groups with potentially similar dismal or enlightened trajectories, depending upon where they are in life. Two distinct paths for each, both similar and both different but for obvious reasons. In each thread, there exists a level of anxiety, or as the song reminds us, pain: the student and the elderly both fear the unknown, but the latter's eminent destination is far more grave - death. No one can escape it. One's fear is far less severe than the other, yet each is embraced with equal resolve, or at the very least, should be. Graduation from an institution of learning is a joyous occasion. Yet, we don't always perceive the graduation to our Heavenly home as such. For some, without a hope of a greater tomorrow, their earthly existence is all there is. When it stops, so does their hope – therein lies the potential for one's anxiousness. In each graduation, there can be joy, or there can be anxiety. In life, one can find this contrast often. Like most terrestrial encounters, the life experience is almost always an infinitesimal glimpse of what the heavenly experience will provide. In this vein, we continue the comparison and share how the detrimental aspects can be lessened or completely erased when one finds themselves in the preferred spiritual frame of mind.

The melody continued as the dark peaks slowly emerged from the shadows of darkness, "Oh, ashes fall from burning dreams. On, never lived through times like these. Oh, if you're trying hard to breathe in the dark, In the dark. I know there's gonna be some brighter days (yes, I do)."

Some say age is the great equalizer. Those dreams of fortune and fame fall like ashes from the burning flames of life. Reality begins to set in and childhood fantasies are replaced with the daily grind of existence. Before you know it, you’ve passed middle age and your body begins to falter. In our youth, we recover from ailments more quickly, but as most know, the more advanced in years you become, the slower those muscle strains dissipate – some become chronic, lasting a lifetime. My earthly father had almost all of his major joints replaced with man-made devices. Yet, even after all that, his pain persisted to the point he would say, "I know the day that I wake up, and there is no more pain is the day that I'll know I'm dead." His point was in heaven, there will be no more pain, no more sorrow. The body's ability to regenerate often becomes the distraction to which many become victims. The soul's health doesn't seem as important when you feel immortal. But the day will come when all of that youth has passed away, and then, in those twilight years, some become painfully aware of the fallacy of their childish convictions. To make the point, imagine yourself in a stadium at a rock concert full of college-age students. A band is blasting wailing guitars through mountainous speakers, people are screaming, and you can barely hear your own voice. Meanwhile, your best friend is trying to tell you their most intimate life story. All you see are their lips moving and the roar of the crowd. Here and there, you catch a word, maybe recognizing the formation of the lips into something intelligible, but most of what is said is missed. When you leave, your friend feels like they have poured out their soul to you, but you feel little to nothing. There was just too much in the way. In that sense, many of us found religion in our youth precisely like those two in the concert. God was there for us. Maybe a youth minister spoke to us passionately, but we couldn't hear them for the interference that surrounded our lives; the hormones raging, the chat texts blowing up, the fast times cruising the strip, or whatever led you astray – they all stood as an obstacle to knowing the Father.

In our youth, we don't have the life experiences from which to draw. When we are young, the consequences of our actions are buffered by our body's ability to recover from them if they are minor enough. Yet, in advanced age, those ailments become burdens. On the opposite end of the spectrum, those worldly pleasures are enhanced by our body's youthfulness. Desires of the flesh are much more gratified by the hormone-induced will than that of the geriatric patient who barely has feeling in their extremities. One can't help but to want to sin in our youth, while the elderly become numb to its sensation, allowing for the reception of the more spiritual aspect of life to become more significant. Here in this comparison, we can find how much



more easily an elderly person might become a follower of Christ than a young person. Here too, we can see how much more unique and beautiful it is when we find a young person that is a faithful follower of Christ – because they have found, through God's Grace, the ability to overcome those earthly temptations with the aid of the Holy Spirit. This is, of course, not meant to diminish the elderly believer's faith. Likewise, some have lived in sin their entire lives, and finally in old age, to realize that their whole lives were lived in darkness. Is this not just as monumental? Finding Christ in their later years is indeed as much a blessing as those young folks who find Him. This brings us to this revelation: Regardless of age, salvation is priceless.

Either way, the act of regeneration of the body and soul is not easy at any age. As Paul wrote to Timothy, "Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.*" *There will always be struggles when one seeks to become a follower of Jesus. The graduate must learn to balance starting a new career while daily reminding themselves who they serve. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ."*

Everything is a new frontier, a new challenge waiting to happen. Like those potential college graduates, the future has much to hold. Like the believer, the one who knows that when they pass from this life to the next, there will be an experience waiting that has no comparison. As a believer, the things of this world take on new meaning, and new purpose. Again, these are only minute snapshots of our eternal home. We've read throughout the Bible the various prophecies of heaven and all that it holds, but in truth, no one on earth knows. Like those students with whom I recently asked about what their future would be like when compared to an elderly person, they could only see it from the bright side of youthful optimism. In essence, both are saying, as scripture tells us, *"Death has no sting."* Christ defeated death on the cross so that we may have eternal life.

Physically, dying is hard. Even if the pain is removed, the eventual separation from our loved ones, that departure, is brutal. To some, the anxiety, whether from losing a loved one to the loved one going on to glory, is by far the greatest of all sufferings. In our own pain of loss, we often wish those that have died to come back, to return into our presence so that we can go on living as before. How selfish is that? C.S Lewis described wanting his beloved wife, Joy, to return from death like this. "What sort of a lover am I to think so much about my affliction and so much less about hers? Even the insane call, 'Come back,' is all for my own sake. I never even raised the question of whether such a return, if it were possible, would be good for her. I want her back as an ingredient in the restoration of my past. Could I have wished her anything worse? Having got once through death, to come back and then, at some later date, have all her dying to do over again? They call Stephen the first martyr. Hadn't Lazarus the rawer deal?"

Herein lies the perspective from the opposite side of the coin. When one doesn't have the gift of salvation, when all they know is only what this world has to offer, there is a genuine and foreboding sense of dread when facing the end. Whether it's the end of the college career or the end of life alone, we often feel inadequate or helpless. Some mask their fears with an overabundance of optimism, only to cry themselves to sleep in the loneliness of a long dark night. Through the pandemic, we heard stories of depression and abandonment. Suicide rates skyrocketed as many who based their lives on the secular world's existence became abandoned, castaways in their own homes. Even the believers who could not fellowship with others felt the pain of what it was to be like Christ on the cross when God seemed to abandon him. The separation from God is a fate worse than death. And so, we can find that without Him, we are nothing. There is no hope, no future, nothing beyond this life. Those who ignore the calls to join his flock, to become a believer, are like those students who quit and give up and find themselves forever regretting their decisions. While their choice to drop out of school is not for an eternity, and some do recover and have a successful life, their choices early in life affect the remainder of their earthly life. However, unlike a career choice, the spiritual decision has much graver consequences. The choice we make here in our short time on earth will impact our eternal life – damnation in hell or eternal bliss in heaven. Finally, the song concluded as the sunrise broke through the clouds. As I parked my car, the morning’s glow reflected in the lake nearby. The words to the song matched the beauty of the scene before me, warming my heart with a feeling only God can provide. "I know there's gonna be some brighter days, I swear that love will find you in your pain, I feel it in me like the beating of life in my veins. I know there’s gonna be a brighter day."

In the end, no matter the age, God's love is there for us. We only have to accept him into our lives, confess our sins, believe that he died, rose from the grave and now sits at the right hand of the Father, and we too can know Him.

Your salvation is up to you.
There is no age limit. Yes, there can always be a brighter day.
Thanks be to God!

Timothy W. Tron lives in Collettsville, NC. with his family. He is currently the Systems Administrator for the Computer Science Department at App. State. Timothy is the former Director of the Trail of Faith in Valdese, where he still volunteers and helps with tours. He is the author of a new Christian series, “Children of the Light”, with the first book being, “Bruecke to Heaven”, revised as “Bridge to Heaven”, and his recent book, being the second, “The Light in the Darkness”. He is an active blogger, artist, and musician. Timothy also has a BSEE from UF, and is a Lay Speaker. He is currently acting as the Faculty/Staff Liaison for the Ratio Christi campus ministry at App. State. He can be reached at trontw@appstate.edu You can visit his website at //www.timothywtron.com/ or see more of his writings

Poem

Forgiveness
By Regina McIntosh
Yancey County

Forgive – scripture speaks
Silencing the bitter past, the resentments
The anger and doubt, the suffering

Forgive – God instructs
Delivering mercy, grace, compassion
Never judgment or sentence
No verdicts of imprisonment

Forgive – His word directs
Listen to the heart, the Holy Spirit
Has everything figured out
Listen to the One who teaches souls
To believe, to pardon, to excuse

Forgive – sacred promise of healing
From One who carried His cross
Was nailed to the tree God created
Where leaves danced and birds nestled
Never envisaging the shadow, the
Darkness that would cover the earth

Forgive – He gave us an astonishing sample
Reconciling the heart to a God who loves
More than our minds can imagine or expect
With love that is alive, like the forgiveness
Welcoming spiritual restoration, His gift
To those who know He is the answer, the One
Who lifts the veil and delivers us from hell

Forgive – and be blessed by His death and resurrection!

Mark 11:25 (KJV) “And when ye stand praying, forgive, if
ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in
heaven may forgive you your trespasses.”

Regina is a heart and soul who loves the Lord, her family, church, nature, camp-
ing, writing, and reading. Her poems have been published by Blue Mountain Arts
and she has a recent book of Inspirational Christian Poetry available on Amazon
– A Light in the Darkness by Regina McIntosh. Learn more about her by visiting
her website at www.reginamcintosh.com



THE 4th ANNUAL FOUNDERS DAY
GOLF TOURNAMENT

Proceeds to benefit Ukraine

Come and enjoy the day as
we honor the memory of
Billy Graham who, in 1956
played the inaugural round
of golf at Grassy Creek
Golf and Country club in
Spruce Pine NC.

THE

1958

BILLY GRAHAM

2022

Memorial

AUGUST 27

9:30 A.M. SHOTGUN START

TEAM FORMAT 4 PLAYERS

CAPTAINS CHOICE

\$75 EACH PLAYER

LUNCH IS INCLUDED

GRASSY CREEK

GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB

FUND RAISER FOR BILLY GRAHAM EVANGELIST
ASSOCIATION & SAMARITAN'S PURSE
TO ASSIST THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE

A BOOK THAT WILL CHANGE
THE COURSE OF MILLIONS OF LIVES

Read how God guided the hand of this author to write about the cause,
cure and prevention of cancer.
The unique ministry of Barbara Waters called of God to bring His people
out of the bondage of cancer will intrigue the reader as she reveals how God
uses ordinary people to accomplish His great goals.

338
pages

SAY NO

CANCER

TO CANCER

BARBARA WATERS
Foreword by Dr. C. E. Stenson, II

Published By
Covenant Books

Discover vital information about cancer, how to deal with it, and how to prevent it.
This new release is your everyday guide to living your most natural and healthy lifestyle.

PURCHASE “SAY NO TO CANCER” WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD

www.brcnews.com

August 2022 - Blue Ridge Christian News page 40