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Perspectives





From The Publisher

How Great Is That Darkness!

Paul D. Mooney

“If our hearts desire fellowship with Jesus, then we must desire Him alone. Not money, not fame, not power, not the world, not carnal living -- no one can serve God and Mammon. He is the only Light, the only way.”

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Matthew 6:23).

Much commentary has been written on this particular teaching by Jesus, and rightly so. It is especially vital that we grasp the meaning of the phrase, “the light that is in thee.” *John Peter Lange’s Commentary on the Holy Scriptures* (Zondervan) gives us a good interpretation that, for the sake of brevity, I will quote here in part:

“the eye [bodily eye] is evil [not working properly] if it lose its power of perceiving, or begins to wander and miss the object set before it. Then the whole body will be full of darkness, or enveloped in night. But the darkening of the mind [the light that is in thee] has more sad consequences than that of the body... The capacity of the inner eye of reason to become the organ of knowledge is evidently here alluded to, although the expression has a more special meaning. It is not the inner eye of reason itself, but the light of the inner eye, or the Old Testament revelation so well known by the Pharisees and scribes, which had by their carnal views, been perverted into error... The real peril lies in the eye seeing falsely or double, because in that case the light of the sun will only serve to blind, which is worse than utter darkness.... But just as when the external eye is not simple [clear, undivided] or double in its sight the outward light only serves to dazzle [blur], so also in reference to the inner eye and the light of revelation. How great is that darkness!”

Personally, I believe we are encountering the type of darkness in today’s society that Christ gave reference to in this powerful verse of scripture. And Lange gives an accurate portrayal: we have eyes but they are evil. Ezekiel, a prophet who was not unfamiliar with confronting the darkness of his day, describes it with these words, “Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house (Ezekiel 12:2).

I have talked for hours with many men and women over the years who have chosen not to align themselves, neither their hearts nor minds, with the Apostolic doctrine and holiness, not because they don’t understand it, but because their inner eye does not desire it. They reject the light.

Knowing *of* the light and walking *in* the light are two different things. As is *knowing* the truth and *walking* in the truth. When the heart is set on eternity and the promises that belong to us in Christ, our eyes naturally look for the light. We seek after it, desire it, yearn for it and the illumination that it brings to our lives and to our souls. Our inner eye sees clearly because it is free from distortion – it has no fellowship with darkness. It is only possible to serve one master. If our hearts desire fellowship with Jesus, then we must desire Him alone. Not money, not fame, not power, not the world, not carnal living -- no one can serve God and Mammon. He is the only Light, the only way.

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints” (Ephesians 1:18).

As Jesus taught, the eye is the only way that light becomes a factor to the body. Light makes it possible for one to see, move confidently, and fully understand the physical world. Such are the eyes of understanding; once enlightened, one may then come to know and thus understand. However, when one rejects knowledge, he, as a result of his own action, becomes blind. If we choose blindness, choose darkness, it is a greater force in our lives than if it were subjected upon us and we resisted it.

If those who have known Him and have walked with Him in the light of the revelation of His name, His Godhead, in the light of the baptism of the Holy Ghost in the light of righteousness, and in the light of godliness and holiness... if they should reject that light - and then set aside or pervert that light to satisfy their own will... then indeed how great is that darkness! Dear reader, take careful note. Christ makes this proclamation as a declarative statement. *How Great is That Darkness!* It is not a question.

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♦To promote revival and growth among Apostolic churches and pastors by encouraging unity and cooperation among those of like faith and by providing a forum for the sharing of new ideas, ministries and programs.

♦To report on those trends and events which directly affect the work of the church.

♦To promote and enhance the ongoing ministry of Indiana Bible College.

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Unity in the Church

(Bruce Johnson)

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Building Strong Marriages

Compiled by Christina Li

Note: The opinions on this page are entirely those of the individual and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of Indiana Bible College.



Tom Trimble, St. Charles, MO -- We have a young marrieds class that meets weekly during our teaching hour. We emphasize parenting on the typical days, i.e. Father's Day and Mother's Day. I wrote a booklet and preached the message "7 Steps to Being a Great Dad," available through Pentecostal Publishing House.

Important elements for building a strong marriage are: 1) Having a vibrant individual relationship with God and the church; 2)

Accepting that we are different and appreciating those differences; 3) Finding hobbies and events that we both enjoy; 4) Making and taking the time; and 5) Trips with just the two of us. In my opinion, the greatest enemy of marriage and families today are social media and the internet in general. More than 80 percent of U.S. divorce attorneys say they've seen an increase in cases involving social media, and, according to a survey, one-third of all divorce filings last year contained the word Facebook. I recommend these books: *The Five Love Languages*, *Passages in Marriage*, and *Love and Respect*.



Rufus Parker, La Crosse, WI -- The most important elements for building a strong marriage are separation from each other's families to build your own family identity and cohesion, communication with each other, forgiving each other, and to never stop courting (holding hands, kissing each other, buying things that the other likes, remembering each other's birthday, anniversary, and doing things together).

We have had Bro. Bob Kurz, Counselor and Psychologist, come in and teach on the family, relationships and strengthening interpersonal relationships. We try to encourage attendance at District Family Camp, and Ladies' and Men's conferences here in Wisconsin. I recommend the book *If God Be For Us, Who Can Be Against Us?* Not because I am the author, but because most people who struggle in their marriage or walk away from their marriage have allowed the enemy to get a foothold and their personal relationship with Christ has grown cold. If a couple can get to the point of nevertheless, and apply themselves to their marriage, they can make it work. This is a book of encouragement packed with scriptures to help a person see that God can fix any problem. The question is, will we let Him? If we will, He can and He will.



Arlo Moehlenpah, Poway, CA -- Before marriage, the future bride and groom should do the following: get the approval of both sets of parents, talk with each of their pastors, avoid physical intimacy, get out of debt and save some money. They need to check out each other's spiritual desires to serve the Lord so there is agreement on the commitment in whatever way the Lord would lead. After marriage, couples need to honor the vows made such as "forsaking all others" and "until death do you part." They should continue

to stay out of debt with the exception of perhaps purchasing a house. To continue to strengthen the relationship and their family, couples should read the Bible and pray together and be absolutely honest, communicate and cast down imaginations.



Tony Singh, Bolingbrook, IL -- All marriages are under attack from the adversary. Every married couple has the key to a successful community, and that is a successful home. Therefore, every couple is a target. For this reason, we emphasize the practice of togetherness, in prayer, church attendance and worship. The place of spiritual agreement is paramount in the process of two becoming one. The church helps by creating services and functions that help husband and wife

see each other's roles and bring understanding to each other's perspective. As the couples within the church are strengthened, that example bleeds into the communities, providing the impact for those outside our walls.

The important elements to building a strong marriage, in my opinion, are: Healthy communication -- we learn proper manners in public settings and forget it all in the privacy of our homes. Consistent forgiveness -- if we forgive (as we should) it is no longer an arrow for the next battle. Proper intimacy -- keep the fire burning! Appeal is attitude. Learn to laugh -- disappointment is not an opportunity for anger and emotional separation. The greatest enemy of the home today, in my opinion, is entertainment. It can steal away the precious moments of emotional engagement.



Todd Nichols, New Albany, IN -- Keys to building a strong marriage are: Never allow anyone to be more important than your spouse. Have proper communication. Speak to one another with respect when working to resolve stressful issues. Listen to what the other person is really saying and anticipate the other's needs. Work as a team and not as individuals trying to gain control. The greatest enemy to a healthy marriage and family is the same as it has always been: selfishness.

We provide regular pre-marital counseling to all couples that we marry. We do not marry anyone without it. We recommend strongly that they read *Love & Respect* by Emerson Eggerichs. In my opinion, this is the best book on the market for those who want to build a solid, loving marriage. After they are married, we encourage couples to participate in marriage counseling at the church before issues become catastrophic. Our church app, GreaterFaith, is a resource available at any app store.



Steve Green, Grand Rapids, MI -- There are several important elements to building a strong marriage. First is a strong personal commitment to Jesus. A key indicator to me when someone is ready for marriage is how faithful they are to walking with God. If you are faithful to what you can't see, you will more than likely be faithful to the one you can. Second is understanding that marriage is a path of personal sacrifice. Within marriage there has to be a commitment to giving unselfishly.

Third, communication is key IN EVERYTHING. If you are not talking and listening to each other, then everything will fall apart. Fourth is time together. How can you say you love someone that you are never with? People are too busy doing everything but being together. When we have no room to reflect, share or give to one another, there is no place for love to grow and marriage to be strengthened.

Unity in the Church

By Susan Thomas



Bruce and Nina Johnson
Athens, AL

"Revival, by my definition, is the church (members) being spiritually alive and vibrant in their walk with the Lord, and if that is in operation, those that make up the church will affect their surroundings, and harvest *will* occur," shares Pastor Bruce Johnson of First Church in Athens, Alabama.

Principles of Growth & Revival

"I believe the most important key to having a growing church is *unity*."

The best programs, plans and strategies for growth may work for a moment, but it will be a love and a true concern for one another that will fuel a continual mode of growth (spiritually and numerically) that will last after the hype of the latest 'new thing' has passed. Priorities should be placed on the people," states Bro. Johnson.

Concerning time management, he said, "My original pastor, Jon K. Petoskey, always stressed that balance is what you need to have in your life and ministry; without it, a person tends to lean too far one way or another, so I believe that as a pastor, my time needs to be balanced in all aspects within the church."

Several outreach tools and efforts are used for increasing attendance at First Church. "Our annual Fall Harvest, Trunk or Treat, in which we have over one thousand people on our church property the last Sunday night of October, is one of them. We have guest cards that people fill out, and they receive a coupon for a free burger, chips and drink. We then use those cards to make contact for future visits to First Church and potential Bible studies for the unchurched. We also have door prizes and bounce houses for the children. There are many other outreach tools we use and have used, but personal evangelism followed up by home Bible studies has been the most effective in increasing the average attendance."

Organization & Management

There are many different ministry departments at First Church, including Ladies, Youth (The Direction), Sunday School, Prayer, Benevolence, Food Bank, Outreach, Music, Jail, and Building Maintenance (yes, it is a ministry). First Church also houses Tennessee Valley Bible Institute, which is a satellite branch of Texas Bible College.

"About 40% of our members are involved in ministry, and about 20% involved in evangelism," said Bro. Johnson. "I encourage involvement by stressing the need to be active. We have an annual planning meeting with our ministry leaders; this year we

are having a retreat.

"I am also planning on establishing a monthly meeting with *people ministries* and continuing to have tag-ins on a need-to basis."

Special Miracle

There have been many miracles at First Church, but one in particular that Pastor Johnson wanted to share. "The grandfather of our youth pastor's wife, who had been addicted to nicotine and alcohol for 58 years, began to attend our church on a regular basis," he said. "While I was preaching one Sunday morning on *consequences*, I called his wife (a wonderful, faithful saint) and three of their grown

(Holy Ghost-filled) grandchildren to the front to show what the *consequences* of having a Godly grandmother can have on her family. Then I called him up to join them and before he made it fully to the altar, he received the Holy Ghost.

"He has not smoked cigarettes or drank alcohol in almost a year. I had the privilege of baptizing him in water in Jesus' name the next Wednesday. He has been completely changed, and revival continues to spread in their whole family."

Personal Ministry

On Dec. 31, 2003, at the age of 38, Pastor Johnson left his secular employment to fulfill the calling the Lord had placed on his life to be a full-time evangelist. For the next nine-plus years God used his family extensively in the Northeast portion of the U.S. and overseas to help strengthen the churches and pastors across our fellowship.

He was elected senior pastor of First Church in May 2013. "We were here to help evangelize and strengthen the local church body when the former pastor asked us to pray about staying on in the role of senior pastor," he said. "With much prayer and Godly counsel, we accepted the invitation to stay on and fill the role. "Jesus broke down all of the teachings of the Old Testament to the lowest common denominators, love God . . . and love people! That is my philosophy of ministry. The subject I enjoy preaching most is revival, and the focus of my ministry would definitely be *balance*."

Current Facility

"We own 28 acres of land and the building we are currently in was constructed in 2001 and will become our Family Life Center in the next building program," explained Pastor Johnson.

The main sanctuary seats 500-plus on the floor with another 40 on the platform. There are offices, adult classrooms, a commercial kitchen, fellowship hall, food bank and nurseries on the main level.

Also on the main level is a guest lounge where first and second time guests are able to come after service to meet with some of the ministry team and receive gift bags, which contain a church coffee mug for men and an acrylic tumbler for women with a gift card for a local restaurant (owned by a couple in our church). The second level contains more offices and the children's/youth Sunday school classrooms.

"The facility was acquired by sacrificial giving," he said. "When I first arrived in January 2012, the church was averaging 145 in attendance; we are currently running 175 on Sundays. We've had numerous conversions this year and last. This year we've had 15 to 20, and last year 30 to 40."

Personal History

Pastor Johnson was born in East Hartford, CT on December 7, 1965 to a working middle class non-Christian family. There were two men that influenced his ministry the most: his original pastor,

Jon K. Petoskey and his son, Pastor Jon W. Petoskey.

"In the early '80s, Pastor Petoskey felt led to leave Michigan and to start a church in Connecticut," explained Pastor Johnson. "He ended up getting employed by the Hartford Insurance Co. where my brother Rick was working. A Bible study soon ensued and that was the beginning of the church. God began to deal with our family. My fiancé (who later became my wife) and I began to take a Bible study and over the next year or so we both went through our conversion experience and have lived for the Lord ever since.

"I received the Holy Ghost in 1985 at the age of 19. I preached my first message in 1988 at the age of 22 at a Jewish Synagogue that our home church was renting at the time (United Pentecostal Church of East Hartford). After preaching for a few years, I began to follow through to receive my local license in 1991. In January of 1994, after attending the ministerial conference *Because of the Times*, I felt the call to be an evangelist. For the next eight-plus years, we served in our local assembly and began to preach out under the oversight of my pastor.

"My mom says I've always been a talker and that is one of the unique aspects of my youth that influenced my ministry."

Church History

Bro. Johnson said the church was started sometime in the 1930s as a preaching point from other assemblies. For the last 50 years it has been pastored by two men of God, Bro. Dewey Craft and his son, Bro. Rick Craft. The location has always been in Athens. "My first service at this church was on January 8, 2012 as an evangelist," he said. "I remember wonderful services that morning and evening. I also preached that Monday the 9th, which was the day of the National Champion football game between Alabama and LSU. When we drove by the Wal-Mart at 6:45 in the evening the parking lot was empty, but when we got to the church it was full! I realized then that the church wanted revival!"

Concluding Comments

"I enjoy spending time with my family and friends on my off time," he said, "That's what brings the relaxation that is needed." Pastor Johnson and his wife, Nina, have two children, Caleb, 21, and Rachel, 19. "Occasionally, I like to drive the little white ball (golf) or my Harley." Bro. Johnson can be contacted through his e-mail at internationalevangelist@gmail.com.



Pastor Bruce Johnson ministers with excitement to the congregation.



The pastor performs a baptism at the church.



The exterior of First Church in Athens, AL



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Reasons Church Members Don't Invite Others to Worship

Studies have shown that large percentages of unchurched would consider attending a church if someone simply invited them. The problem is not the attitude of the unchurched; it is often the failure of church members to invite others. Here are ten responses often heard from church members as to why they don't invite their friends, family, co-workers and neighbors to church:

"I just don't think about it." Many church members have contact with the unchurched every week, if not every day. What church folks don't do, though, is see the unchurched as spiritual beings in need of redemption and a church family.

"I'm afraid I'll be rejected." Nobody likes to be turned down, especially after taking the risk to invite somebody to church. It's just easier to avoid that possibility by not inviting anyone at all.

"The music isn't that good." Some may argue the worship wars are over, but the battles seem to be ongoing. Church members who themselves don't enjoy the music don't readily invite others to join them.

"The preaching isn't strong." Church members who love their pastors do not want to hurt them, but they spoke honestly. When the preaching is poor, invitations to the unchurched decrease.

"We've got too many church problems right now." Church members frequently recognize when something "just isn't right." They see the attendance decreasing, or they hear of internal conflict. Simply stated, they do not invite their friends onto a battleground.

"Our church is already too crowded." We don't like being cramped, even in church. Moreover, we don't want to have to search for a parking space before entering that already crowded building. One way to avoid more crowding is to stop inviting anyone.

"I don't know how to start the conversation." Simply inviting somebody to church would seem easy, but that's not the case for many. In a culture where discussing religion or politics is almost forbidden, even long-term Christians struggle with initiating an invitation to church.

"It's the Spirit's job—not mine—to bring people to church." To be fair, we have heard this response primarily from congregations seeking to avoid any "man-centered" approach to evangelism. In their zeal to keep their focus on God, they walk cautiously when considering their role in evangelism—including simply inviting others to church.



A Christmas to Remember

By Stephen Judd, TCM President



Stephen Judd
www.mansionkids.org

This time of year at Tupelo Children's Mansion is busy and exciting. Our days are filled with lots of activities, as the children anxiously await the Christmas season.

Many of our resident children have never had a "real" Christmas. Most of them come from poverty

stricken homes or from situations where they were not a priority and gifts were a luxury. To see their faces as they open gifts from people whom they have never met is wonderful to witness. Many of our children have a hard time believing that they are lovable to anyone; much less a person they have never met.

We have had several new arrivals in the last few months, and I wanted to share one story with you. Annabelle (not her real name) came to us in the fall of this year. When she was just two years old, Annabelle began being molested by her grandfather. She was a ward of the state after being taken from her biological mother, and her custody was awarded to the man listed on her birth certificate. He knew nothing of the child until she moved into his home.

Of course, this alone was traumatic, but the situation became much worse when she was left in the care of her biological

grandfather when her father went to work each day. On the grandfather's deathbed, he confessed to molesting this baby almost daily for two years.

If you saw this child, as she pushes her baby doll around campus in a stroller, you would never imagine what she has been through; however, when alone at night in her room, she is tormented by memories of her past life. She is on some medication to help her sleep, to calm her down and even to be able to go to the bathroom, because of the damage done to her young body.



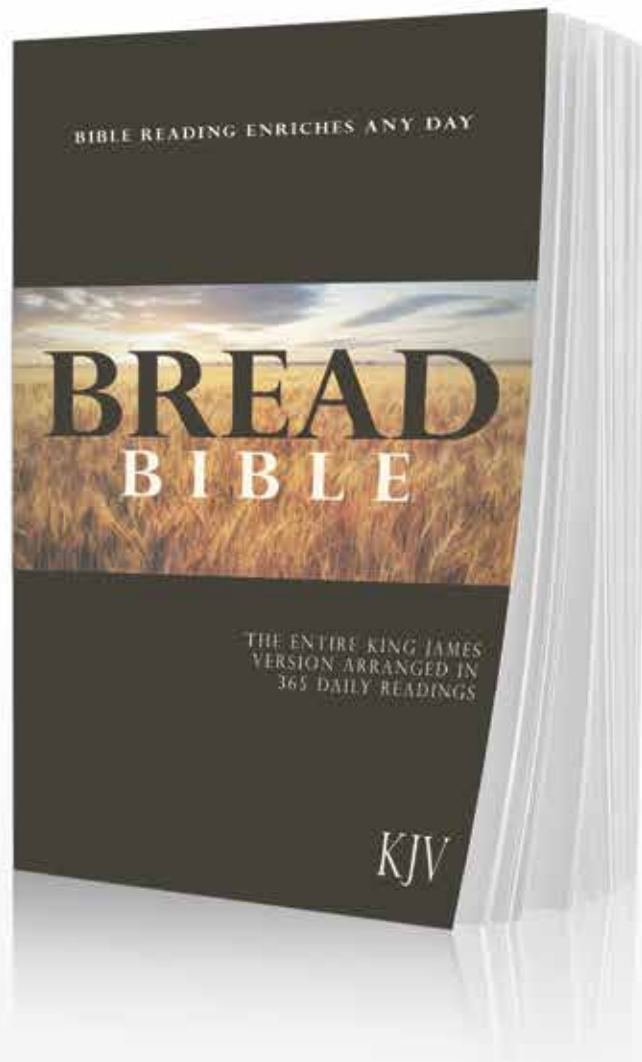
Last night, at a special Mansion family gathering, I watched as Annabelle reached out to a staff member for a hug. She was all smiles and seemed genuinely happy. Even though she still has trouble sleeping at night, she has begun to trust and to feel at home.

She knows that she is now safe and truly cared for by people who truly love her.

Because of your giving, Annabelle, along with dozens of others, has a home. And, with your help, they can have a Christmas to remember. As you celebrate this wonderful Christmas season with your family, you can also know that because you gave, our children are opening gifts and making memories with their TCM family. We are grateful for every gift received.

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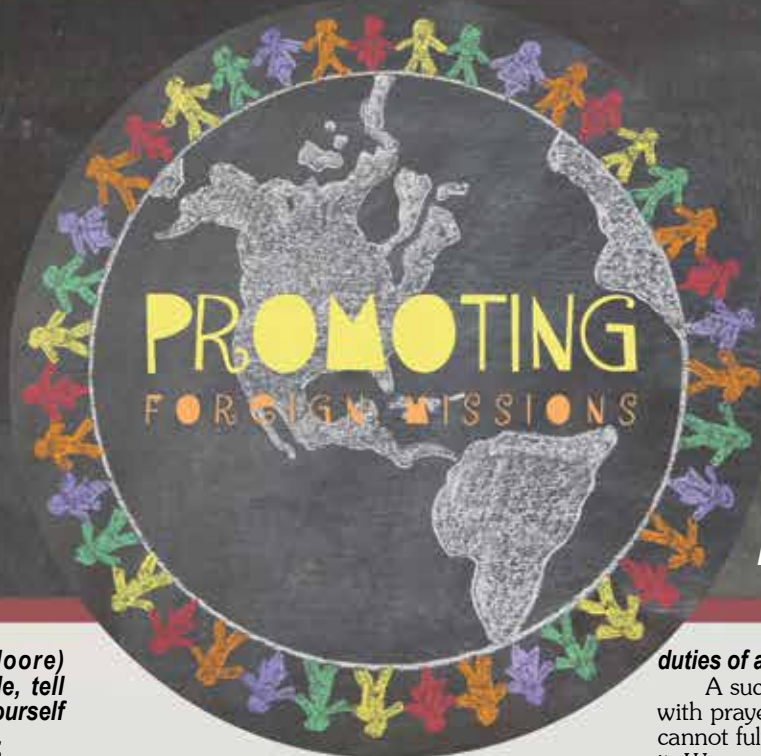
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Interviewed By Susan Thomas



Sis. Patricia Moore
Midland, MI

Sis. Patricia (Moore) Giwa-Agbomeirele, tell us a little about yourself and your ministry.

I am a retired Associated Science & Technology Technologist from Dow Corning Corporation. I received the Holy Ghost and was baptized in Carrollton, Kentucky on Feb. 12, 1983.

I attend Pentecostal Temple in Midland, Michigan where I have served in numerous roles, such as World Missions Director, Uplift Singles Director, Prayer Ministry Leader, Golden Eagles Leader (group for seniors at church) and the SHIELD's Group (group that sends birthday, Christmas, Mother's Day and Father's Day cards to all the missionaries the church supports). I am currently the Children's Ministry director and young adult class Sunday school teacher.

My main focus is helping and inspiring children to work at achieving their goals in life, no matter what their world is like around them in living for God. I am also the co-author of a book for children, *You Can Be a Chemist*. In the book, I share my experience as a young girl of disadvantaged circumstances who dreamed of something more.

Where did you get the inspiration to write *When God Calls*, a book for local church missions directors? What's the story behind it - why did you write it?

I became the World Missions Director when my previous pastor asked me to fill the position. At that time the church supported missions but did not have an active missions program. I had no idea what to do or how to run a missions program. Reaching the lost in foreign countries was very dear to me because my husband (at that time) and father of my two sons had left us and returned to Nigeria.

I was World Missions Director for over 15 years and during that time, through prayer and seeking God for this ministry, God inspired me with skits, dramas, ideas and songs which were used to inspire the congregation to give generously to missions.

For many years, Bro. Leaman, director of the UPCI World Missions Department at that time, came to Pentecostal Temple's missions conference to speak. He found himself touched very deeply by the skits, dramas, decorations and ideas the Lord had given to me. And during one of the times, he said he wished that other churches knew how to have a conference and run a missions program. Thus with years of praying and seeking direction from God, *When God Calls* was written to help churches start a missions program. I recognized that God was inspiring me in such an abundant way so that souls could be reached; therefore, the book was given to the UPCI World Missions Department to help churches and raise funds for missions.

Why should a church consider having a missions conference each year? What are the advantages?

A missions conference helps the whole church to have a time to focus on the great commission: "go ye into all the world." We must keep missions fresh in people's minds so they will remember that it is a very important and vital part of reaching the lost. We reach out to our communities, but a conference helps us to remember there is a world outside of our city, state and country. People need to know that they too can be a part of reaching the lost. To me it helps the church to see that God wants people *everywhere* to hear the gospel. The truth must be preached everywhere, not just in their part of the world. There are souls wanting and needing to hear the Gospel. That is how one can play a small or big role in helping enlarge God's church . . . through missions. And in this way if you have not reached a soul in your community... your \$1, \$20 or \$50 a month can help a missionary reach a soul for you. Whether with financial contributions or with prayer, everything for missions is appreciated and welcomed.

What are the key aspects of a successful missions conference? What are the primary

duties of a local church missions coordinator?

A successful conference always starts with prayer. Prayer is very important. We cannot fulfill God's plan for the lost without it. We need prayer for the missionaries and their work. Much work is going on behind the scenes in missions that nobody sees; only God knows, and that is why prayer is so vital. We all need to come together in prayer for the lost throughout the world; there are many souls crying out for truth, and missions brings it to them. Secondly, planning brings the mission field, the missionaries and the burden to win the lost alive to the congregation through songs, skits, dramas and missionaries themselves. Come before the church monthly with updates from the mission field, reminding the congregation of their commitment and the reason for that commitment . . . to reach the lost.

We also need to hand out missionary reports, put out decorations and hand out letters from the missionaries to the congregation to keep missions in the minds of the church. Monthly, while speaking to the congregation, take a "Change the World" offering. This money goes to the missionary that comes to the conference for special projects that they may have. Ask the congregation to save their pocket change during the month for the "Change the World" offering.

Visit Sunday school classes when possible (5 to 10 minutes) and talk about missions. This helps the kids to start developing a heart to serve and give to missions. These are things that can be done monthly. And, of course, host a yearly missions conference.

Share some ways that a local missions director might promote missions in the church.

I encourage prayer and keeping missions fresh in the minds of the congregation as being the most crucial. Mention missionaries and the work being done to reach the lost at every opportunity. Keep that hunger to reach the lost and dying souls in the heart of every saint. You may buy the book, *When God Calls*, from the Pentecostal Publishing House for a cost of \$7.50 PPH Stock #13458. Money from the book goes to the missions department.

For information about these events, call the event coordinator. If you would like your event on this list, call (800) 8000-AIS. IBC Perspectives does not endorse any seminar or conference listed. This page is provided simply as a service to the greater Apostolic community.

apostolicalendar 2015

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	SPEAKERS	CONTACT / INFO
JAN 1-4	Times of Refreshing - Odessa, TX TOR will be hosting a fellowship dinner Friday and Saturday for pastors, full-time evangelists, assistant pastors, missionaries and retired pastors.	Life Challenge Church Odessa, TX Host Pastor: Dan Smelser	To be announced	For more info: visit www.gordonpoe.com/TOR/conference . (717) 755-7202
JAN 30	Indiana Bible College LIVE RECORDING Under the direction of Lindel M. Anderson, Dean of Music	Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave. Indianapolis, IN Host: Paul D. Mooney	Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenbush, Lindel Anderson, IBC Choir, IBC Chorale, IBC Praise, others	ibc@apostolic.edu www.go2ibc.com or call (317) 262-4030 or (317) 554-8069
FEB 19-21	WinterFire 2015 WinterFire's focus is ministering to those in ministry. Our objective is that every member of your team will leave renewed and refreshed.	First Cathedral 1151 Blue Hills Ave. Bloomfield, CT 06002	Sam Emory, Jelaine Lumpkin, Elias Limones, Mark Morgan, Theodore Brooks, Jerry Jones, David Bernard, David Hudson and I.J. Cunningham	For more info: visit www.winterfire.org or visit Twitter: winterfire-conf or Facebook: winterfire
FEB 25-28	INAAP Regional Training Center Empowering and equipping Apostolic leaders to build the Kingdom of God. Our vision is to align the Apostles and Prophets for the purpose of affirmation, awakening, aligning and activation.	Liberty Tabernacle 6177 N. 75 W. New Whiteland, IN 46184	Apostle John Arcovio, Apostle Amador Valensuela, and Prophet Mike East	For more info: visit www.spiritled.net , e-mail spiritledm@gmail.com , or call 888-776-0797
FEB 26-28	Indiana Bible College CONNECT 2015 Your chance to visit the IBC campus and see what Bible college is all about!	Indiana Bible College 1502 Sumner Ave Indianapolis, IN 46227 Host: Paul D. Mooney	Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenbush, Jason Gallion, Bobby Killmon, Lindel Anderson, others.	ibc@apostolic.edu www.go2ibc.com or call (317) 262-4030 or (317) 554-8069
MARCH 19-21	Times of Refreshing - Tulare, CA Services times are Thursday and Friday at 7:30 p.m., and Saturday at 6:30 p.m.	Living Christ Church Tulare, CA Host Pastors: James McPhail, Don Demyan, Brian Allard and Arthur Law	Jeff Arnold, Doug White and Gordon Poe	For more info: visit www.gordonpoe.com/TOR/conference . (717) 755-7202
APRIL 15-17	Indiana Bible College MUSIC FEST 2015 Under the direction of Lindel M. Anderson, Dean of Music	Calvary Tabernacle 902 Fletcher Ave. Indianapolis, IN Host: Paul D. Mooney	Paul Mooney, Rob Rodenbush, Lindel Anderson, IBC Choir, IBC Chorale, IBC Praise, others	ibc@apostolic.edu www.go2ibc.com or call (317) 262-4030 or (317) 554-8069
APRIL 30-MAY 2	Eagles Summit Conference - Stockton, CA Eagles Summit is committed to birthing, empowering and equipping Apostolic leaders to build the Kingdom of God.	Lighthouse of the Valley 368 N. Sutter St. Stockton, CA 95204	Stan Gleason, Brian Kinsey and John Arcovio	For more info: visit www.eaglessummit.net
JUNE 25-27	INAAP Regional Training Center Empowering and equipping Apostolic leaders to build the Kingdom of God. Our vision is to align the Apostles and Prophets for the purpose of affirmation, awakening, aligning and activation.	New Life Center 840 Rouse St. Houston, TX 77020	Apostle John Arcovio, Apostle Amador Valensuela, and Prophet Mike East	For more info: visit www.spiritled.net , e-mail spiritledm@gmail.com , or call 888-776-0797
JULY 22-24	Mile High Conference 2015 Revival of Prayer, Praise and Evangelism	To be announced	To be announced	(303) 758-5900 www.cacdenver.org DEH2@comcast.net
JULY 2015	IMPACT Family Conference 2015 Day sessions to meet the needs of your entire family unit (Married, Single, Parents, Teens & Children) and your church leadership.	To be announced	To be announced	For detailed schedule, visit www.woodlawn-church.cc (601) 736-5128
AUG 2015	Arkansas Campmeeting - North Little Rock, AR A conference where Apostolic doctrine is not only preached but embraced. The message of Acts 2:38 remains the same!	First Pentecostal Church of North Little Rock, 1401 Calvary Dr., North Little Rock, AR Host Pastor: Joel Holmes	To be announced	For more info visit www.arkansascampmeeting.com
AUG 2015	Investing in Futures A conference for those who invest in children. Educating, encouraging and equipping children's ministry workers.	The Apostolic Sanctuary, 1501 John Deere Parkway, Silvis, IL 61239 Host Pastor: Gary Randol	To be announced	For more info: visit invest-in-futures.com
SEPT 2015	Apostolic Doctrine Conference Strengthening Our Doctrinal Foundation	To be announced	To be announced	For more info: www.newliferrehaute.com or 812-877-9348
NOV 2015	West Coast Conference - Fresno, CA 32nd Annual Fresno Meeting	To be announced	To be announced	For more information call: (559) 225-1622 www.truthtabfresno.org

Church Today: The War On Christmas



Robert L. Rodenbush

■ Church Today

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The War on Christmas

Every year it seems that anti-Christian advocacy groups renew their attack on Christmas. Using scare tactics, including threats of lawsuits, they attempt to intimidate individuals, churches, government officials and school administrators into removing all vestiges of Christ from Christmas. Attempts are continuously made to remove religious references in Christmas carols, ornaments and decorations, to remove nativity displays from public places, and to replace the word *Christmas* with non-sectarian words such *holiday* or *season*.

The U.S. Constitution does not require a strict secularization of Christmas no matter how often or how loud secularists and liberals recite their favored "Separation of Church and State" mantra or cite court cases such as *County of Allegheny v. ACLU*, 492 U.S. 573 (1989) or *Lynch v. Donnelly*, 465 U.S. 668 (1984). Based upon the foregoing, anti-Christian advocacy groups would like for Christian individuals and government officials to believe that the Constitution does not allow any religious expression on public property. Such assertions, however, are wrong.

Rather, the First Amendment protects the rights of private citizens to engage in such religious speech and expression. See *Capital Square Review and Advisory Board v. Pinette*, 515 U.S. 753 (1995) where the Supreme Court held that a private group could erect a cross in a park where other expressions and symbols were being displayed during the holiday season. See also, *Freedom from Religion Foundation, Inc., v. City of Warren*, 707 F.3d 686 (6th Cir. 2013) where the Court of Appeals allowed the City of Warren, Michigan to display a nativity scene as part of a larger overall holiday display that also contained a collection of secular and seasonal symbols. Further, the court upheld the city's denial of a request by the Freedom from Religion Foundation to include a "secular display" to "rebut" or "neutralize" the religious content of the nativity scene.

In essence, the First Amendment allows private religious holiday displays on public property where: (1) the public property is considered a public forum which means that the property site is open to the public's use for a variety of expressive activities (examples include a public park or town square); (2) the religious display is privately erected and sponsored (examples include sponsorship by a private citizen, civic group, or church group); and (3) it is made clear to the public that the display's message is not that of the government (examples include posting a sign with the display indicating sponsorship and/or disclaiming any government endorsement). If the foregoing criteria are met, the First Amendment prevents a government entity from denying a private citizen or group the right to set up a religious holiday display. Further, the government entity cannot compel the private citizen or group to include secular items such as snowmen, decorated trees or a Santa Clause as part of the display.

Finally, if your town sets up a seasonal holiday display this Christmas don't be afraid to request that the town include a nativity scene as part of the display. After all, Jesus is the reason for the season.



Bobby Killmon

■ Theology

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Is the issue regarding Oneness versus the Trinity more of a semantic debate over terms and precise theological definitions rather than a salvation issue?

That is an important question. One must say that a shocking number of people in the pew do not know their own doctrinal belief or at least know it well. It is fascinating that when you begin to teach Bible studies with many of the average Trinitarians, when you begin to talk to them, you discover they are functionally Oneness. However, that does not mean our understanding of the Godhead is a small issue. It is, in fact, critical to salvation.

How is the Oneness of God critical to salvation? Jesus said it this way, "I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; if you do not believe that I am *he*, you will indeed die in your sins" (John 8:24). While this reference has been disputed in interpretation, any approach leaves the unbeliever in trouble.

"I am" (*ego eimi*) is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew words found in Exod. 3:14 and Isa. 43:10. So "I am that I am" compared with Jesus' statement would show that He is none other than the one God of the OT. Further, Jesus would be claiming that belief in Him as the one God or "I am" (singular here) is essential to salvation.

The other way this verse is compatible with Oneness is to say Jesus is speaking in His role as the Messiah, the Christ. Jesus would be telling the people unless they accept Him as Messiah they are going to be lost. Why would acceptance of Him in this role as man be essential to salvation?

Scripture makes it clear that sin alienated us from God. God came to save us in the person of Christ. That means Jesus is our only lamb, sacrifice, High Priest, mediator, etc. The man Jesus is our only "way to the Father," the "one mediator between God and men," so if we reject this only means of salvation we will be lost. Why?

Here is the crux of the matter. The false doctrine of the trinity affects salvation because people are baptized into a trinity instead of the one and ONLY saving name: Jesus (Acts 4:12). It is Jesus the man who died for our sin (Isa. 53). What's fascinating is at this point in books and sermons, most Trinitarians discard speaking of the trinity subconsciously and begin to speak of the work of the man Jesus. They quote verses like 1 Timothy 3:16 talking about how Christ was taken to heaven in glory. But what glory? This is disclosed in Phil. 2:10, 11. "Every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Why not the trinity? Because it's not about persons, but the work of the man accomplishing the will and plan of God which brings salvation to fulfillment: namely by being the lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world.

Either way we look at this particular verse, we must be clear. Oneness is essential to understand because of the necessary mediatorial role of the man Jesus in our salvation. Baptism in Jesus' name isn't just a way to define ourselves against our Trinitarian friends. It's application of the ONLY saving name.



T. W. Massengale

■ Church Growth

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Make 2015 Your Best Year Ever

Seeing your church double in three to five years is doable. You simply need to focus on three timeless principles.

First, know that you cannot do this by yourself. You need a ministry team. Each team member must be willing to do his or her part (which must be clearly spelled out in detailed job descriptions). While there are many ministries a church can have, experience has shown the following to be critical:

Discipleship-focused: Men, Ladies, Youth, Music, New Converts, Prayer. *Evangelism-focused:* Sunday School, Bus Ministry, Home Bible Study, Guest Follow-up, Outreach, and Public Relations. In small churches, finding 12 individuals to fill these positions is challenging and often requires innovation. But with a good management system a pastor can use marginally gifted individuals and still see good success. Good management needs four steps: an annual planning retreat, each ministry handing in a written 1-year plan, monthly planning meetings, and a weekly tag-in. Ongoing leadership training is essential to turn marginal leaders into exceptional leaders.

Second, you need key evangelism

ministries to sow the Gospel consistently. The best, in my opinion, are: Sunday School, Bus or Van Ministry, Guest Follow-up, Home Bible Study, Constant Contact Consciousness, and targeted Public Relations.

Third, you need to work hard to keep your new converts. This is best done by (1) Instruction (first week counseling, new converts class, home Bible study), (2) Fellowship (assigned care partner, monthly fellowship assignments, regular new convert outings), (3) Involvement (discover giftedness, assign involvement, labor under mentor).

All three principles are explained in more detail in the Total Church Growth materials. You can do this. 2015 can be your best year yet! Call 1-800-800-0247 to order.

GORDON POE

MINISTRIES



TIMES OF REFRESHING EVENTS

Odessa TX

Date: Jan. 1-4

Host Pastor: Dan Smelser

Tulare CA

Date: March 19-22

Host Pastors: James McPhail,
Don Demyan, Brian Allard
& Arthur Law

Lufkin TX

Date: April 10-12

Host Pastors: John Boone
& Phillip Moore

Harlingen TX

Date: April 16-18

Host Pastors: Tony Ybarra
& J.C. Milligan

Addison IL

Date: June 4-7

Host Pastor: Brian Labat

Tyler TX

The Well Ladies Conference

Date: July 10-11

Host Pastor: Larry Gandy

San Benito TX

The Well Ladies Conference

Date: July 17-18

Host Pastor: J.C. Milligan

Mattoon IL

Date: Aug. 27-29

Host Pastor: Shine Doughty

Katy TX

Date: Sept. 17-19

Host Pastor: Rob McKee

Tyler TX

Date: Oct. 15-17

Host Pastor: Mike Littlefield

Denver, CO

Date: Oct.

Host Pastors: Dannie Hood
& Billy Hale

Lewisville TX

Date: Nov. 6-8

Host Pastor: Rob McKee

Everyone welcome! • Visit GordonPoe.com for more info

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IBC Live Recording- January 30, 2015
Graduation- May 7-8, 2015



Carol Clemans

Spiritual Growth

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What is a God-Conscious State of Mind?

How can I live for God to bring Him glory? Micah 6:8 has the answer: 1) Do justly – do what is right in the sight of God at all times. 2) Love mercy – God is merciful to us so let us have mercy and compassion on others. 3) Walk humbly with thy God – giving all the glory to God in all we do. This is a definition of how to live in a God-conscious state of mind!

Another description is being Holy Ghost-controlled. This is allowing God to rule and reign over every thought, feeling and action! Romans 12: 1 & 2: Paul is begging (beseeching), instructing us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto the Lord which is our reasonable worship. Verse two says be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by renewing our mind, that we may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God. The Word instructs us to do all we do heartily as unto the Lord – every action to please God is worship to Him.

If we all obey the two above passages of God's truth, we will have love, joy and peace in our hearts with God and others. How? Because we are allowing the Fruit of the Spirit complete control, being longsuffering-patient, kind, gentle, good, faithful and having self-control toward others in every circumstance.

In my teaching for churches/conferences and counseling (nationwide by phone/Skype – (636) 448-0121), I help believers understand how to put this 'God-conscious state of mind' into daily practice. We cannot departmentalize our walk with God separate from our actions! Paul told us we are bought with a high price (the Lord's death on the cross): therefore glorify God in our body and spirit which are God's – 1 Cor. 6:20. Do all your actions glorify God?

Carol Clemans is an anointed teacher of God's Word, a Certified Pastoral Counselor, a Certified Christian Life Coach & author. Call to schedule speaking or counseling by phone/Skype (636) 448-0121 – www.carolclemans.org - bio, 90+ articles, teaching CD's, DVD's, book: God's Design for Marriage. Revs. Harold & Carol Clemans' pastor is Jerry Dillon, Madison, MS.



Brian Norman

Revival Concepts

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How Do You Treat Visitors?

Entering a church service can be exciting, challenging and overwhelming. Consider the visitors' perspective. They have not been there before so they are not sure what to expect. When exactly will the sermon be? How long does service last? What style of music do they play?

These are just a few of the questions that a first-time visitor might have when coming to a service. Add to that, is there anyone I know here? Do I look okay? Will I fit in? First-time visitors to our church services are not sure of what they are stepping into. Even non first-time visitors generally have a sense of uncertainty when coming into a church. As the church family, we must make certain there is a connection, first with God and second with us. A few things for us to consider in regard to the visitors' experience:

- The #1 reason visitors return a second time to a church is because that church was friendly.

- Visitors have expressed a willingness to be in church, feel God's presence, hear God's Word, and that they are considering a change in life, just by being there.

- 80% of conversions with a social connection in the local church stay. The exact opposite is true for those who do not have a connection.

This means as a local church congregation we must do everything we can to make sure our visitors have a "friendly" experience. And we must do everything possible to build that bridge of connection. Here are a few suggestions:

- 1) Have greeters in the church vestibule who know how to smile and shake hands and thank people for coming (and who mean it).

- 2) Consider giving every visitor a nice, brief placard that explains what to expect in our services, and the Biblical basis.

- 3) Take a five minute break "in service" for people to greet those around them in the auditorium.

- 4) Publicly acknowledge the visitors for being there, whether generally or specifically, and give sincere appreciation for their attendance.

- 5) Teach and preach about loving others until it just flows out of your people, touching every one they come into contact with – including visitors!

Brian Norman is a full-time International Evangelist. His experience includes pastoring and planting churches in America and overseas. Website: GlobalEvangelism.org Phone: (636)544-0627



Aubrey Jayroe

Finance

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As we get toward the end of the year, can you provide help as to maintaining records and destroying them based on the IRS requirements?

As stated last month, this is part two of an article concerning the maintenance of records for the church.

Legal, Insurance records such as insurance policies should be kept for 7 years after cancellation, leases should be kept 6 years after they expire, general contracts should be maintained 3 years after termination, and legal correspondence should be kept 6 years.

Payroll records such as payroll registers, state unemployment tax records, earnings records, payroll tax returns (Form 941 or 944), and W-2 statements of employees should be maintained for 7 years. Garnishment records should be kept for 5 years.

Employment Records such as employment agreements, termination agreements, and retirement/pension plan documents should be maintained permanently, records relating to promotion, demotion or discharge should be kept for 5 years after termination, accident reports and worker's comp. records for 5 years, time cards 4 years, and employment applications and I-9 Forms and W-4 Forms should be kept for 3 years.

Accounting records and documents such as annual audits, reviews, and financial statements should be kept permanently, general ledgers and tax returns should be kept 8 years, business expense records, journal entries, purchase invoices should be kept 5 years, with petty cash vouchers, cash receipts, and credit card receipts/invoices being kept for 3 years.

Electronic documents should be retained or destroyed as if they were paper documents. A church can keep records on the computer instead of actual paper documents. However, backup procedures should be done a minimum of weekly, with a copy of the backup being kept off site. Also, the administration should test the backup records periodically to ensure the data is readable and correct.

Documents should not be destroyed without consent of the pastor and/or board. Secretarial staff must be sure to keep all necessary records and only destroy what has been authorized. Failure to comply with proper maintenance or destruction of church records could result in possible civil and criminal sanctions as well as disciplinary actions. For a full listing of all record retention and destruction items, please contact our office.

Aubrey L. Jayroe is an Accredited Tax Advisor, Accredited Tax Preparer and Enrolled Agent by the IRS, as well as an Apostolic pastor. Contact him at: (870) 633-6045. Jayroe & Company, P.O. Box 1217, Forrest City, AR 72336. Email: jayroeone@sbcglobal.net



Delano Sherley

Accounting & Tax

Year-End Contribution Reports

Since the year is almost over, it is a good time to review the rules for issuing charitable contribution statements.

Charitable contributions must be reported/claimed in the year in which they are delivered to the charity. If you receive cash or a check after December 31, it should not be included on the donor's 2014 contribution statement. This is true even if the check

is dated in December but delivered in January.

For the purpose of determining the delivery date, a contribution that is mailed (postmarked) by December 31, 2014 is considered delivered by that date and can be included on the donor's 2014 contribution statement. However, if you receive a check in 2014 that is dated in January 2015, it must be held until 2015 and recorded as a 2015 contribution.

Not following these rules can jeopardize the tax exempt status of the church.

Each contribution statement should

include the following statement: "No goods or services were provided in exchange for your contribution."

We suggest that you advise your donors to not file their 2014 income tax return until they have received a written acknowledgment of their contributions from the church. Under IRS rules, they may lose the deduction if they file their tax return before receiving the written acknowledgment from the church.

Delano Sherley is a CPA and president of Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc. He can be reached at 513-737-1314. Delano Sherley & Associates, Inc., 3189 Princeton Road, Suite 228, Hamilton, OH 45011. Email: Delano@dsacpainc.com Website: www.dsacpainc.com

THAT'S OUTRAGEOUS**Idaho Pastors Face Jail Time, Fines For Not Performing Gay Weddings**

Two ordained Christian pastors in Idaho have filed a federal lawsuit and a motion for temporarily restraining Coeur d'Alene city officials from forcing them to perform same-sex wedding ceremonies or face



prosecution for violating "non-discrimination" laws.

Alliance Defending Freedom

attorneys filed the lawsuit on behalf of Donald and Evelyn Knapp, who run Hitching Post Wedding Chapel and have been required by city officials to perform gay ceremonies or face months in jail and/or thousands of dollars in fines.

The city says its ordinance requires them to perform same-sex wedding ceremonies because the courts have overridden Idaho's voter-approved constitutional amendment that affirmed marriage as the union of a man and a woman.

"The city is on seriously flawed legal ground, and our lawsuit intends to ensure that this couple's freedom to adhere to their own faith as pastors is protected just as the First Amendment intended," ADF Senior Legal Counsel Jeremy Tedesco said.

MEDICAL TRENDS**Doctors Advised Not To Say "It's a Boy" Anymore**

A new debate is raging across the country concerning gender assignment at birth. Some believe doctors should not describe a newborn as a boy or girl, but that these children should be given the opportunity to choose their gender when older.

The issue of "infant gender assignment" was defined in a recent article by Christin Scarlett Milloy: "Don't Let the Doctor Do This to Your Newborn." She described gender assignment as "when the doctor holds your child up to the harsh light of the delivery room, looks between its legs and declares, 'It's a boy or a girl,' based on nothing more than a cursory assessment of your offspring's genitals."

She went on to say when a doctor tells you the sex of your baby, he could be doing the baby irreparable harm by not taking into consideration that in later years, that child might not want to belong to that sex. In fact, Milloy suggests that infant gender assignment is playing "Russian roulette with your baby's life."

**Big Bang's New Findings Bewilder Secular Scientists**

If the Big Bang theory is correct, our universe should not exist, according to research published recently by physicists at King's College in London. The shocking discovery implies the universe should have collapsed less than a second after it exploded into existence.

Christians are divided on whether or not the Big Bang theory fits with the biblical description of creation. But the theory has been an enormous concession for many secular scientists. For years they clung to belief in a universe that was steady and that had existed indefinitely. But recent advances in physics have forced most scientists to admit the universe had a beginning and has been expanding ever since by cosmic inflation.

For Christians, the universe having a beginning point is no new discovery. These scientists were upstaged more than 2,500 years ago by Job, Moses, David and other Bible authors, said Hugh Ross, astrophysicist and founder of the Reasons to Believe ministry. The Bible confirms repeatedly the two most fundamental properties of the Big Bang theory: there was a definite, finite beginning and the universe is undergoing continual expansion. For example, said Ross, in Isaiah 42:5 both properties were declared: "This is what the Lord says—He who created the heavens and stretched them out."

The researchers of the current study combined data from observations made possible by the BICEP2 telescope with new information developed from the discovery of the Higgs Boson, a particle thought to be responsible for the mass of everything that exists. The scientists said the universe lies in a valley of the Higgs Field, an energy field that exists throughout the universe. It contains the Higgs Boson particle and sets the limits on its behavior. The universe is prevented from entering an even deeper valley by a large energy barrier that can be thought of as a giant hill separating the two valleys. But, according to the Big Bang theory, the researchers say cosmic inflation would have kicked the universe over the hill and into the deeper valley where it would have collapsed in less than a second.

Bewildered secular scientists are scratching their heads at the new findings. "We have to extend our theories to explain why this didn't happen," said Robert Hogan, a doctoral student at King's College who led the study. The researchers conclude there must be some process yet undiscovered.

Someday the scientists seeking explanations of why there was no big collapse immediately after the universe came into existence may well have to contend with the concept of a Creator.

NEWS IN BRIEF

■ The lost sermons of 19th century legendary London pastor Charles Spurgeon will be published next year. A collection of over 400 sermons and outlines from Spurgeon's days as a young pastor outside Cambridge were discovered about three years ago in the archives of Spurgeon's College in London.

■ The Shut Up, Devil! free smartphone app promises the power to silence Satan. It is being reported as "an innovative resource that puts the power of the Word of God in your pocket." Available for iOS and Android users, it contains scripture cards and reminders to help keep the enemy at bay.

BIBLICAL TRENDS**Life-Sized Noah's Ark Replica In Works For KY**

A Creationist group's project to build a park centered around a life-sized model of Noah's Ark might benefit from an estimated \$18 million in tourism incentives. This would come by way of a state sales tax refund that would be received after the Ark Encounter has been open to the public for at least three years.



The Kentucky Tourism Development Finance Authority has given "preliminary approval" recently on the Ark Encounter project overseen by a Christian apologetics group known as Answers in Genesis. Slated to be built in Williamstown, a small community located in Northern Kentucky, the Ark Encounter has had its share of issues getting started.

In late December 2011 it was reported that the Ark Encounter was suffering from a lack of donations, having raised only \$4.4 million of the needed \$24.5 million at the time.

Hoping to benefit from the tourism incentives, the founders have set the projected opening date for Ark Encounter for 2016.

LEGAL TRENDS**Houston Mayor Withdraws Subpoenas of Sermons With Homosexual Content**

The mayor of Houston, Texas recently withdrew the subpoenas of sermons from five pastors who opposed an ordinance banning discrimination against those affiliated with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) organization. Filed last month, the subpoenas outraged many conservative Christians as an affront to religious freedom.

Houston Mayor Annise Parker said in late October that as important as it is to protect the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance (HERO), the subpoenas became a distraction. They were aimed at pastors active in the movement to overturn HERO through a citywide vote.

Parker, Houston's first openly gay mayor, said she made the decision after meeting with Houston pastors and then with national Christian leaders, including National Clergy Council President Rob Schenck. "They came without political agendas, without hate in their hearts and without any desire to debate the merits of HERO," Parker said. "They simply wanted to express their passionate and very sincere concerns about the subpoenas."

Erik Stanley, senior legal counsel for the Alliance Defending Freedom, called the subpoenas a "gross abuse of power."



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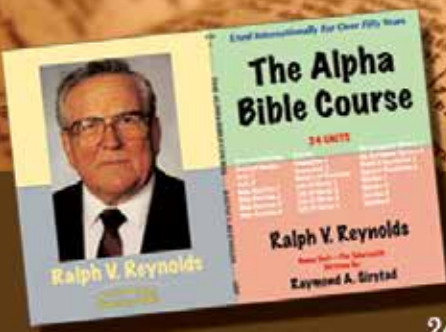
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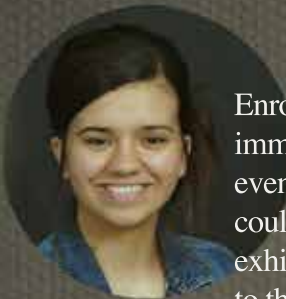


The relationship between the pastor and the saint of God is beautifully illustrated in this explanation of church structure.

\$10.00 *The author places the pastor in the position of honor as pertains to the Scripture. He gives an enlightening explanation of the sheep of the fold, or the saint of God, under the leadership of the pastor, as to the rights that he has to speak. All of this is couched very scripturally in a beautiful area of mutual relationship between a sheep and his shepherd.*



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Enrolling in January allowed me to immediately experience all of the events I heard so much about but could never attend. It was such an exhilarating feeling to jump right in to the work of God taking place at IBC.

Kelsey Wilson
IBC student



Coming in January was a great experience for me. IBC is a very welcoming place. Teachers and peers helped me adapt to coming in January. By taking a few extra credits each semester, I will be able to graduate with the class that came the previous semester.

Kyle Bowden
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SNAKES IN THE CAN

Amos 5:19 “As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.”

On April 10, 1912 a brand new ocean liner left port heading from Southampton, UK to New York City. It was the largest ship afloat at that time in history. It was designed to be the ultimate luxury liner, the biggest and best of its time. The plans show that the first-class lounge was styled after the palace at Versailles. The vessel housed an onboard swimming pool, a gymnasium, and a squash court. It boasted a top-of-the-line Turkish bath. It had three libraries where passengers could check out books at their leisure. But for all of those things, that's not why we remember the RMS Titanic.

We remember it because on April 15, 1912, the unsinkable ship . . . sank. The sinking of the Titanic is still regarded as “one of the deadliest peacetime maritime disasters in history.” We all know the story. The ship hit an iceberg in the middle of the night, and the Titanic went down. It is recorded that 1,502 people lost their lives. That was the end of the story, or so it seemed.

But something interesting happened in 1985. You see, that year the Titanic was rediscovered. Scientists found it resting on the bottom of the ocean floor. At that point, scientists began to examine the wreckage and, in 1996, they made a discovery. For over 70 years everyone had assumed that an iceberg tore a huge hole into the side of the ship and that as a result, the ship sunk. Scientists had even estimated the size of the hole. The prevalent theory was that it was 300 feet long. But looking at the wreckage, scientists discovered that there was no gaping hole. There was no huge gash, no large dent. It never existed. In fact, the side of the ship where it had collided with the iceberg was completely intact.

Instead, scientists discovered that the only thing that sent the Titanic to the bottom of the ocean was a simple series of six narrow slits. They noted in their study that the largest of them wasn't any wider than a human hand. They also added that the entire area of damage was less than the size of two sidewalk squares. *Think about it: 900 feet of ship was no match for six narrow slits and 12 square feet of damage.*

Many times our lives work the exact same way. It's very rarely the big circumstances or the big mistakes or the huge, gaping holes that take us down. Instead, it's typically the little things that cripple us. It has been said that integrity isn't built year by year; it's built moment by moment. It's not the big circumstances or the big instances of life that define us. But many times it's the day-by-day, little decisions we make along the way.

In the Book of Amos, we have God's man of the hour speaking to God's people. If we were to summarize Amos 5 to 140 characters—the size of a twitter post—it would say: *“Lament for Israel. She is fallen. Seek me and live. You shall not dwell in your houses. I despise your feasts. Let justice roll like waters.”*

Those aren't exactly the kinds of things you want to hear God say about your life. But within the chapter as Amos is prophesying and venting and warning and speaking on behalf of God, as he's listing out some of the grievances of Israel, as he's talking about the ways they've wronged God and the different things they've done . . . within all of that, we hit verse 19.

And as we do, we see that Amos inserts a story. It's a parable. It's a story to teach. He's making a point. And even though the King James Version is fairly clear here, I feel the New Living Translation puts it a little better: Amos 5:19 (NLT) *“In that day you will be like a man who runs from a lion—only to meet a bear. Escaping from the bear, he leans his hand against a wall in his house—and he's bitten by a snake.”*

Talk about a bad day. Amos tells of a man who meets up with a lion and having good sense . . . he runs. He does

something. We don't know what he does, but he does something. Maybe he runs. Maybe he climbs a tree. Maybe he throws the lion a steak. But whatever it is that he does, it works. The man escapes. But no sooner does this man escape the lion than he runs into a bear.

And it's the same story . . . steaks included. I'd imagine the commodity price for beef probably went up that day.

No sooner does he escape the lion and no sooner does he escape the bear, than he gets home. He reaches his refuge. The ONE place where he feels he'll be safe. The place where he can kick off his running shoes, grab a drink of water, and hit the shower. It's there in that place of solitude and protection that he leans his hand against the wall to catch his breath. And as he does, he feels a sharp pain, lets out a howl, shakes his hand, and catches a quick glimpse of a tiny tail slipping effortlessly into a crevice in his wall. He's bitten . . . by a snake . . . in his own home.

There was a snake in the cinderblocks . . . and not just any snake. The word that's used implies a poisonous, deadly snake. It's the kind of encounter that could potentially end a life. Scariest of all is that Amos' parable man doesn't stand alone. We're right there with him every moment that we live. In our lives it's very rarely the lions and bears of life that destroy us. They may crush us. They may change us. They may affect us. We may walk away from those instances limping and thinking and feeling and living differently than we did before, but it's rarely those things, the big things in life, that cripple us. Instead, it's when we find ourselves in a place where we feel safe. It's when we let our guard down. It's when we begin to say, *“Let me loosen up and relax some things. This is my home. These are my walls. No one will ever know.”* It's then that we set ourselves up to find snakes in our cinderblocks.

They're not very big. They don't take up a lot of room. They don't seem to get in the way of anything. They're just sort of off in the crevice. You wouldn't see them if you weren't looking for them. They're small, never noticed, forgotten, ignored. But it's those things, those tiny, forgotten things that have the potential to cripple us. It's those things that bite us when we're down. It's those things that come back to haunt us when we least expect it. The reason the man in Amos wasn't safe in his own home was because he had allowed some snakes to roost in his walls.

Taking that to heart, be careful what you allow to roost in your home. Be careful what you allow to roost in your heart. Be careful what you allow to roost in your mind. Be careful what you allow to roost in your relationships. Be careful what you allow to roost in your health. Be careful what you allow to roost in the walls of your life. *Whatever goes in will eventually come out.*

If it went into your walls, it'll come out of your walls. If it came into your life, it will inevitably make its grand reentrance at another time. At some point, that man's snake entered his walls and it was when he was weakest from going and going and running and fighting all day, when he was worn down, when he was tired, when he finally let his guard down and decided to take a rest; it was then that it struck.

The things you allow into your life will catch you when you least expect it. You may not be out on the corner with the prostitutes. You may not be shooting up somewhere in a dark alley. You may not be drinking yourself to death in your living room. You may not have a mouth like a sailor. And the

INDERBLOCKS

great; those are lions and bears that have been conquered in your life. And sometimes, contrary to popular belief, the way to conquer those things is to run away, just like the man in Amos. Paul told Timothy to “flee youthful lusts.” But while you’ve been out fighting lions and you’ve been out fighting bears, what things have you allowed into the crevices of your life? Has the snake of pride crept in? Has the serpent of offense begun to roost? Is the snake of bitterness present in your life? Do you have a 6-inch-long bad attitude hidden in your cinderblocks? We could list sin after sin. Issue after issue. Problem after problem. But that’s not the point. Psalm 90:8 says God already sees our secret sins. But I like what David says in Psalm 77:6: *“I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search.”*

Notice that last phrase: *“my spirit made diligent search.”* David says, *“I’ve searched my heart diligently”* and then by inference, he adds, *“God, don’t let there be any secret things in my life. Remove those things, even the things I may not be aware of.”*

In Song of Solomon chapter 2, Solomon says it’s “the little foxes that spoil the vines.” The little foxes. Not just any foxes. THE LITTLE FOXES.

They start out cute. They start out cuddly. They’re orange and warm and fuzzy. They’re literally balls of fur with black noses and little ears. They’re so pretty that companies put pictures of them on calendars . . . and people buy them! They’d never go near them in person, but they’ll look at them on a calendar.

Foxes start off small and cute, but even then they do damage. They spoil vines. They gnaw on the vines. They bruise the grapes. They knock them off the vines. They do damage. And not only that, but here’s the bigger problem: *small foxes become big foxes.*

And that’s how it is in our lives. Integrity is created in the moment. Little decisions become big decisions. Little lies become big lies. Little mistakes become big mistakes. Little things become big things. In our lives, it’s not the gaping holes that do the most damage. It’s the little slits that send ocean liners to the ocean floor. It’s the little foxes playing in the fields. It’s the snakes hiding

in the walls. The little decisions. The things we do day after day after day.

Pride. Hatred. Lying. Bitterness. Offense. Attitudes. Sin. They all start out small, but they don’t end that way. While little foxes may ruin grapes and fields, big foxes become predators, and predators are a lot harder to deal with. In Judges 15, we have Samson getting revenge on the Philistines. Here’s what he does -- he catches 300 foxes, splits them into pairs, ties a torch between their tails, and then sets them loose in the Philistines’ corn fields.

Judges 15:4-5: *“And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks [still talking about corn], and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives.”*

Imagine this picture. The foxes are scared. They’re running in circles. The corn fields are burning to the ground. And as the fire gets hotter and the flames grow higher, the foxes become more and more terrified. So, what do they do? They run home. They run to their place of safety. They run to the vineyard. They run to the place where they used to frolic and play as kits. They run to the place where they feel the safest. They run to the vineyard. It’s their place of refuge. It’s where they’ve taken up residence.

Be careful what you allow into the crevices of your life because the baby fox problems of today become the predator fox problems of tomorrow. If you let them grow, they will take up residence in the crevices of the vineyards of your life. The Titanic had its slits: the width of a hand, the length of a sidewalk. The vineyard had its foxes, tiny enough to run under the vines. The cinderblocks had their snake, small enough to live in the crevices.

They were small. Easy to ignore. Easy to miss. Easy to forget.

But each one did irreversible damage. Don’t be like Amos’ parable man. It’s time to clean house.

Banish the snakes from the cinder blocks, patch up the holes, and forbid them ever to return.



**Bro. Jeremy Gove, Asst. Pastor
Midtown Tabernacle, Midtown, DE**



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MATTHEW 28:19 TRIADIC, JEWISH OR TRINITARIAN

KULWANT SINGH BOORA
Book 13



Foreword
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Kulwant Singh Boora

Was the trinitarian baptismal formula used by the apostles?
Boora’s book shows conclusively it was not.

To be released end of December

Napa Earthquake Damages Parsonage, Sanctuary

Safety Issues Force Pastor's Family to Abandon House

By Gregg Stone

On August 24 at 3:20 in the morning, a 6.0 magnitude earthquake struck Napa, California. Bro. Timothy Bledsoe and his wife, Becky, were awakened by the sound and feel of their house, the parsonage next to the church (New Life Tabernacle), being shaken from stem to stern. "In the chaos of the moment I heard what I thought was a busted water main," said Bro. Bledsoe, "but quickly realized the high-pressure side of the gas main was sheared off and blowing gas under the house. Immediately we abandoned the house and ran to the other side of the street."

It wasn't until daylight that Bro. Bledsoe realized the house had fallen off its piers. "We are so thankful for God's protection," said Bro. Bledsoe. "It could have been much worse. The house remains pitched off to its side waiting for us to decide if it's cost effective to lift the house and build a new foundation, or to simply raze the old house. Both options will potentially cost our church several thousands of dollars, rebuilding being the most costly option. My family and I are currently staying in the church evangelist quarters, while our belongings are being stored in the church annex, pending our ability to obtain permanent housing."

The sanctuary of New Life Tabernacle suffered minor damage. "There was a broken water pipe, resulting in the loss of the carpet in the nursery," said Bro. Bledsoe, "and glass globes were broken in the sanctuary lighting. Musical instruments, a projector and podiums were thrown

around and broken, but overall we have survived. Thank you, Jesus!"

Because Napa sits on a fault line, insurance does not cover any of the damages and any work performed has to be paid for by the church. "We are in the process of taking bids to put the house on a new foundation," explained Bro. Bledsoe, "but it will also have to be rotated as it moved three feet to the side, one foot forward, and twisted all at the same time. Bids are coming in from \$30,000 to \$45,000. The house also needs a new kitchen and a new roof and the outside of the house needs to be painted."

Due to the estimated cost of repair and restoration, Bro. and Sis. Bledsoe, their family and their congregation could use not only your prayers but your support as well. Anyone wishing to help with the restoration process and to help New Life Tabernacle get back on their feet again can make donations to New Life Tabernacle, P.O. Box 10428, Napa, CA 94581.



The parsonage of New Life Tabernacle in Napa suffered foundation damage due to a powerful earthquake in August.



Pastor Timothy Bledsoe and his family
New Life Tabernacle, Napa, CA



Apostolic Book Outlines How to "Pray the Tabernacle Plan"

By Gregg Stone



Sis. Carole Keller, author
Oak Creek, WI

As we walk with our Savior, He will lead us to a place He is calling us to occupy, a place of power, intimacy, anointing and joy. However, most importantly, it is a place of transformation. Written by Carole Keller, the book *From Ashes to Glory* outlines a path to re-connect with God through principles of prayer and the Word modeled after the Tabernacle Plan. God said to make Him a sanctuary where He can dwell. That sanctuary is our heart.

The Tabernacle Plan is more than a prayer regimen. "Scripted methods of prayer often become impersonal and rigid," said Sis. Keller. "The Tabernacle Plan is a perspective for encountering God in increasingly intimate levels of prayer and relationship. The heart of the Tabernacle Plan of prayer is the altar. Everything else—from the cleansing by the Word (Laver), to the ministry of the Holy Spirit (Golden Candlestick), and the

Word (Shewbread) to intercession (Altar of Incense) and breaking through to revival (Holy of Holies), along with miraculous answers to prayer, flows from a deeper revelation of repentance. The progression in prayer and the intimacy from prayer is attributed to the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. When God sees the blood in repentance, all the other elements in the Tabernacle Plan fall into place to become one dynamic episode of prayer."

What distinguishes the Tabernacle Plan of prayer from other forms of prayer is its connection to the cross, because it is at the cross where divinity meets with humanity. "This is where we find God's heart," said Sis. Keller. "God never wants us to forget the cross and the precious blood that was shed there. The Tabernacle Plan becomes an experience where God personalizes (through revelation) His plan to redeem us from the power of sin so that we rise from the ashes of defeat to the glory of victory. There are stunning testimonies in the book of visions people received when they surrendered the reins of their heart at the altar. The light of the Golden Candlestick took

away the blindness from their eyes so they could see what was in the darkness! Thus, Christ becomes more intimate and our walk with Him more rewarding because we want to involve Him in every detail of our life."

For the past 32 years, Sis. Keller has attended Parkway Apostolic Church in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, involving herself principally in teaching Biblical principles and authoring several books on restoration and personal deliverance. One of her books, *The Transforming Power of Engrafting God's Word*, is part of the curriculum at the Nigerian Bible School (Ministerial Training Center). Another book, *Free at Last*, has traveled to other parts of the country and has been used successfully in small groups, correctional institutions, and churches. Sis. Keller had the recent opportunity to coordinate a *Free at Last* seminar in conjunction with her pastor in Wisconsin. She welcomes the opportunity to share principles of restoration and revival.

From Ashes to Glory is available through her website, www.freeatlastministries.us.



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Word To The Wise:

"Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect."

* * * * *

A father and son were riding in their truck together one day and the son asked the father, "Dad, how high can you count?"

The father replied, "Well, I don't know, son -- how high can you count?"

The son immediately replied, "One thousand, five hundred, forty-two."

The father said, "Why did you stop?"

The son shrugged his shoulders and said, "Well, church was over."

* * * * *

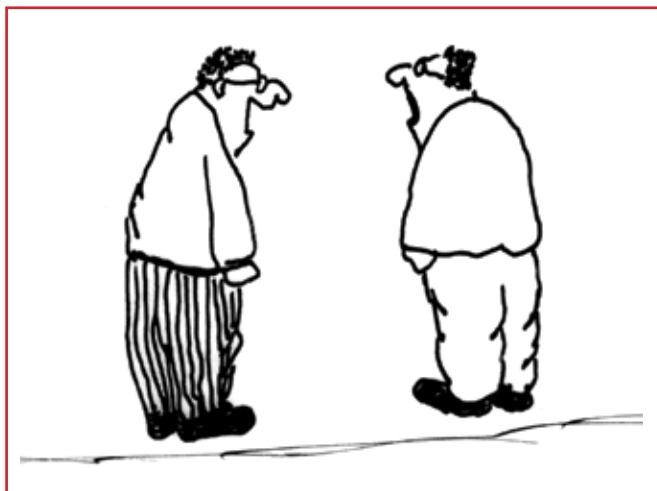
His Own Medicine

A doctor and a lawyer were talking at a party. Their conversation was constantly interrupted by people describing their ailments and asking the doctor for free medical advice. After an hour of this, the exasperated doctor asked the lawyer, "What do you do to stop people from asking you for legal advice when you're out of the office?"

"I give it to them," replied the lawyer, "and then I send them a bill."

The doctor was shocked but agreed to give it a try. The next day, still feeling slightly guilty, the doctor prepared the bills.

When he went to place them in his mailbox, he found a bill from the lawyer.



"It's not atheism, agnosticism or humanism, Patrick -- our true enemy is golf."

* * * * *

Communication

A wife asks her husband, "Please go shopping for me and buy one carton of milk and if they have avocados, get 6."

A short time later the husband comes back with 6 cartons of milk.

The wife asks him, "Why did you buy 6 cartons of milk?"

He replied, "They had avocados."

If you're a woman, I'm sure you're going back to read it again. Men will get it the first time.

* * * * *

A Sunday School teacher began her lesson with a question: "Boys and girls, what do we know about God?"

A hand shot up in the air. "He is an artist!" said the kindergarten boy.

"Really? How do you know?" the teacher asked.

"You know ... Our Father, who does art in Heaven."



"Here's the state-of-the art gymnasium, here's the coffee bar and internet cafe . . . oh, yeah -- and this little thing over here is the new sanctuary."

A man was seen fleeing the hospital just before his operation.

"What's the matter?" he was asked.

He said, "I heard the nurse say, 'It's a very simple operation, don't worry, I'm sure it will be all right.'"

"She was just trying to comfort you, what's so frightening about that?"

"She wasn't talking to me. She was talking to my surgeon!"

* * * * *

You know you're in a small country church when ...

~ People wonder, when Jesus fed the 5,000, whether the two fish were bass or catfish.

~ People grumble about Noah letting coyotes on the ark.

~ The preacher says, "I'd like to ask Bubba to help take up the offering," and five guys stand up.

~ Opening day of hunting season is recognized as an official church holiday.

~ A member of the church requests to be buried in his 4-wheel-drive truck because: "It ain't never been in a hole it couldn't get out of!"

~ Prayers regarding the weather are standard practice.

~ The choir group is known as the "O.K. Chorale."

~ The pastor wears boots.

~ Four generations of the same family sit together in worship.

~ There is no such thing as a "secret" sin.

~ There's a special fundraiser for a new septic tank.

~ Finding and returning lost sheep isn't just a parable.

~ High notes on the organ can set the dogs to howling.

~ The final words of the prayer are, "Ya'll come back now, ya hear."



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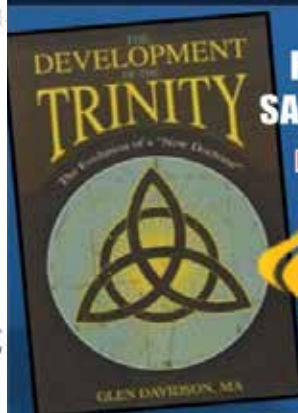
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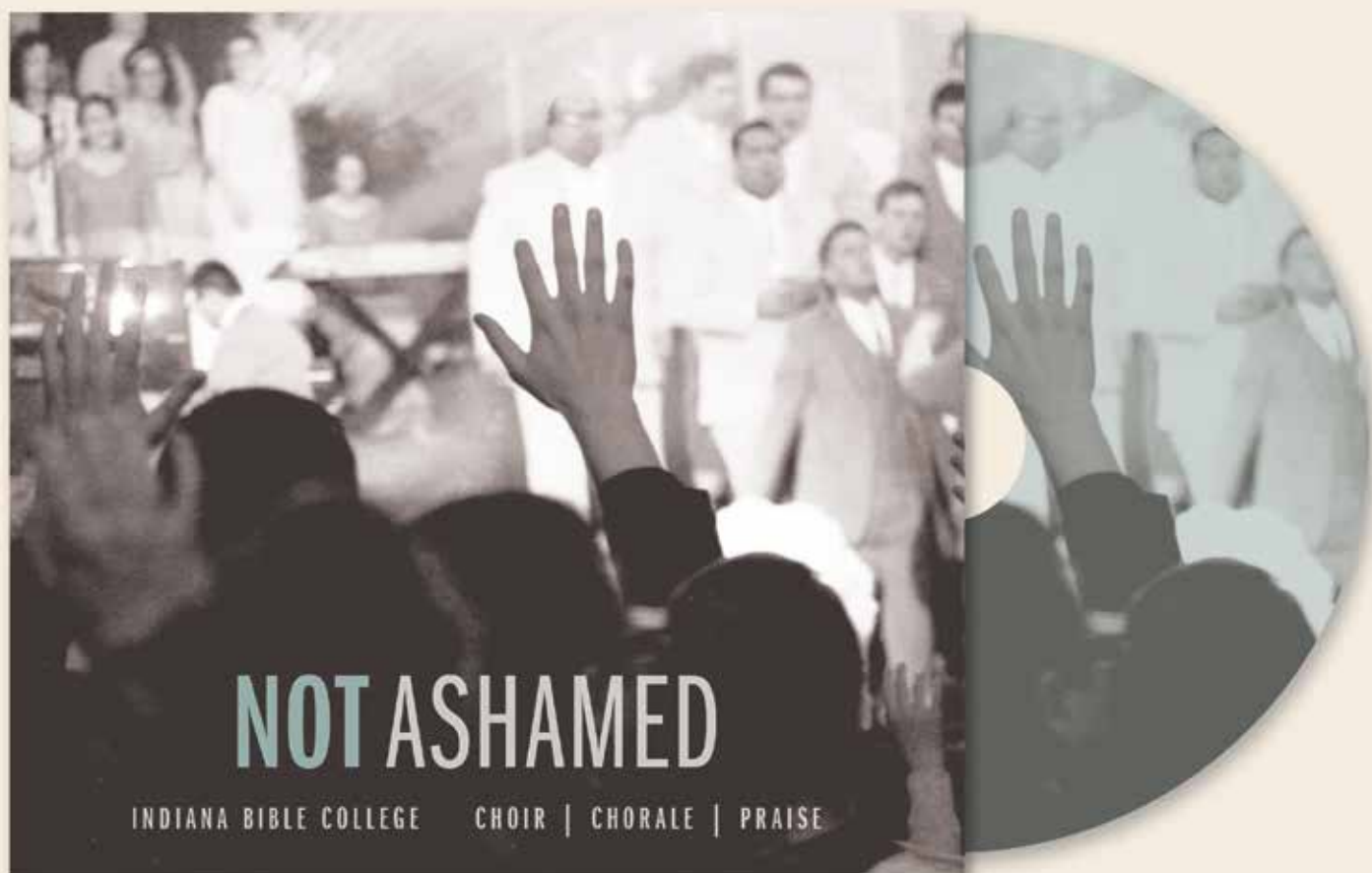
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