

Gulf Coast BAPTIST News

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Volume XXIX

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dr. H. H. Strickland

This is the first report of the 2024 new year. We have chosen to go to a quarterly new letter due to the present financial situation with the school. I hope that you will bear with us as we continue to make the transition.

We are still in the process of locating and acquiring a facility that can house both the school and the print shop. I have looked at a couple of buildings but we have not been able to secure any of them. The difficulty is financing a purchase. At the present time, the school or the shop could sustain a mortgage payment. We must find a way to acquire a facility

where we will not have the debt. This has been an ongoing process now for over a year and it has not come to a close.

The semester began with three students. One of the students that had attended in house classes last semester chose not to enrol for this semester but is taking directive studies. However, we were able to enrol one new students. Dr. Gonnella is working hard in representing the school in churches in and around Mobile and Pensacola. He has been encouraged by the response that he has had. It will take time to rebuild our enrolment but with the continual requesting of information, this will happen.

There are three ways in which classes are offered. We have in house classes, internet classes through zoom and directive studies. At present, we have one taking classes through zoom and two who are taking directive studies.

The Schillinger Road Baptist has been a tremendous blessing to me, my wife and the ministry. Pastor Marty McCoy is working hard to promote the ministry. Through all the difficulty, God has

continued to bless the ministry. His Spirit has encouraged me many many times.

I always offer my personal thanks for every church and individual that have continued to support this ministry. I refuse to accept the idea that, because of the lack of support, that the ministry would close. The Lord has not brought the ministry this far to see it fail now. I am convicted that there are some tremendous blessing in store for all of us.

The wife and I recently attended the Alabama State Association where we enjoyed a tremendous time of fellowship and the preaching of the Word of God. Pastor Steven Merritt and the members of Zion Missionary Baptist Church did a splendid job in hosting the meeting.

I ask that you join me in continual prayer for the ministry and for all of us.

I am available to come and present the ministry on any Sunday. I am also available to do fill in work for any church that may have that need.

Please send your offering to P.O. Box 1183, Theodore, Al 36590.

Study helps for this Quarter

A Study in Hebrews/James; Herman Strickland
Studies in 1st and 2nd Thessalonians; David Gonnella

From a
Woman's Point
of View



By: Loretta Pritchett
lorettapritchett@yahoo.com

The Power of Prayer

In this day and time prayer is very powerful when we ask the Lord to help us and our country.

People don't realize how important it is to remember to give thanks to God for helping them through the rough times in their lives. Yes our country needs prayer, but we the people need more than that to turn the right way and get away from Satan.

Satan has a big hold on the world and we as believers need to be stronger by praying everyday about what is happening and what we should do about it.

Satan doesn't care that the world has been destroyed and will continue to be destroyed by the people who have fallen away from God, because that is and always will be his goal to destroy the people.

His hold on unbelievers lives is strong, but the power of your prayers to God are stronger than his. Pray as if that is all that's left to do. God hears our prayers and He wants us to pray without ceasing and ask

for things for yourself as well as your country.

No it won't be easy to stand against Satan unless you have the Lord beside you each and every time you pray.

We all know one day and it could be today Jesus is coming again and we need to be ready. So I ask that when you pray to pray for the lost souls and that they will come to the Lord and accept Him as their Savior.

God wants to see all of His children in Heaven and every prayer that is prayed is another powerful prayer lifted up to God for His answer and blessing on everyone.

As we go through another year I pray you pray always for forgiveness and blessings in your daily lives.

May God richly bless you and give you the desires of your hearts.

**PHILOSOPHY
OF
RELIGION**

DEFINITION OF RELIGION

One of the main reasons why there are so many religions in the world is because men have devised their own definition of religion. Instead of leaving that in the hands of the Lord and accepting His Word, they have devised their own definition. The problem with this idea is that men are really trying to tell God what He should accept and what he should not accept. The whole idea then is men trying to be their own god instead of letting God be God.

Wells further tries to make the case for the lack of proper definitions by stating;

"It is hard in an area so highly charged with emotion, to look upon the definition dispassionately. Even though it is recognized

that definitions are, after all, simulative, and hence neither true nor false, it still seems to many religious persons as if the fate of religion depended upon proper definitions, rather than upon true descriptions."

The main problem that such a statement presents is the assumption that nothing is either "true or false." There is always a right and wrong when it comes to the teaching of the Lord. The Word of God is not a take it or leave it book. It is the eternal Word of God. It is forever settled in heaven and whether man believes it or not does not make it true or false. Therefore, every definition regarding man, that is contrary to the truth, is false. Man cannot possibly define God for God has told every man what state they are in and what they can expect after death if they reject His eternal Word. It is never one or the other. It is right or it is wrong. There is but one truth when it defines God or Christianity. Only man has achieved the goal of improper definitions. It is man who has made it difficult for others to understand or accept. Satan has

done a masterful job of confusing the issue.

One of the greatest mistakes that man makes is attempting to recognize, or define, when one is religious by what they do. The truth of the matter is that there are no good deeds that man can do, that would make him acceptable in the sight of God. It is true that it may make him religiously accepted by the definitions of the world but certainly not by the standards of God. If man is capable of performing any spiritual good deeds it is because he has had a change inside. He performs acceptable deeds by the outworking of the inward spirit and not the reverse. No amount of goods deeds will ever produce inward spiritual attainment.

Why men make such an effort to define what has already been clearly set down for us is beyond comprehension. Why cannot men just simply believe the eternal Word. It supposes that the only answer is that men still have a desire to be god and not let God be God.



David Gonnella, Th. D.

Who Needs Them?

This may surprise you. There are actually Baptists in 2024 who believe that Bible colleges and seminaries are not necessary at all. In fact, they object to their very existence. Such are not very conversant with the Word of God nor with the history of Baptists since the time that our Saviour walked this earth.

Did Jesus attend a Bible college or seminary. No, He did not. However, we should remember that He is God the Son, and by the time He was 12 years old He could astound the theologians of His time with His knowledge of the Word of God and His wisdom. We should also remember that, as a boy and teen, he no doubt attended religious training in His local synagogue. Jesus was recognized as a rabbi and as a rabbi taught in the Temple.

What about the apostles? They did not attend Bible college or seminary either. However, the three years they spent with Jesus was an education that none of us can receive today. If Jesus were here on earth to teach us, we would close our college and attend with Him. However, that option is not available to us.

It is true that one will not find Bible colleges and seminaries in the Bible. However, like Sunday School and mid-week services, they are a good idea.

The Apostle Paul was well-educated in the Old Testament Scriptures along with the philosophical and poetical works of the Romans and Greeks.

What about relying on the training one gets in the services of his church? While that can be a good foundation, very few pastors teach the doctrines and practical matters necessary for success in the pastorate or mission field

The truth is, while we hold pastors in the highest of esteem (we were a pastor for over four decades), we also know the limitations of the pastorate. The pastor cannot make his pulpit ministry into a Bible college equivalent, for he must preach not only to those called to the ministry, but to all the members of his church from babes in Christ to mature Christians.

Cannot the pastor mentor those called to the ministry? Yes, he can, if he has the ability and time. While most pastors have a broad range of general knowledge of many of the subjects necessary to train someone for the ministry, some do not have the expert knowledge of all subjects. Nor do most pastors have the time. The

bi-vocational pastor is working a job while tending his flock. The full-time pastor has a ministry that requires his constant attention.

At a good Bible college or seminary, the student is treated to a faculty of professors who are expert in various areas of study. No one professor possesses all the knowledge necessary but taken together they represent a treasure trove of Biblical and practical knowledge. Moreover, the student can take a number of classes at the same time, allowing him to amass the training necessary for the ministry in a concentrated manner.

What about the delaying factor in seeking a Bachelor's Master's or Doctor's Degree? Don't those who are called to the ministry want to get to it as soon as possible? Let us turn that around. What about the damage done by those who go off "half-cocked" without proper preparation? What about the damage they do to their churches, their own families, and to themselves? Four years is not too much time to spend in preparation for a ministry that should last 3-5 decades.

What is the history of Bible colleges and seminaries among the Baptists? In the early centuries after Jesus walked this earth, Baptists were concerned with surviving the persecutions, first of pagan Rome and then of Papal Rome. However, in Wales, being on the rim of the Roman Empire, ancient Christianity flourished from the First Century until the monk Austin arrived, having been sent by Pope Gregory the Great to "Christianize" the British Isles.

Austin expected to find mostly pagan Saxons in the British Isles. To his surprise, he found in Wales many Baptist churches practicing primitive Christianity. He also found two colleges, in Bangor and Carleon, for the training of ministers. How long had these college been there? We do not know. However, they were already in operation when Austin arrived in A.D. 597.

In Europe and in America Baptists established colleges and seminaries which have a rich heritage of preparing men for the work to which God has called them. The men trained in such institutions have done much good for the cause of Jesus Christ.

Let's face it. The modern American expects doctors, financial experts, musicians, and many other occupations to be college educated. When they go to church, they expect to hear someone who is well-educated deliver a sermon that is worth their time to hear. Are the ministers of Jesus Christ less important than those of secular occupation? Should they not be trained in their all-important work of implementing the entire Great Commission? In the ministry, ignorance is not bliss.



Glen Davenport, Th.D.

A PERSONAL STRUGGLE THAT I MIGHT GAIN THE MORE

INTRODUCTION

As we read this passage of Scripture, we begin to see what Paul's goal was and how determined he was to succeed. His love was for the Lord was his motivation as well as those around him; regardless of their place in society or their needs. He seemed to have a heartfelt love for everybody. We will see that he felt free from all men but still obligated to the gospel.

We will see that the gospel ministry demands many things and meeting those demands was what Paul set out to do.

TEXT: I Cor. 9:19-23

19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more.

20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

23 And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

This lesson calls for a search inside our hearts to heighten our awareness of the people and souls who live within our community and surrounding area. If we have a sensitivity button, we need to find it and increase the levels as soon as possible. I'm going to list some areas that need to claim our attention.

I. Areas Where We Need To Become More Sensitive

A. Physical needs

1. We need more sensitivity toward the HOMELESS.
2. ... more sensitivity toward the NEEDY.
3. ... more sensitivity toward the UNSKILLED.
4. ... more sensitivity toward the UNEDUCATED.
5. ... more sensitivity toward the SUFFERING.
6. ... more sensitivity toward the ELDERLY.
7. ... more sensitivity toward the WIDOWS & WIDOWED

B. Spiritual needs

1. ... more sensitivity toward the YOUNG FAMILIES
2. ... more sensitivity toward the STRUGGLING CHRISTIANS.
3. ... more sensitivity toward the DYING SINNERS.

II. How Can We Become More Sensitive?

A. We need to get out among people and see them where they live.

B. We need to hear their voices and look into their eyes.

C. We need to feel their emotions and touch their lives.

III. What Did Our Trainers Do To Gain The More?

A. Paul said: (Text: verses 22, 23)

*To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: **I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.** And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.*

B. Peter said: (Acts 3:6-9)

*Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but **such as I have give I thee:** In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk.*

7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ancle bones received strength.

8 And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God

C. Jesus said: (John 10:10-11)

10 I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

IV. What Can We Do To Gain The More?

A. We can become more sensitive to the will of the Lord.

B. We can go and deliver the message of salvation.

V. CONCLUDING THO'TS:

Our mission is not to house the homeless although we might provide some help.

Our mission is not to feed the hungry although we might provide some help. Our mission is not to end all suffering although we might provide some help.

Our mission is the Great Commission.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Have Bible – Will Travel!

BIBLE CONFERENCES: Over 20 subjects ready for 4-day Bible conferences, tested in churches over a period of 40+ years. Longer conferences also available.

REVIVALS: I don't come to beat your sheep, but to encourage and motivate. I can rebuke and reprove, but prefer holding out the prospect of rewards for faithful service.

PULPIT SUPPLY/FILL IN: Available to come and fill in when you must be absent. Will do all I can to undergird your ministry.

I ask only travel expense and a place for my wife and me to stay. Will live on what the people put in the plate.

INTERIM PASTORATE: Available for short-term interim pastorates to bridge the gap between permanent pastors. Must limit range of interim pastorates to two hours from Mobile, Alabama.

David E. Gonnella, Th.D 251-214-2536 davekrxt@hotmail.com

SEEKING GOD-CALLED PASTOR

Frankfort Missionary Baptist Church is in search of a pastor. We are located in Russellville, Alabama. Please contact Harold Taylor at 256.332.4666, or Larry Greenhill at 256.415.3700. You can also e-mail: frankfortmbc@gmail.com

SEEKING GOD-CALLED PASTOR

Big Sky Missionary Baptist Church of Dillon, Montana, seeking the God-called Pastor He would have for us. We are a small, doctrinally sound church established in 1975, preaching and teaching the inspired and complete King James Version of the Word of God. We believe in and practice the two Church Ordinances which were only given by our Lord and Savior to those churches that practice the Doctrines the Lord set forth in His first Church that began on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. The Lord's Church did NOT start on the Day of Pentecost. A parsonage with an attached two-car garage is provided, plus utilities and a small salary. The man God has for us should be bi-vocational. Please contact IVAN HALE, 524 Barnett Ave, Dillon MT 59725-3905 (406-683-5421) OR imhale@q.com

SEEKING GOD-CALLED PASTOR

Bethany Missionary Baptist Church . . . Verbena, Alabama
 Contact: Ralph Wilson / 205-351-1640 / wralph@live.com or Jerry Vines / 205-755-5424 / jerryvines@bellsouth.net Bethany MBC in Verbena is prayerfully seeking a pastor. We are a small church.. Our church is interested in a man who is willing to lead his flock as well as be able to go out and visit the lost in our area. If you are interested in this position, please contact us and we will happily send you a questionnaire to fill out. If interested, please email or call Ralph Wilson or Jerry Vines. Thank you for considering this position

SEEKING GOD-CALLED PASTOR

Winan Missionary Baptist Church in Hot Springs Arkansas is searching for a pastor, retired or bivocational. We are small.
 Call Donna Jordan at 501-337-2543 or text

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Justin Coburn,
Secretary/
Treasurer

MISSION NEWS AND VIEWS

MONTHLY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$2,648,856.79
RECEIPTS:	
Interstate Salaries	\$59,443.13
Foreign & National Salaries	\$57,571.14
Designated	\$35,831.53
Undesignated	\$13,397.96
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$166,243.76
BALANCE FOR SALARY/EXPENSE	\$2,815,100.55
DISBURSEMENTS	
Interstate Salaries	\$62,467.25
Foreign Salaries	\$31,409.04
National Salaries	\$25,750.00
Designated	\$35,981.53
Salaries & Expenses of Sec-Treas. Office	
Office Salaries	\$12,964.95
General Office	\$1,977.87
Automobile Expense	\$2,514.82
Sec/Tres Expenses	\$1,249.80
Total Office	\$17,322.04
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$172,929.86
BALANCE FORWARD	\$2,642,170.69
DEFICIT FOR JAN.	\$(6,686.10)

I wish to begin this report with some great news of God's blessings. Our goal for the 2023 Thanksgiving Missions Offering was \$325,000. We are pleased to report that the 2023 Thanksgiving Missions Offering total is an incredible **\$346,103.62!** Praise the Lord for His goodness and faithfulness! Since the start of this special offering, the total is well over 6 million dollars. Thank you for your incredible sacrifice on behalf of ABA missionaries.

For the month of January, the missionaries reported **436 professions of faith and 44 baptisms** bringing the totals for

this associational year to **3,362 professions of faith and 383 baptisms!**

I also wish to extend a big thank you to the way you responded to missionary James Shields and his family in their time of extreme loss. Many of our churches responded and their sending church was overwhelmed by the generosity and love shown to their missionary during this difficult time. Again, please continue to remember this dear family in your prayers.

For the month of January, my family and I were privileged to be with Sharon MBC in Benton, AR and Grace BC in Gurdon, AR. I also was privileged to share the work of ABA Missions with Longview MBC and Timpson MBC. I thank God for these churches and pastors who faithfully support the missionaries of our association.

Church letter forms have been mailed out so you should receive them soon, if not already, by the time that you receive this report. Those can be filled out by hand and returned, or you can find the form on our website, abaptist.org, that can be filled out, printed, and then mailed back to us. They can be found under the CHURCH DIRECTORY tab or 2024 ABA MEETING INFORMATION under the EVENTS tab.

I would like to remind you all that the 2024 Pre- Association Standing Missionary Committee Meeting will take place at Northern Hills BC in Texarkana, AR, on May 20-21. Please make plans to attend that meeting.

FOREIGN MISSIONS

ABA. COLOMBIAN MISSION
Carlos Julio Mendoza, Missionary

Although some families travelled to the Christmas in Ibaguá MB., we had 18 in attendance and one visitor.

In the evangelistic campaign, held last December at Monterrey MBC, we had 3 visitors and 2 professions of faith.

In the city of Girardot, Cundinamarca, the brothers continue to work hard. 3 ladies made a profession of faith.

We, continue praying to God on our knees, for the property for the work in Ibague. We have \$19,775.95 dollars in the fund, as of A DECEMBER. 31/23. We need \$69,223.55 dollars. Thank you for your prayers and financial help.

We continue looking for a new place for the work in Ibaguá MB. We have until February 2/24 to vacate. Thank you for your prayers for this need.

Bogotá, Colombia
Gilberto Pinzón, Missionary

PENIEL BAPTIST MISSION. January was a sickness month in our church and sister churches. Attendance was down. More than a half of our people had a strong flu; several are not completely recovered; I am one of them.

The youth people of the church had a devotion and sport activity at the Tunal park in Bogotá last January the 8th. We enjoyed a great fellowship and recreation.

I was invited to preach at the Bosa MBC in Bogotá, last January the 21st. The preaching was about the scriptural baptism, during the invitation, brother Manuel Iván Orozco asked his baptism, please pray for him and for his wife, Margarita Bohórquez, who is also at the point to take her decision for baptism. What a great way to start the new year obeying the Lord!

THE COLOMBIA MISSIONARY BAPTIST FEDERATION (ASSOCIATION), Had its annual meeting last week. We approved to continue supporting missionary Hernando Cubillos and the work in Santa Marta, sending offerings for the secretary-treasurer of the association and also several churches committed to sending offerings for the teachers of the Colombia Theological Baptist Institute. We appreciate the generosity of the churches that, despite the difficult economic situation and low salaries in the country, give according to their

strength and beyond their strength. We invite other sister churches in Colombia and other countries to pray and financially support the missionary work in Colombia. New officers were also elected for 2024: President, Gilberto Pinzón, Vice President, Alexander Pinzón, Secretary/treasurer; Fred Jhonatan Mojica Cardona, Prosecutor, Hernando Cubillos. Next annual meeting was programmed for January 25, 2025. Thanks for your prayers and for supporting the missionary work in Colombia. Amen.

Peruvian Missions

Carlos Angulo, Missionary

Greetings from Peru. We are getting close to the end of the year. Many things need to be done at the church, the missions and also at the school. This is the time that I need to be strong, but I don't fill that way. My body some days is weak. I was sick, but, now I am getting better. Thanks God. God is always good, and merciful.

Christian women reunion.—Sister Ana Maria led the ladies of the church to a reunion for two days at First Baptist church. It was a great success. Ladies have the opportunity to serve the Lord in their community.

THE GRADUATES IN OUR SCHOOL.—Thanks to the Lord, this year we have a great group of students to be graduated. Their team is FRIENDS FOR EVER. They had good teachers. We will miss them, but we will rejoice when they will make a difference in the world with their way of life.

It is always exciting the coming of Christmas. The children were waiting for a toy, and for the Christmas cake and hot chocolate. We had some toys, not like in the past years. We were suffering economic difficulties, but the good Lord took care. Thanks God again.

I visit a doctor, because a bad pain in my nerves and after two weeks of therapy, I can walk a little better.

Anna Maria is also suffering pain in their bones. She works too much. We will rest in heaven, because on earth always will be much work.

Romania

Kolt Mackrill, Missionary

We began February by traveling to Kentucky. We arrived safely and was greeted

by a mission house stocked full by our sending church. They always make us feel loved and take such good care of us. We also want to say thank you to the **Macedonian Missionary Service** for allowing us to stay in the **Evening Shade Mission Home**. Our first Sunday was spent at our sending church, Langdon Street Baptist. It was a wonderful time of fellowship. That following week we made a trip back to Arkansas. Amy was scheduled to have a few tests which all came back with good news. Thank you all for your prayers for Amy's health. We traveled back to Kentucky for the next weekend where we were able to update both the **Bradley's Pleasure Baptist Church** of Nancy, KY and **Clear Springs Baptist Church** of Russell Springs, KY. We enjoyed an amazing time of fellowship with both churches. The following weekend was spent with both the **Mt. Hebron Baptist Church**, Lancaster, KY and **Unity Baptist Church**, Danville, KY. It was another time of sweet fellowship which we thoroughly enjoyed. Unfortunately we spent the remainder of the month quarantined at the mission house due to illness. We are all doing much better now. We want to say a special thank you to all of the churches mentioned above for their years of faithful financial support and most importantly for their faithful prayer support.

Feldioara & Zrne'ti churches & Humanitarian outreach: The work in Zarnesti continues! Bro. Marian has reported that attendance last month was up. We are thankful that the Lord continues to bless the work in Zarnesti. The church in Feldioara is continuing to do well also. Bro. Florin and Daniel are stepping in and leading out in their services. The humanitarian work is also continuing and did well last month. Please keep the work in your prayers as we are in on furlough. Thank you and God bless!

Spain

Daniel Estrada, Missionary

VANGELIZING IN THE STREETS... God allowed us to go out again and had some opportunities to witness people on the public places, please pray for us as we continue doing this once a month for now.

Thanks for the sister in Christ who came out alongside with me. Many people are lost

here, we encourage you to do the same on your town and enjoy the big blessing to see people listen to the Gospel.

Please keep us in your prayers as we continue this effort for the Lord. More people from our congregation are getting involved and really enjoy sharing the Gospel with others.

Just to see these young people listen to the Gospel is a privilege and joy.

We ask you to pray for this little boy named Jasiel, he is very ill and needs several surgeries. Please lift him up in prayer to God. There has been progress and improvements in his life. God is doing great things in his body.

We keep making disciples. We are with Damian and Carolina making good friends and improvement in their Christian lives.

SE-Asia

Rusty Teer, Missionary

Can you imagine being in a Buddhist public school and them allowing the Gideons to hand out Bibles? It happened and some of our students were eating it up. I had to get their attention because they kept reading instead of following the lesson.

I like to walk around and chat with students and teachers here and there on my free period. I first walked into a classroom of 7th graders, and I didn't recognize any of them. I thought many were Christians because they had Bibles on their desks. They told me they were not. I was able by the grace of God to introduce them to John 3:16 and ask them what it means. One student gave a good clear answer so then we backed up to John chapter 1 and talked about how we know that we are created and how we know that Jesus is our Creator. Wonderful opportunity!

Thank you for praying. These conversations would not be possible if you were not praying and we were not expecting Him to answer your prayers. Our Father is giving us amazing opportunities.

If our Father has told us to pray, we pray. If He tells us to GO, we GO. If He tells us to make disciples of ALL the nations, we do that. Thank you for supporting and praying daily. If He leads you to please increase your prayers and support, we are in need of His increase in every area!

Interstate Missions

FIRST: My wife and I attended NORTHSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH Glennville, Georgia with Brother Justin Ray. He had a very good message. We had lunch with them after the service.

SECOND: We had a very good service. There were 35 men out for service. There were three men that sang about four songs. We had a very good piano player and drummer The men sang about 15 old gospel song.

THIRD: We shipped him the following.
Five cases King James Bibles 100.
Five cases Spanish Bibles 120.
Five cases Brother Dills booklets approximately 3000

NEW JAILS -PRISONS: FCI Oakdale One -Oakdale, LA, The Beacon Skyline Corr. Inst. Canon, City, CO. We are still in need of someone to come and HELP in this Ministry.

Souls are being saved. Many that get out continue to do our Bible Studies. Many write and state that they are in Church.

Haleyville, AL

Allen Barton, Missionary

We are excited to see what 2024 holds for Heritage Baptist Mission! We have been praying and working towards the goal of organizing this year hopefully. Please pray for us in this desire. We have been studying in Zechariah on Wednesday nights and sometimes I feel like the returned ex-iles to Judah. They were discouraged at the work ahead and the seemingly lack of resources, but God promised them that He would restore them and see His work finished! I believe that God will do the same for the work here in Haleyville.

Our van ministry continues to bring promising results. Bro. Wesley and Sister Kaity are picking

up anywhere from 4 to six people every Sunday morning, evening and Wednesday evening. The children that they pick up need prayer, but we are already seeing a positive influence from the effort. Bro. Wesley told me that the other day when he was taking

them home two of the young girls started singing hymns in the van. That may not seem like a big deal to you, but if you knew how far they have come, it would seem like a halleluiah moment!

The coffee shop ministry as well as the door to door visitation continues to go well. Bro. Wesley and I also plan on starting a men's ministry in February.

Kansas

Everett Ledbetter, Missionary

Allow me to begin by saying that we are so overwhelmed and grateful for all the prayers and support that we have received. Because of the generosity of the Lord's churches, we are able to do the things that we are doing here. We are officially in the building. We are having Sunday morning and evening worship services there and our mid week Bible Study. Throughout this month, we were blessed with 4 first time visitors. We are using the building, but our grand opening is scheduled for March 24th. We are planning a Community Day on March 23rd with representatives from the Police Department and Fire Department. We will have a cookout and games. We are hoping to introduce ourselves to our neighborhood on that day. We are also using the building on Monday night. We are averaging 15 police officers in our building each Monday night. We are playing basketball. We are providing a safe and secure location for them and I get to pray with them before each night. This is a picture of the first group that joined us. Topeka Police, Highway Patrol, and Sheriff's Department have all been attending.

Work Progress - Sanctuary is carpeted, stage area is still being worked on, vinyl floors are being installed in the hallway, money for worship chairs is being raised (we are about halfway to our goal), the new furnaces will be installed in March (we could still use help paying for those), the roof is being repaired this week, and media center computer and camera needs to be replaced (the one that came with the building is out of date and the OS is not supported anymore).

Join us for our **Building Dedication**. It will be Friday, April 26th at 6pm. There will, most likely, still be some areas that we are working on, but we want to celebrate what the Lord is giving us.

Twin Lakes, AZ

Jerry Baker, Missionary

Oftentimes when we glance back over a month that just ended it seems more like a blur than individual 24 hour days. We find such is the case when so much time is consumed with needful doctor appointments, tests, and travel back and forth to Albuquerque. Somehow, sandwiched in between were hours spent cleaning the church, our home bible study, preparing for Sundays, and making arrangements for my upcoming surgery.

Winter snowstorms, severe winds and occasional road closures hindered church attendance, which we have become accustomed to after 20 years of missionary life on the Reservation. The water pump at the church decided to cease working, twice, which can be a bit embarrassing when visitors arrive with young children. BUT, speaking of visitors, the 3rd Sunday of the month during Sunday School a family of 4 were first time visitors! The dad, Terrance, is a coworker with one of our newest members, Jeffrey, who had been inviting Terrance to church for quite some time. Imagine that! A new member witnessing on the job and continuing to encourage his coworker to come to church! After worship services we enjoyed getting acquainted with this young family. Terrance even shared with me that he was not saved and invited me to visit in their home. He and his family live about 20 miles from the church and RETURNED the following Sunday BRINGING his mother-in-law and 4 young teen nephews! After morning worship the entire family visited with us for quite some time, all of them seemingly eager to become acquainted with us and to know more about the church. We are thankful that the Lord led Terrance, Debbie, Rosalee and these 6 young people to our church and look forward to good things to come!

We would appreciate your prayers concerning this family, that we will be able to see them come to know Christ and become part of our church family. By the way, we had to order additional Sunday School literature! What a great "problem" to have as we begin a new quarter!!!

By the way, we now have a surgery date. Please lift us up to the Lord, especially on March 25th.

**J. A. Crain**

Business Manager Report

The month of February has been a good month with everything in Texarkana going well. Recently, I enjoyed visiting with the Missionary Baptist Seminary in Little Rock for the Israel lectures. I spoke at the CABBI Seminary for Chapel time. I will be speaking at LMBIS in Minden for their Spring lectures in March. My wife and I also had the wonderful opportunity to visit and dine with Bro. Dennis Richey and his wife in South Carolina. As usual, I also have done some fill-in preaching. I enjoy getting to visit among the brethren.

I was deeply saddened to hear of the death of my good friend and former EIC, Bro. Larry Clements, also father to our present EIC, Bro. Mark Clements. Bro. Clements was a blessing to so many in the Lord's work. We extend our love and prayers for the Clements family.

Work processes are on time or ahead of schedule as the Team faithfully keeps the processes flowing very well. Our editorial and Press departments have recently upgraded some computer programs and they are having to learn the upgrades but are making good progress. God has blessed us with some great folks working here and I have learned that we are blessed with folks who can and will do the needed job.

For several months, we have been notifying our customers that we would eventually be going to paperless billing. The cost of continuing the monthly mail out of statements was over \$1,000 per month. As we have prepared, I decided we would make this change this coming June. Recently, however, the machine we use to prepare the mail-outs broke and we could not get parts for the machine. A new machine to continue the mail outs till June would have cost \$13,000.00 by the time it was in use. Such an expense just to continue for 4 more months, something we were going to cease anyway, was not wise. Therefore, we will begin paperless billing starting in March. Customers, while not receiving a separate mailout statement, will continue to receive a billing both by Email and by invoice with their materials.

Our finances ended fairly well for the year 2023 and we are seeing good reasons that 2024 also will be a favorable year for the finances. Our January sales in dollars are up about \$45,000 over last year in January. While we have made some good changes to help our financial situation and God has been blessing, costs of operations are increasing sometimes by leaps and bounds. The insurance policies for both the building and operations also will likely rise substantially this Spring as we approach renewal. We have recently changed our insurer to Brotherhood Mutual and are hoping that they will be able to provide a somewhat better policy financially and in coverage.

We are praying and looking into some building remodeling in the future. Much of our building has been here since 1971 and some of it is in need of repair and remodeling. Please join us in praying that God will provide the leadership and finances for this need. We are very thankful to Northern Hills MB Church in Texarkana for again hosting the February VBS Seminar. The Seminar was a success.

In Summary, all is well at Texarkana, as the Lord continues to guide us and bless us. Come visit anytime in Texarkana.



Mark Clements
Editor in Chief

The Sting of Death

On Wednesday night, February 14th, after a day full of walking (6.3 miles), studying God's Word, writing and preaching, my dad, Larry Clements, closed his eyes in sleep and awoke in the presence of his Savior. My family and I are devastated, still reeling from his unexpected departure from our lives. Death stings, stirring up feelings of anger mixed with deep sorrow.

What should be the target of our anger when death takes away our loved ones? Many people become angry with God, and certainly God is sovereign over death, but death was not His original plan for His creation. Just because death may be common to all mankind does not mean God is its author. God's Word tells the story of the beginning and end of death, giving us the real target for our justified anger—sin—and providing us with hope for death's ultimate annihilation—our risen Savior, Jesus Christ. Heed the Word of God:

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16, 17). "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Genesis 3:6). "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Romans 5:12). "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow" (Psalm 116:3). "Jesus wept" (John 11:35).

"Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John 11:26). "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead" (1 Corinthians 15:19-21). "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:14). "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:3, 4). "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God" (Job 19:25, 26). "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

It is okay to be angry at sin and its wages, death. But death itself will soon die. Until then, we pick up the gospel ministry mantle of Larry Clements, ask God for a double portion of his spirit and work until Jesus comes.

"O land of rest for thee I sigh, when will the moment come
When I shall lay my armor by and dwell in peace at home?
We'll work till Jesus comes, we'll work till Jesus comes,
We'll work till Jesus comes, and we'll be gathered home." (Elizabeth Mills)



**FINANCIAL REPORT
GULF COAST BAPTIST COLLEGE
August/September 2023**

	Income/Expense
Income:	
Conations	\$1,495.00
Designated Funds	\$1,450.00
Tution	\$210.00
Building	\$250.00
Press	\$100.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$3,505.00
Expenses:	
Utilities	\$184.75
Support	\$1450.00
Salary	\$1200.00
Travel Expenses	\$439.89
Zoom	\$299.00
Postage	\$671.53
Bank Fees	\$14.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4,259.95

NOTE:

There is a notable change in the treasurer’s report for the last period. This is due to some criticism that was received regarding the method of reporting. It is not our intention to deceive anyone but the treasurer is often blamed for which is not their problem.

I trust that we can continue to receive your offering as the ministry goes forward.

The classes, both in-house and on line, continue to progress, though they are small. Rebuilding, following all the things that we have had to deal with, is slow but there are signs of encouragement.

If any supporter would like to receive more information regarding your contribution, please do not hesitate to let me know.

There are more changes coming that are necessary in regards to the school and its ministries. Please continue to remember us all in your prayers as we endeavor to follow the Lord.

We are continuing to search for a facility that can house the printing ministry.

HHS

CHURCHES SEEKING A PASTOR

Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church is in search of a pastor. We are a small church but are interested in growing and serving the Lord in our community and surrounding area. We are located 6 miles east of Ola, Arkansas.

Please contact Kenneth McCoy at 479-747-3760/email kenneth@arkwest.com or Don McCoy at 479-747-3403 for more information and to set up and appointment.

Landmark Missionary Baptist Church in Bedford, Indiana is seeking a pastor. We are a conservative King James only church. If you are interested please email us at landmarkbaptist47421@gmail.com

Liberty Baptist Church, Collins,MS. seeking pastor. Contact Ricky Lott 601-543-4561 or rickylott4@gmail.com

Highlands MBC, North Highlands, CA is seeking a part-time youth pastor. All inquiries are to be sent to Pastor David Butimore, Sr. At (559) 260-0093 or brob@bigvalley.net.

Landmark MBC of Amite, La. is in search of a pastor. Located about 40 miles east of Baton Rouge and about 50 miles north of New Orleans along the I-55/I-12 corridor. We are a conservative country church, traditional in worship, doctrinally sound, with a big heart for missions. Church and annex sit on 3 acres debt free. We associate locally within the First Trinity Missionary Baptist Association. We are calling for a seasoned Missionary Baptist pastor of same mold. KJV only. If interested or for more information, please contact:

Joseph Holden, Deacon
985-517-8582

biglefty27@gmail.com

Franklin Parker, Deacon 985-507-2884

william f parker@hotmail.com

Melissa Wallace, Church Clerk

985-286-9324

mrwalla59@gmail.com

PRINTING NEWS

Printing News:

The ministry continues to move forward. I am presently trying to keep up with the demand for materials. Even though it involves continued trips to Pensacola, I will continue to fill all the orders that are sent to us.

Everyone associated with this ministry continues to pray and search for a suitable facility where the school and the shop can be housed. I have looked at a couple of buildings but at this point I have not been able to secure any of them.

A price for steel building in Pensacola has been agreed too but the transaction has not been completed. When this is done, it will help us tremendously. We do not want the

material to lay there and deteriorate to the point that it cannot be sold.

Some of our printers are beginning to give us problems. By me not being there and taking care of the situation, it is difficult to make sure that they stay in good shape. It appears that once we are able to move everything, we may have to purchase additional units.

The Systematic Theology books, by Dr. David Gonnella, continue to be widely used. More and more schools are beginning to use this material. These books are the only ones that are written by someone associated with our work. This is a six volume set that present a complete study of the subject.

The Spanish material also continues to be used by a number of churches in the Sate as well as several countries. I really miss traveling to Mexico and taking all the materials for the good people there. However, all of our Spanish

materials are made available through others who are helping to get it into the churches in Mexico.

I am working toward getting series of the New Testament completed. Because of the situation, it has been a slow process but the work does continue.

I would personally express my deepest appreciation to those who support this ministry. It is because of your faithful support, materials continue to be produced.

I thank you so much and may the Lord continue to richly bless everyone.

Please pray that we can locate and secure an adequate facility in the Mobile area so that the equipment can be moved and set up.

The ministry is in need of more support. Please send your offerings to P.O. Box 1183, Theodore, Al 36590

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Articles should be in the office no later

than the 10th of the month so that they might be included in that months edition. Mission reports are alternated so that all may have the opportunity to be published.

Herman Strickland; editor

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