



# The Alabama Baptist

Toll free 800-803-5201  
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September 12, 2019

Vol. 184, No. 36  
Informing. Inspiring. Connecting.

## INSIDE



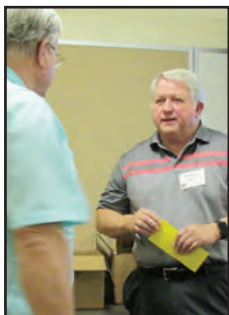
**Go, Taste and See**  
— Helen, Ga.

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To watch the videos from this week's issue, visit our YouTube channel "TAB Media."



Submitted photo

After watching his mom suffer from kidney failure when he was a child Michael Odom (left) decided he would donate one of his kidneys if he ever got the opportunity. His moment came when he began attending Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Thomasville, and learned Latisa Sheehan (right) was in need of a kidney transplant.

## 'Only God'

### Kidney donation inspires Clarke County motorcycle ministry

By Grace Thornton  
The Alabama Baptist

Michael Odom didn't tell anyone he was doing it — not at first anyway.

Not until he'd made the first phone call to UAB Hospital to ask if he could be a kidney donor. And not until he'd gone through several more

interviews. He wanted to be certain before he started offering people hope.

But it was hard not to be certain. He knew a miracle had been set in motion 40 years ago — and the miracles just kept coming.

#### 'Opportunity to donate'

"My mom had a kidney removed in 1969, and the second kidney eventually failed and she went on dialysis," he said. "They wouldn't let me donate then because I was too young, but I made up my mind 40 years ago that if I ever got the opportunity to donate mine I would because

I had watched what she went through."

Odom carried that commitment with him until spring of 2018 when he decided to try a new church — Mount Vernon Baptist Church, Thomasville, in Clarke Baptist Association.

"I was going to a local Church of God at the time but I always drove by Mount Vernon Baptist on my way home and thought about going in there and checking it out," he said.

A country church is what he was used to and a country church is what he found —  
(See 'Odom's,' page 9)

## God moves mountains and Hills

By Grace Thornton  
The Alabama Baptist

Several years ago, when some friends in Montana invited Morris Hill and his wife, Barbara, to come up for a visit and check things out it "didn't take a lot of arm twisting" for them to say yes.

"We've been going up to Wyoming and Montana over the last 12 years for vacation and really fell in love with the area and the culture," Hill said.

#### 'Planted a seed'

But that trip to visit their friends — two couples serving as church planters in Big Sky Country — did something different.

"It kind of planted a seed in our hearts," Hill said.

When they saw how God was stirring in the hearts of Montana's people and how He was working through Chris Baker, former director of missions for Clarke Baptist Association, and his team, the Hills knew God was asking them to be open.

"We thought it was something we might be a part of at some point in our lives," said Hill, who by then had been a bivocational pastor at Oak Grove Baptist Church, Coffeerville, in Clarke Association, for about a decade.

(See 'Seasoned,' page 8)

# Equip *ministry tips*

## A Sense of Call to Leadership – Claudia Johnson

Every Christian is called to leadership, and figures from the Bible help us realize how God has placed this calling on our lives. In the life of Esther believers can envision how God has positioned us for leadership. A burden for leadership is evident in the story of Nehemiah, who received a calling to serve God that would not go away. Peter was experienced to lead and modeled leadership by influencing others. The woman at the well received refreshment to lead others to Christ.

“You must be a leader somewhere,” said Claudia Johnson, director of Woman’s Missionary Union’s Christian Women’s Leadership Center.

“What do people call you for? How has God positioned you to lead? Has He given you specific experiences that make you a likely candidate to lead?”

God positions us, providing us opportunities to use our abilities and experiences to lead others. According to Johnson, believers can become too lax or too rigid in spiritual dis-

ciplines, so it is important to abide in Christ, to live in His word and to pray in faith.

“It is important to know the voice of God,” Johnson said. “As we remain in Him, spiritual fruit should be evident in the ways we fellowship with believers, witness to the world and minister to others.” (Lanell Downs Smith)

**“You must be a leader somewhere.”**

**Claudia Johnson**

**director of Woman’s Missionary Union’s Christian Women’s Leadership Center**

*God is doing amazing things in Alabama. We readers know because we read about it in TAB! Each issue seems just flat exciting to me. As to writers, Grace Thornton. Wow. She’s my hero. Her quality of writing is simply amazing to me. And Rashional Thoughts provides sometimes profound and always gentle-spirited columns. Alabamians are so fortunate to have Jennifer Davis Rash at the helm!*

**Karen Willoughby**  
**TAB reader in Utah**

### REFLECTIONS



### Reliable Signs celebrates 25 years

A special congratulations to our longtime advertiser Reliable Signs for the company’s 25th anniversary of business. We appreciate our partnership with you and are glad we get to connect you to so many of our partner churches and associations.



**The crossword puzzle can be found on page 17.**



“If ye continue in My word, then ... ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:31-32

(ISSN 0738-7741; USPS 011-080)  
© The Alabama Baptist, Inc.

is published weekly except for one week in July and December by The Alabama Baptist, Inc., at 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209. Phone: 205-870-4720. Statewide phone: 800-803-5201.  
Website: www.thealabamabaptist.org  
Email: news@thealabamabaptist.org or subscribe@thealabamabaptist.org  
Periodicals postage paid at Hattiesburg, Miss.

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# MY RASHIONALE

**By Jennifer Davis Rash**  
President and Editor-in-Chief

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## 'You be you' is overrated; 'You be Jesus' is what we need

**Y**ou be you — a popular phrase repeated often in recent years and the title and focus of several songs and books — celebrates the individual and encourages children and adults to push back against pressure to follow the crowd.

Obviously the phrase and the concept can go in a lot of directions — even controversial or difficult ones — and travel far down any roads chosen.

For our conversation here I'm interested in thinking about how often we spend time and energy either attempting to emulate someone else or pushing that person to be like us when our total focus should be on becoming more like Jesus and helping others do the same.

Little kids mimic older kids and adults in their lives as their minds soak up everything around them. They are sponges during those toddler and pre-school years.

The adolescent and teen years become a war within ourselves as we desperately want to be loved and accepted.

Everything from clothing, hair styles and slang to determining whether we hold to the standards and values we were taught or walk away from them becomes a choice based on gaining someone else's approval.

While many families find a way to help their children navigate and survive these years with confidence and their value system still intact, others have varying degrees of success.

For the young adult who

walks out into the world still unsure of who he or she is and to whom he or she ultimately belongs, more struggles will come.

The good news is we all can find our way to victory through life in Jesus Christ no matter the path we took. He wants to wipe all our slates clean with His own blood. He gave His life to do so.

At some point after we have learned about Jesus, He will draw us to Himself and we will choose to follow or ignore.

Finding ourselves at the feet of Jesus happens when we grasp the fact we are evil left unto

ourselves (Rom. 3:23) but also understanding God made a way of escape from the evil (John 3:16) and that Way (John 14:6) is our only option.

From there we must admit our nothingness and evil nature (Luke 13:3), look to Jesus and ask Him to pull us from the evil of this world and into the security and clarity of life in Him (Rom. 10:13).

The heart knows when the connection with Jesus is made and the next steps fall into place easily — believe and share with others what you experienced (Rom. 10:9–10).

In the early days of our new life in Christ we become toddlers again. We are focused on learning all we can about Jesus and want to be like Him.

Then come the spiritual adolescent and teen years complete with their internal battles and pressures of life bearing down. Before long we are back to focusing on others around us with our eyes off Jesus — but we don't have to stay there.

We can encourage each other along the journey and keep moving toward a "you be Jesus" concept rather than "you be me" or even "you be you."✝

## WHAT'S NEW AT TAB?

### Special USB audio cartridges of TAB available thanks to donors

**A** shout out to Alabama's Charles T. Carter, my "one-time pastor and all-time friend" as he describes himself, for donating the first 10 cartridges along with their special mailers to TAB's new podcast ministry for the visually impaired.

I'm sure you read about the new podcast audio ministry in last week's issue on page 2 but in case you missed it, the details are found at [www.thealabamabaptist.org](http://www.thealabamabaptist.org) or by calling our office at 800-803-5201, ext. 101.

Dr. Carter, pastor emeritus of Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Vestavia Hills, didn't hesitate to step up and make sure we could



CARTER

stay on schedule with our planned kickoff of the new ministry for the visually impaired.

We are so excited to spread the word about TAB's new ministry opportunity and hope it also opens up a new world of possibilities for those not yet using the specially

designed digital device and audio cartridges provided free of charge by the National Library Service.

To apply for the service participants need to fill out a brief form and have a certified professional confirm the visual impairment.

We've got the application ready for you to download and fill out at [tabonline.org/application](http://tabonline.org/application). It can be completed over the phone if needed.

Also be sure to email us to sign

up for our special audio version of *The Alabama Baptist* ([tabnews@thealabamabaptist.org](mailto:tabnews@thealabamabaptist.org)).

We will maintain a separate database from the National Library Service so it is important you let us know when you are ready to start listening to the TAB News audio digest of the paper through this new format.

Help us spread the word and come alongside us to make sure we can provide the service to all who are interested.

To donate to TAB's visually impaired podcast ministry visit [www.thealabamabaptist.org](http://www.thealabamabaptist.org) and click on the "donate" button or mail a check to TAB at 3310 Independence Drive, Birmingham, AL 35209.

—Jennifer Davis Rash



# Your Voice



Share your comments, letters to the editor, blog excerpts, social media posts

## Summer memories, lives changed for eternity

By Chris Mills

Student missions mobilizer, SBOM

Summer is in the rearview mirror. School has started. The heat may still be here but everything else is a memory.

As I review reports from student summer missionaries, I think of the 305 reported professions of faith — 305 lives changed by the gospel.

That memory is one those new believers, student missionaries and others will long remember — and those memories impact eternity.

What a blessing for us to be allowed to be a part of their story by praying and supporting student missionaries.

The stories of student missionaries help us see that God is at work across the globe — using students to make His name known and challenging them to see their role in the Great Commission.

I hope these stories encourage and challenge you as you seek to follow the Lord's direction in your life.

▶ A student who served in Colombia ministering to Venezuelan refugees was touched by the opportunity to wash the feet of refugees:

*My favorite moment this summer was washing a Venezuelan woman's dirty feet. All my team had wet wipes and muscle cream but we used them as tools to minister to their*

*physical needs and talk about Jesus. Thinking about how Jesus washed His disciples' feet and realizing I was doing the same thing humbled my spirit in a way I never experienced before. I felt lowly washing stinking feet but I also felt on top of the world because it felt like I was washing Jesus' feet at the same time. "What you do for the least of these, you have done for me."*

▶ A student who served in South Asia shared this story of a God-ordained moment:

*A man sat down beside me on a park bench and began to talk about how he tried to fill the emptiness in his life with things that satisfied temporarily but ultimately were not fulfilling. I shared the gospel with him and invited him to a Bible study. He came and told me after, "I am sure that this message is true! I believe!"*

Another student who served in Colombia reported that he shared the gospel every day.

Those words challenged me to think about the countless opportunities that God gives us each day.

May we be found faithful in engaging and sharing with those whom God has placed on our path.

May we be intentional to see Him at work and join Him — seeking to share our hope every day.

*EDITOR'S NOTE — Adapted from a blog post originally posted at One Mission Students. Read more stories at [onemissionstudents.org/summer-missions-report/](http://onemissionstudents.org/summer-missions-report/).*

I was dreading our first day of canvassing. I absolutely did not want to do it. The monologue going on in my head sounded something like this, "I do not want to do this. I can't do this." That's when the Holy Spirit reminded me I was right. I can't do this — not by myself at least. I am totally and utterly useless for the Kingdom without the power of the Holy Spirit. When I realized that truth and truly died to myself, the idea of canvassing became a lot less scary.

**Student missionary  
Washington, D.C.**

After sharing with a Hindu lady, we began to see that the Lord was at work in her life. We explained that Jesus Christ is the one, true God. She said her son was very sick and she was praying to other gods for his healing. She finally realized she had to believe only God has the power to heal. At the end of the conversation she said, "Even if it means my son's life, I reject those gods and follow Jesus Christ."

**Student missionary  
South Asia**

God very clearly answered our prayers for openness and set us up for having tons of opportunities to share the gospel with students.

**Student missionary  
Southeast Asia**

## Letters to the Editor

Your editorial in the Aug. 1, 2019, issue of *The Alabama Baptist* was one of the best editorials I've ever read. Excellent topic, excellent writing, and you actually were demonstrating what you were talking about in writing.

**Steve Loggins, DOM  
North Jefferson Association**

The Aug. 8, 2019, issue of *TAB* was outstanding. Practically the whole paper appropriately covered topics of interest related to what everyone had on their minds — getting back to school. Readers of all ages had something to

learn from the issue. And it was presented attractively.

You've taken us to another level. Thank you.

**Bob Henderson  
Tuscaloosa, Ala.**

We really appreciate *TAB* taking the time to address the discrepancy in the article "History of American Immigration."

Journalism has really gone downhill the past several years. It is nice to know our favorite paper *TAB* still has journalism standards and ethics. Thank you.

**Brad Renneke  
Enterprise, Ala.**

Share online or email [news@thealabamabaptist.org](mailto:news@thealabamabaptist.org)

“If [people] are going to hear the gospel, we are going to have to go where they are and share it with them.”

J E F F I O R G  
President, Gateway Seminary

Across America, people are finding new life in Christ as churches work together through their state convention ministries. In addition to your church’s ongoing Cooperative Program support, your annual state mission offering is an opportunity for Great Commission and Great Commandment giving.

**Paul Chitwood**  
President, IMB

The mind that is alive chooses the spiritual rather than the fleshly. For example, take our thought life. The world sends a constant barrage of messages to us — politics, world, business, sex, sports, products and others. God also is sending us messages, messages about His expressed will in the Bible for us, promptings

about words to say or not to say, anger to control or patience to extend.

**T.W. Hunt**  
“The Mind of Christ: The Transforming Power of Thinking His Thoughts”

To get up each morning and know you are sowing seeds for a future harvest is both humbling and exciting.

**Eddie Jones**  
Founder and CEO  
LPC Books

I kind of wore myself really, really thin, and if I would have just done a better job of listening to what God has to say about rest, I might still be [coaching], to be honest with you. [God has] taught

me that it’s important to rest. I didn’t do a very good job of resting [as a coach]. I didn’t do very good with the Sabbath. God gave us the Sabbath for a reason.

**Mark Richt**  
Retired football coach

Work is the regular means through which God provides the material things we need for living. God calls us to nurture generous lifestyles through our work. God gives us work as a platform to glorify Him in how we do our work and how we model and share the gospel. We should take pride in our work and give our best for the Lord’s sake (Col. 3:23–24).

**Daryl Cornett**  
Pastor, FBC Aberdeen (N.C.)



Judson College photo  
Mark Tew is president of Judson College in Marion.

## How students may thrive

“Don’t use the ‘M’ word!” Those were my instructions to parents after their daughters moved into their residence hall assisted by Judson personnel and local church members.

Everyone congregated in the chapel and the historic Judson triangle was struck, announcing the beginning of a new academic year. I implored them, “Do not say ‘I sure do miss you!’”

Then we all practiced a substitute for the “M” word. Repeating after me, the parents and students said in unison, “I am ... looking forward ... to seeing you ... at Christmas!” After everyone laughed, I said it was ok to substitute Thanksgiving.

I reminded students and parents of Joshua 3:3–6. Standing on the precipice of something brand new, remember what God told Joshua to say.

Joshua told the people to consecrate themselves, for God was about to do something wonderful. Next they were to be expectant, anticipating what God would do. Finally, when they saw the Ark of the Covenant, the very presence of God, they should simply follow.

In the newness of going to college, students will thrive if they consecrate, anticipate and simply follow God.

—Mark Tew

# From the *Twitterverse*

### @alabamawmu

Gifts to the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering make it possible for #DisasterRelief volunteers to be ready for disasters. In 2019, #ALDR has responded to four floods and 12 tornadoes and continues assisting in Florida in response to Hurricane Michael. #MyersMallory @alsbom

### @ricklance

In leadership — especially ministry leadership — your passion may drive you but to balance things out reason needs to hold the reins.

### @TonyReinke

David Platt: “People today are not starved for great music. They’re not starved for entertaining speeches. People today are starved for the greatness of God. And if they don’t

see his greatness in our worship, then where will they see it? On television? In movies?”

### @EdLitton

Psalm 145:4: “One generation will declare Your works to the next and will proclaim Your mighty acts.” Older believers have a duty to declare to the next generation God’s mighty acts. Failure to do this is the reason many churches, and denominations decline and die.

### @BeesonDivinity

“When you are singing, you are brought out of yourself. It causes your soul to come up higher so that your feelings and your mind are united in the full expression of what you are singing. God commanded his people to sing.” — Dr. Allen Ross on Exodus 15 in #HodgesChapel.

### @BillyGraham

“From a cleansed conscience emerges a changed life.” — Billy Graham

### @GoBGR

As you are waking up to pictures of the devastation taking place in the Bahamas, we ask that you consider giving to disaster response efforts in the area. Your donations are critical to providing life-saving resources like food, water and shelter. #Dorian

### @mann\_\_up

It was an honor to share this time with Doug [Sweeney], Kristen [Pardilla], and Kyle [Young]! I’m so thankful to study at a seminary that gives its students so many opportunities for cross-cultural ministry. @BeesonDivinity

# Striking tourism gold



Fly-fishing

Photo courtesy of Alpine Helen/White County CVB

## 6 great reasons for a fall visit to picturesque, Bavarian-themed Helen, Georgia

By **Connie Pearson**  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

**A** tiny town in a picture book setting, Helen, Georgia, boasts a population of under 500 and covers a mere 2.1 square miles yet it welcomes close to 2 million visitors a year. Fifty years ago the forward-thinking town leaders struck tourism gold when they chose a Bavarian theme for Helen. What existed then as an unnoticed village with only 10 buildings now has 120 buildings and is the third most visited city in Georgia.

Fall, Christmas and summer are extremely popular. Here's why:

### 1. Natural beauty

The air gets cleaner and fresher with every curve winding into Helen. The thick canopy of trees creates a colorful spectacle each fall and the Chattahoochee River, known locally as "the Hooch," flows through town, adding beauty and recreational opportunities.

The Blue Ridge Mountains descend into mere foothills in this part of North Georgia but the views are still impressive and photoworthy.

### 2. Outdoor activities

Numerous hiking trails converge in Helen, several of which lead to breathtaking waterfalls. The half-

mile-long trail to Anna Ruby Falls is the shortest and easiest to navigate because it's paved. Others are more strenuous.

There's also fly-fishing or tubing on the Chattahoochee, primarily between May and September, and archery, target shooting, paddle boarding, zip lining and mountain biking at Unicoi State Park.

A new attraction for thrill-seekers, the Georgia Mountain Coaster, al-

lows an individual or a couple of buddies to slowly ascend a heavily wooded hill before hurling down a steel rail maze in a cart. It's similar to a roller coaster but the rider controls the speed, which can reach 25 mph.

### 3. Culinary delights

German dishes prepared by native German chefs appear

prominently in the cuisine of Helen. Hofer's of Helen is both a bakery and a café with breakfast entrees, sandwiches and a full display case of freshly baked German breads and pastries. For a full German meal served in a true, unhurried European style, Bodensee Restaurant is the hands-down favorite. The sampler platter includes portions of several meats and sides, such as sauerbraten and spaetzle. For a casual lunch, try the Reuben sandwich at Café International.

Trout, baby back ribs and shrimp

and grits are menu favorites at Mully's Nacoochee Grill, but their steaks and pork tenderloin also get rave reviews. A bonus of eating dinner at Mully's is the live music provided by talented musician Kurt Johnson.

Bernie's at Nacoochee Valley Guest House is an elegant place for lunch or dinner prepared by a trained chef and Bigg Daddy's serves an eclectic mix including wings, tacos and burgers. Cimmi's Café is a popular casual place for breakfast and lunch and its large courtyard puts you in the middle of the action in downtown Helen.

Nora Mill Granary is a highly recommended stop if you want to purchase some of their stone-ground grits or corn meal to take back home.

### 4. Crafts and shops

Helen's Main Street is lined with Bavarian-themed shops such as Hansel and Gretel Candy Kitchen, Tim's Wooden Toys, Lindenhaus Imports and other specialty boutiques.

For an intriguing look at authentic regional pottery be sure to visit the Folk Pottery Museum in nearby Sautee, Georgia. You'll find the work of area potters for sale and on display plus you'll learn about the Meaders family, recognized by the Smithsonian and considered by many to be the most influential potters of the South Appalachian folk style.

Combining both pottery and artistry using gourds, The Gourd Place also is in Sautee. Co-owner Priscilla Wilson, a graduate of Auburn University, patented a technique using gourd molds to shape porcelain dishes. They are both unusu-

ally beautiful and practical serving pieces.

### 5. Lodging options

From a primitive treehouse with no electricity or plumbing at Nacoochee Outdoor Adventures to plush guest suites in resort hotels, Helen has a lodging style to suit any budget or preference.

Unicoi State Park has a number of fully furnished cabins, plus newly refurbished rooms at the park's lodge. Helen has plenty of hotels, condos and listings on [airbnb.com](http://airbnb.com) and [vrbo.com](http://vrbo.com) too.

Valhalla Resort Hotel has created a truly luxurious stay for its guests. The property includes a golf course, restaurant and in-house spa, plus the views are awe-inspiring and the suites are elegantly furnished.

### 6. Festive atmosphere

Oktoberfest in Helen is the longest-running festival of its kind in the United States. The celebration lasts Thursdays to Sundays through most of September and then daily through October. Locals in lederhosen and typical Bavarian costumes greet visitors with accordions, polka music, bratwurst and pretzels inside the Festhalle.

Once Oktoberfest ends the Christmas decorations go up transforming Helen into a holiday wonderland. Even the producers of Hallmark Christmas movies agree.

January through mid-May is quieter in Helen but the food, crafts, shopping, trails and natural beauty, not to mention Helen's almost-500 proud citizens, are ready to welcome you throughout the year. 🍂

Photo courtesy of Alpine Helen/White County CVB  
Bavarian Fest

# Reaching *the* nations

## Alabama Baptist volunteers go to the world at back-to-school event

By Mark Kelly  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

**T**en-year-old “Lily” was born in a refugee camp half a world away. When her parents were granted asylum in the United States, she was excited and curious about what life would be like. The camp had no schools and Lily knew education would change the course of her life.

The family was placed in Clarkston, Georgia, an eastern suburb of Atlanta home to immigrants from more than 60 countries. Lily speaks no English and the 100-plus languages spoken in Clarkston confused her even more — but school was about to start and her excitement knew no bounds.

But this refugee girl with no schooling, who could speak no English, was going to be placed in fifth grade. On top of that her parents were handed a list of required school supplies costing more than \$100.

Even working multiple jobs how could they begin to afford that for their five children? And the entire



NAMB photo by Greta Reynolds  
A family receives backpacks filled with school supplies at a back-to-school event at Clarkston International Bible Church. The outreach offers an opportunity for the church to connect with immigrant families in the community.

family was only beginning to learn English so how could they help her with homework?

The best news of all arrived when an Alabama Baptist volunteer knocked on Lily’s door. Elizabeth Beavers of Crossroads Baptist

Church, Warrior, was distributing flyers advertising a back-to-school event the next day, Aug. 3, at nearby Clarkston International Bible Church (CIBC). The flyer announced the church’s ministry center would be providing backpacks filled with all the needed supplies — for free — and there would be registration tables for English classes and tutoring, as well as a host of other necessities such as free shoes, reading glasses and health screenings.

As many as 3,500 people came to the ministry center at CIBC, according to David Creswell, a Send Relief missionary with the North American Mission Board.

In addition to a warm welcome, each family was offered a New Testament and about 160 volunteers — many of them from Alabama — had opportunities to explain the good news of God’s love to a multitude who had never even heard of Jesus.

### Gospel witness

The 2,166 backpacks filled with more than 35,000 school supplies were provided by the 2018 “Christmas in August” campaign of national

Woman’s Missionary Union, Creswell said.

But the event not only provided desperately needed resources and a gospel witness to refugee and immigrant families, it also gave the Lord an opportunity to speak to volunteers’ hearts about how He has brought the lost nations of the world to their own backyard.

### Connection point

For Craig Walston, youth pastor at New Life Community Church, Asheville, North Carolina, the back-pack distribution helped his students understand the world is bigger and much different than they realize.

“It helps them see the face of God in other people and gain a broader understanding that everybody needs to hear about Jesus,” Walston said. “CIBC trains them to be missionaries when they go home.”

Preconceptions about refugees and immigrants also are challenged in Clarkston, Beavers said.

“When you get here you learn who the refugee really is — the struggle they have been through,” she said. “You discover they really just need someone to connect with. And you learn there are places here in the United States where you can actually

reach the nations with the gospel.”

The experience in Clarkston helps team members view their own communities through different eyes, said Jase Vann, a member of Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Birmingham.

Vann, co-founder of 5:9 Ministries (five-nine.org), is sharing the love of Christ among Muslims in Birmingham through an ongoing series of “lunch and learn” gatherings.

What’s happening in Clarkston shows what is possible when followers of Christ reach across cultural and religious boundaries.

“This connects us to the fact those nations are right here in the U.S.,” Vann said. “Yeah that was in Georgia but look at what’s around us here in Birmingham.”

## Christmas backpacks will be collected Oct. 28–Nov. 2

What began when a Girls in Action leader was moved to provide Christmas gifts and school supplies to poor children in Appalachia has become a year-round effort by national and state Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU) to help families and those who minister to them.

In 2018, Alabama Baptists packed 9,531 backpacks for the Christmas backpacks effort and this year’s goal is 9,500. Each backpack includes a copy of “The Christmas Story” along with school supplies, hygiene items and age- and gender-appropriate gifts.

Backpacks will be collected in Alabama the week of Oct. 28–Nov. 2 and will be distributed through compassion ministry sites and church plants in at least four states. Opportunities are available for missions teams and individuals to assist in backpack distribution and long-term ministry site partnerships.

One change in the program this year is that color-coded bands to label backpacks must be ordered in advance from Alabama WMU. Copies of “The Christmas Story” must also be ordered ahead of time. (TAB)

For more details and ordering information, visit [AlabamaWMU.org](http://AlabamaWMU.org).

For more information about WMU’s Christmas in August missions project, go to [www.wmu.com/christmasinaugust](http://www.wmu.com/christmasinaugust).

# 'Seasoned believers' to help Montana ministry

(continued from page 1)

He held two other jobs — working for a pest control company and running a goat farm, something he and his wife slowly began to part with as they prayed about the future.

## Sealing the deal

"The Lord began dealing with us that we needed to free ourselves up," Hill said. "We had a little farm — we raised milk goats and made cheese and soap and had little home-school groups come through and learn about that process."

But when they felt God at work they started the process of selling off their animals. They paid off their mortgage and became debt free. And they didn't stop there.

"We got rid of a lot of our farm implements all the way to the point of tearing down fences and selling the wire so we wouldn't go back," Hill said.

Then in October 2018 they returned to Montana to visit the Bakers and their other friends from Clarke Association, Darryl and Veronica Brunson. They spent time in the cities where the couples served and caught a vision for how they might be a part.

It sealed the deal. And when they called their son from the airport on the way home, he said, "Y'all don't even have to say anything. I know you're moving to Montana."

The Hills had only been at their new church — Mount Vernon Baptist, Thomasville — for about a year when they felt like it was time to turn their attention to moving to Montana.

They'd witnessed God perform miracles there already. One woman whom Hill and his wife visited and invited to church started coming, and she — desperately in need of a kidney transplant — met a man there who would become

her donor. The two of them would start a motorcycle ministry together and Hill wanted to join it too (see story, page 1).

But they knew God was calling them to Montana, a place where the percentage of Christ followers is "miniscule." They knew Hill needed to step down from the pastorate at Mount Vernon so they could start preparing, going through the sending process of the North American Mission Board and Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions and raising support.

They're aiming to leave Sept. 30.

## 'Walk by faith'

"We have had to walk by faith," Hill said.

Baker said he's excited about the Hills coming to join their gospel work in Montana.

"The Hills will be another avenue into our community as they bring fresh eyes and ears to the north end of the Flathead Valley," he said. "We are excited to have them because we see a deep



Morris and Barbara Hill

Photo courtesy of Morris Hill

love for Montanans."

Baker has several ideas in mind for what the Hills will be doing, but most of all he's thankful for the presence of more "seasoned be-

lievers who love Jesus and His church."

"I saw as their associational missionary that they know how to care for and lead people to Jesus." ✠

**To contact the Hills email [morrispreach@yahoo.com](mailto:morrispreach@yahoo.com) or visit their Facebook page, [God Moves Mountains and Hills](#).**

SAVE THE DATE




# HALLELUJAH FOR THE CROSS

## 2019 ALABAMA BAPTIST PASTORS CONFERENCE


Eastern Shore Baptist Church, Daphne  
November 11, 2019

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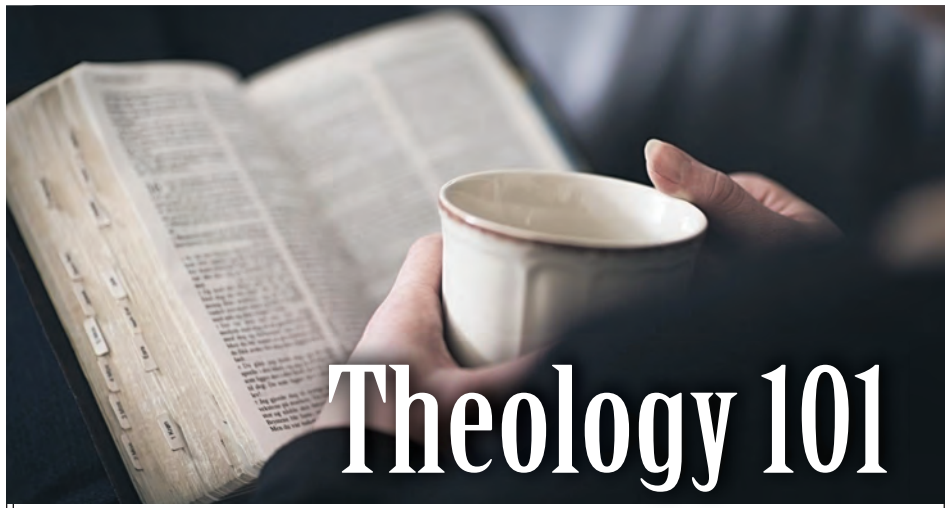
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# Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

## Aspects of an Abundant Life

### A Crucified Life

By Jerry Batson, Th.D.  
Special to The Alabama Baptist

Jesus declared that one purpose of His coming was that His followers might have life and “that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). As we explore aspects of an abundant life we are giving thought to what we might think of as experiential theology or a theology of Christian living. This week Theology 101 seeks to delve into what might be termed a crucified life.

The Apostle Paul used such terminology in his testimony in Galatians 2:20: “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me.” Later in Galatians he added, “God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Gal. 6:14).

#### Crucifixion of the flesh

At first glance it may seem contradictory to say the way to abundant life is by death. The death in view must be of a spiritual nature not a physical one.

Rather than the crucifixion of a body, this crucifixion is that of the flesh — flesh being a term by which the Bible speaks of our lower sinful nature with its desires or compulsions.

A crucified life is thus one in which sinful or fleshly desires are being put to death.

How then is one to make the matter of a crucified life a fact of the Christian life? We might include in the process three ideas:

know it as a fact of Scripture; want it as part of obedience to Scripture; and reckon it so as an act of faith.

The key is willingness to reckon it so or count it so.

#### Daily confession

This reckoning is not a once-for-all event however. Rather it demands day-by-day or moment-by-moment confessing the fact of having been crucified with Christ.

For example if temper seeks to flare say by faith, “I died to that.” Similarly if unkind words begin to form or hatred begins to boil respond immediately with, “I died to that.” In short, living a crucified life demands reckoning the truth of Scripture to be so in life’s situations of temptation.

We remember that Jesus Himself placed emphasis on the need for “daily” denying oneself and taking up of the cross by those who would follow Him (Luke 9:23).

Romans 6:11 commands, “Reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in its lusts.”

*Jerry Batson is a retired Alabama Baptist pastor who also has served as associate dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University and professor of several schools of religion during his career.*



## Odom’s kidney donation offers ‘new hope in a dark season’

(continued from page 1)

around eight people on a Sunday morning, maybe three on a good Wednesday.

“I was welcomed right away. It was a small group of people there,” Odom said. “They were arms wide open and made me feel really comfortable.”

Around the same time Morris Hill — Mount Vernon’s pastor at the time — learned about a woman in the community who was in kidney failure. Hill called and asked if he and his wife could come over and visit her and her husband.

That woman was Latisa Sheehan.

“We had a really good talk,” Sheehan said. “They invited us to come to Mount Vernon Baptist Church, and we did. Everybody knows everybody there and we ended up swapping stories with Michael.”

And as they did Odom felt the pang in his heart of that commitment he’d made all those years ago.

“I had made that promise to myself and I hadn’t really discussed it with anybody,” he said.

He decided to call for more information but since he doesn’t get very good phone service at home he drove down the road and parked at the local tractor supply store.

#### ‘Give me a sign’

“I stopped and prayed about it and said, ‘God if this is the path that you want from me give me a sign,’” Odom said. “Right then a little spotted fawn ran across the parking lot in front of me between my truck and the door.”

He made the call and his first visit to UAB Hospital was a few weeks later. He found out he would need to lose weight and he came home and tore his kitchen apart, throwing away food and putting together a diet plan.

“I got together with Bro. Morris to get some advice on how to lose weight,” Odom said.

And in the midst of all that one day he received a package in the mail from his brother, a box his mom’s sister had decided to send

them out of the blue. It was filled with pictures, keepsakes and a letter from UAB Hospital dated 40 years to the day. It was explaining that she had gone back into the hospital with complications of the transplant.

#### ‘All God’

That was confirmation on top of confirmation for Odom.

“I still get emotional,” he said. “God’s hand has been in this from day one.”

Odom discovered another miracle that day — he and Sheehan were a perfect blood and tissue match something that rarely happens even with relatives.

Sheehan said it was God “showing out.” “There’s only eight people in our church,” she said. “Only God could’ve put the two of us in that one church and we be a perfect match. This is just all God.”

And for Sheehan it was new hope in a dark season.

“I was diagnosed in 2011 and gradually the function of both kidneys just gradually decreased,” she said. “Both of them literally shrunk and died and the biopsy shows no reason why.”

She said she’s speechless at times about how all this came together. “You don’t have to be a church of 1,000 people for God to hear your prayers and respond,” she said.

And you don’t have to be a big church for God to use your story, Sheehan said. She and Odom have both been doing well since their surgery in May and there’s another result that they’re grateful for too — they’ve become the best of friends.

“Michael, my husband Stan and I — the three of us just hit it off immediately,” Sheehan said. “He’s kind of a brother. He calls me sis.”

And the three love motorcycles. They’ve started a motorcycle ministry and they’ve been touring around churches in the area sharing the story of their miracle and God’s intensely personal love.

“I made that decision years ago and it was God’s timing to make it happen now,” Odom said. “I’m a living testimony.”

**“Only God could’ve put the two of us in that one church and we be a perfect match. This is just all God.”**

Latisa Sheehan

ONEMISSION: The Great Commission ONEPROGRAM: The Cooperative Program MANYMINISTRIES: Great Commission Ministries

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**PARTNERSHIP MISSIONS**

Your gifts have not only allowed us to send mission teams to Alaska this year but also to assist them with resources to observe their Week of Prayer for State Missions September 1-8.

**CHURCH REVITALIZATION**

Already this year, 540 persons have participated in church revitalization conferences all across the state and 18 individuals have been trained as church revitalization coaches.

# Churches must follow tax law in handling gifts

By Michael J. Brooks  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

It's a new day in charitable giving for a number of reasons — one being recent tax changes.

“[The ‘Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017’] raised the standard deduction from \$12,000 for a married couple to \$24,000,” Lee Wright, director of church compensation services for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, said. “This means that charitable giving is less important for (federal) income tax purposes. We know our people support their churches with higher goals than tax savings, but tax law does affect us.”

Wright led a “A New Way to Give to Your Church: What Your Treasurer Needs to Know” at the Summit for Church Leaders at Shocco Springs Conference Center in Talladega on Aug. 2.

Wright said CPAs recommend two tax strategies for consideration. One is “bunching.”

“This means, for example, that a church member can give two years’ worth of contributions in one year and thus have enough perhaps to make itemizing possible,” he said. “Of course regular giving is what our churches need, but I know one person who did this ... The Bible does talk about ‘first fruits,’ so this is a consideration.”

A second plan is for those over the age of 70 who must begin to take distributions from their IRAs.

“With a ‘qualified charitable distribution,’ or a transfer IRA one can have gifts sent directly to their church,” he said. “This wouldn’t be an

item for their contribution records, but it wouldn’t be counted as taxable income, either.”

Wright recommended churches provide a letter to those who use the qualified charitable distribution acknowledging their gifts and stating no goods or services were given in exchange.

Wright said several requirements are actually mandated by law for tax-deductible giving, including no personal benefit accrued, gifts are made before the close of the year and gifts declared as deductions cannot be greater than 60% of one’s adjusted gross income. Churches must also be careful

handling designated gifts, Wright said.

## ‘Unconditional’

“Designated gifts must be unconditional and un-specific,” he said. “Tax law requires the church make the ultimate decisions about how the [gift] is disbursed.”

Wright said the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) reports positive news about giving since the law changed.

“The ECFA said church giving was up in 2018 and it appears that giving is good thus far in 2019,” he said. “We know that giving to God’s work is an act of obedience and worship.”

Wright can be reached at 800-264-1225, ext. 241, or lwright@alsbom.org.

## EDITOR’S NOTE —

*While the federal tax laws have changed Alabama and other state tax laws may vary so check with your tax preparer before adapting your giving habits.*



Photo by Michael Brooks  
Lee Wright, director of church compensation services for the SBOM, discusses the church tax law with leaders.

## TAB CLASSIFIEDS

For information on placing a classified ad  
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### CHURCH POSITIONS

#### SENIOR PASTOR

Linden Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking a full-time senior pastor. We are a conservative Southern Baptist church located in Marengo County, Alabama, with blended style of traditional and contemporary worship. If interested in this position, send resumés to: Linden Baptist Church, P.O. Box 480776, Linden, AL 36748-0776, ATN: Pastor Search Committee or email to: jarnett@bellsouth.net. The deadline for sending resumés is Sept. 30.

#### PASTOR

Indian Springs First Baptist Church, Pelham, AL 35124, seeks pastor. 80,000 population in five-mile radius. Not currently large congregation but having all ages, ample facilities; blended worship; traditional Southern Baptist theology and practice. Seek full-time but will consider part-time; preferred age — 30 to 55; with seminary training and experience; in agreement with Baptist Faith & Message 2000. Submit resumés and recommendations to: indianspringschurch@gmail.com.

#### PASTOR

Camellia Baptist Church, 201 Woodvale Rd., Prattville, Alabama, 36067 prayerfully seeking God’s choice for a full-time pastor. All applicants should have previous senior pastor experience and have earned a master’s of divinity. Resumés with photo, may be mailed ATTN: Pastor/Search. www.cbcprattville.org.

#### PASTOR

Stapleton Baptist Church is prayerfully seeking a full-time pastor. Seminary degree required along with pastoring experience. To be considered for this position please submit a resumé and cover letter to: sb.search.team@gmail.com.

#### FULL-TIME MUSIC & WORSHIP PASTOR

Piedmont First Baptist Church, Piedmont, Alabama, is seeking an individual with experience to provide full-time leadership in developing a quality Christian music ministry of various music styles that glorifies God. Must have a bachelor’s degree in choral or instrumental music, and the ability to play piano/keyboard and experience in utilizing and/or coordinating audio, video and lighting. Please send resumé to: info@piedmontfbc.org. Full job description on request.

#### WORSHIP PASTOR

Mount Zion Baptist Church, Alexandria, Alabama, is seeking a full-time worship pastor, ministry style is contemporary blend. Send resumés to: mtzion@cableone.net.

#### MISSIONS, MEN’S & EVANGELISM PASTOR

First Baptist Church in Athens, Alabama, is prayerfully seeking resumés for a new and exciting position on our staff. This candidate will lead our efforts in missions: Lead, challenge and recruit for involvement in missions. Men’s: Lead men to live out a godly purpose in family and community. Evangelism: Assist lead pastor and staff in oversight of all evangelistic ministries of the church. We seek a gifted communicator of the gospel and seven to 10 years of related ministry experience. A master’s degree is required. Email resumés to: MMEPastorSearch@fbcathens.org.

#### ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF STUDENTS

First Baptist Church in Athens, Alabama, is prayerfully seeking resumés for associate pastor of students. This candidate will lead our efforts to reach and disciple middle school through college students as well as providing pastoral care and ministry to parents and families of students. Engaging parent/guardian involvement is primary. We seek a gifted communicator of the gospel and five to seven years of student ministry experience. A bachelor’s degree is required in a related field. Email resumés to: StudentPastorSearch@fbcathens.org.

#### BIVOCATIONAL YOUTH PASTOR

New Beginnings Baptist Graysville, Alabama, is searching for a bivocational youth pastor. Youth sixth through 12th grade. Currently small group but many prospects for growth in area. Please send resumés to: nbccbaptist@gmail.com.

#### BIVOCATIONAL YOUTH PASTOR

First Baptist Church of Dawes has a part-time opening for a youth pastor. Contact Harold Rester at haroldrester@att.net or send resumé to: FBC of Dawes, 3941 Dawes Rd., Mobile, AL 36695.

### OTHER POSITIONS

#### CHURCH SECRETARY

Bethel Baptist Church in Pleasant Grove, Alabama, is looking for a part-time church secretary.

This position will be for 20 hours per week and requires some computer skills along with some minor financial skills. Job duties include posting of receipts, paying bills, church weekly payroll, creation of weekly church bulletin/newsletter, along with other general secretarial duties. Interested parties should contact Pastor Rick Cato at 205-744-6711 option #1 or email at Brorick@bethelpgal.com.

### BUSINESS

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-Dr. Steven Weems, Senior Pastor at First Baptist Church  
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# Samford faculty discuss notable changes, vision for future growth

Samford University's religion department earned a new name recently — biblical and religious studies. Roy Ciampa (pictured, center), chair of the department, discussed the name change and other notable updates during Samford's final panel session at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

Another change that affects all of Samford's undergraduate students is the biblical perspectives course. The new required course will be biblical foundations, which will help students to "understand the world in which they live and engage that world more effectively," Ciampa said.

Other additions include a new major in biblical studies, a new minor in theology and ethics, a new cadre in faith and learning and a new



Photo by Hannah Muñoz

Watch the full videos of this and other interviews from the Southern Baptist Convention in June at [www.tabonline.org/Samford](http://www.tabonline.org/Samford).

faculty member, Will Kynes (pictured, right).

"I look forward to training Southern Baptist students as they come into Samford and being involved in ministry in Southern Baptist churches in the area while I'm teaching at Samford," Kynes said.

"I am really grateful for

the changes that we're seeing in the department and for the leading edge that it's taking in the vision of the (Howard College of Arts and Sciences) and the university as a whole," said Tim Hall (pictured, left), Dean of Howard College and moderator of the panel. (TAB)



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UAB MEDICINE



# 3 stories

## you should know



U.S. Coast Guard photo by Adam Stanton

Aid groups, including Baptist Global Response (BGR), are assessing needs and providing assistance in the Bahamas after Hurricane Dorian caused several deaths and destruction on Abaco Island and Grand Bahama, two of the nation's 700+ islands. Jeff Palmer, executive director of BGR, said BGR will work through the Bahama Baptist Convention and the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship to help affected communities. To donate to relief efforts, go to [www.gobgr.org](http://www.gobgr.org). (BP)

### Removal of extradition bill 'not enough' in Hong Kong

The withdrawal of an extradition bill that threatened religious freedom in Hong Kong is not enough to satisfy Christians and others amid protests there.

Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam pledged Sept. 4 to formally withdraw the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance which would have given China the right to extradite Hong Kong Christian residents to mainland China for prosecution.

Comprising only about 10% of Hong Kong's residents, Christians feared the extradition law would subject them to the intense religious persecution Christians suffer in China.

Among freedoms enjoyed in Hong Kong — which has a limited democracy — Christians can gather without obtaining a permit as required in China. (BP)

### Howe named EC VP of communications

Jonathan P. Howe has been named vice president of communications for the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee (EC).

Howe will oversee all EC communications including SBC.net, *SBC LIFE*, Baptist Press, social media initiatives and other media strategies. Howe most recently served as director of strategic initiatives with LifeWay Christian Resources, a position he held for eight years. He is also co-host of the weekly podcast "SBC This Week." Howe previously worked with Woman's Missionary Union's New Hope Publishing. (BP)



HOWE

## — NEWSBRIEFS —

### Iron Stream Media acquires LPC Books, will expand lines, titles

Birmingham-based Christian publisher Iron Stream Media has acquired Lighthouse Publishing of the Carolinas, also known as LPC Books, a traditional publisher whose book titles include nonfiction and fiction titles that point to moral truths and characters with strong beliefs.

The acquisition will add several new imprints to Iron Stream Media's catalog, including the Illuminate young adult fiction line.

LPC has several active imprints ranging from romance and suspense to westerns and Christian nonfiction. LPC also publishes titles in ebook and audiobook formats.

Iron Stream's catalog includes the Life Bible Study and Student Life Bible Study brands, printed devotionals, Bibles and discipleship curriculum. In 2017 the company acquired



Unsplash.com

New Hope Publishers and its first fiction titles. Earlier this year Iron Stream Media began the launch of three new imprints: Ascender Books, Iron Stream Books and New Hope Kidz. (TAB)

### LifeLine, Inc. to host special needs conference for families, churches

LifeLine, Inc. — which provides support and resources to families with a member living with a chronic or temporary medical, educational, physical or emotional disability — will hold the Accessible Gospel special needs ministry conference Sept. 27–28 at Concord Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

The conference will feature Stephanie Hubach, an author and mother to a young adult with down syndrome; and Lori Sealy, who has struggled with atheism and lives with autism; as well as many other speakers leading breakout sessions, including Andrew Piper from Huntsville who has a sibling living with a disability.

The conference will contain five tracks:

▶ **Special needs ministry 101** — designed for those new to special needs ministry.

▶ **Special needs ministry 201** — designed for those who have been involved in special needs ministry for five years or more and are looking to grow their ministry.

▶ **Counseling and behavior** — designed to help participants understand what could be behind behaviors causing difficulties in being part of a church environment. New understanding should foster compassion and grace and a display of the unconditional love of Christ.

▶ **For pastors** — designed to equip pastors as they seek to understand more about those in their congregations with disabilities.

▶ **For families** — designed for families, caregivers and those in the church who may be walking alongside those with disabilities and their families. To register for the conference visit [www.tabonline.org/accessiblegospel](http://www.tabonline.org/accessiblegospel). (TAB)

### Ebenezer Baptist Church celebrates bicentennial anniversary

Ebenezer Baptist Church, Stanton, held its bicentennial service July 28, but its celebration began much earlier. Since April, Ebenezer Baptist has

NEWS

# News near you

## BALDWIN ASSOCIATION

► **First Baptist Church, Summerdale**, will host a minister's conference Sept. 17 at 11 a.m. Danny Parris will be the guest speaker. Lunch will follow. To RSVP call 251-945-5112. Rick Ellison is associational missions director of Baldwin Baptist Association and Jason Smith is pastor of First, Summerdale.

## CLARKE ASSOCIATION

► **Forest Avenue Baptist Church, Jackson**, will host Marvelous Mondays throughout September. Services will begin at 7 p.m. on Sept. 16 and 23 and at 1:30 p.m. on Sept. 30. Rob Jackson, interim pastor of First Baptist Church, Tillman, will speak on Sept. 16; Blake Newsom, pastor of Dauphin Way Baptist Church, Mobile, will speak on Sept. 23 and Sept. 30 will be a senior adult celebration with Chris Kynard, pastor of Pine Hill Baptist Church. Dustin Shelander is pastor. ► **First Baptist Church, Jackson**, will host a suicide awareness walk Sept. 14 from 3 to 5 p.m. To register call 251-744-4396. Benjamin Stubblefield is pastor. ► **Union Baptist Church, Grove Hill**, will host a men's conference Sept. 21 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch will be included. Randy Davis is pastor.

## COFFEE ASSOCIATION

► **The Church on Boll Weevil Circle, Enterprise**, will sponsor the Enterprise Military Support Group. Meetings will resume Sept. 17 at 7 p.m. For the meeting calendar visit Enterprise Military Support Group on Facebook. Meetings will be in the Community Conference Room at Enterprise State Community College. For more information call 334-894-6411. John Granger Sr. is pastor.

## MOBILE ASSOCIATION

► **Arnold Hendrix Jr.** is the new pastor of **First Baptist Church, South Mobile, in Theodore**. Hendrix has served churches in Florida as well as Cordova and Atmore. He holds degrees from the University of West Florida and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Marilyn, have one child and one grandchild.



HENDRIX

## MONTGOMERY ASSOCIATION

► **Hunter Station Baptist Church, Montgomery**, will host a homecoming celebration Sept. 15 at 9:45 a.m. with a "Montana Homecoming." The morning service will begin at 11 a.m. Pastor Earl Wise will preach and Melanie Pearson will provide special music. A fellowship lunch will follow the service.

## TALLAPOOSA ASSOCIATION

► **Zack Brown** is the new youth minister at **First Baptist Church, Dadeville**. He previously served as the student pastor at Orchard Fellowship, Oxford. Brown holds a bachelor's of

secondary education and will attend Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina, working toward a master's of divinity. He is engaged to Hannah Gay.

## OTHER

► **Chris Mills** is the interim Baptist campus minister at **Auburn University at Montgomery**.



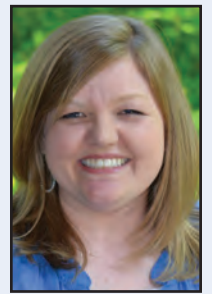
MILLS

Mills has served with the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions since 2008 and currently is an associate in collegiate and student ministries. He holds degrees from Troy University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Brooke, are members of First Baptist Church, Montgomery, and have two

children. ► **Kim Andrews** has been promoted to lead campus minister for Baptist Campus Ministries at the **University of Alabama**. She also serves as Baptist campus minister at Shelton State Community College. She holds degrees from the Baptist College of Florida in Graceville and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. ☠



BROWN



ANDREWS

## — NEWSBRIEFS —

held special services and events in honor of the church's 200th anniversary including a picnic and a balloon release. The church also received



Photo by Lonette Berg

a state historical marker from the Alabama Historical Commission.

On the day of the celebration Pastor Danny Rasberry preached and former pastor Rick Glenn shared mem-

ories of the church. Music was led by worship leader DeLina Lenoir.

Lonette Berg, from the Alabama Baptist Historical Commission, and Larry Felkins, director of missions of Chilton Baptist Association, presented the church with certificates.

Photos, a timeline and newspapers dated back to 1859 were on display. A large stone donated by church member Casey Carter was placed in front of the church. At the base of the stone members placed smaller stones upon which they had written how God has helped them.

Fans with a brief history of the church and

small stones with the church name and 1 Samuel 7:12 were given as mementos.

"The highlight was watching church members work together to prepare for the celebration," church member Hannah Totten said.

A "brunch and browse" was held before the service. Members and guests enjoyed food and viewed the displays. (TAB)

### *Evangelist, former Alabama Baptist pastor Larry Draper dies at 75*

Larry W. Draper, longtime evangelist and former pastor of Roebuck Park Baptist Church, Birmingham, died Aug. 21. He was 75.

A graduate of Samford University in Birmingham, Draper also studied at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and earned his master's and doctoral degrees from Luther Rice Seminary in Lithonia, Georgia.

In addition to Roebuck Park Baptist, Draper



DRAPER

also served as pastor of other churches including Woodland Park Baptist Church, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and West Rome Baptist Church, Rome, Georgia. Since 1995 he served as a full-time evangelist with Sound the Trumpet Ministries, a worldwide evangelistic ministry. Through the years he made dozens of missions trips, trained pastors and watched more than 400 churches planted overseas.

Draper is survived by his wife of 53 years, Sandra, and two daughters, Kelli and Kimberly. (Grace Thornton)

### *National CP giving exceeds budget projection by 2.05% in August*

Contributions to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) in August totaled \$17,466,894.53, according to a news release from Ronnie Floyd, SBC Executive Committee president and CEO. Designated gifts received in August were \$6,243,071.50. Contributions were 2.05% above the projected budget through eleven months of the 2018-19 fiscal year, which ends Sept. 30. (BP)



On November 10,  
**TAKE A STAND**  
for children in foster care in Alabama.

Ashley's father was an alcoholic who was rarely home, and when he was, it was oftentimes a bad situation. At a young age, she had to care and provide for herself. When she first came into the care of Alabama Baptist Children's Homes & Family Ministries, all of that changed. Because of support from churches across Alabama, Ashley didn't have to worry about basics like where her next meal would come from, or how she would get clothes. She felt safe and secure. *She felt free to just be a kid.*

On November 10, join churches across America on **Stand Sunday**, in connection with Orphan Sunday, to help children in foster care like Ashley. Below are a few ways you can take part in this national movement:

**SHARE A VIDEO** | There are many great stories of how God has worked in the lives of those in our care—stories of redemption, healing, and restoration. Visit [alabamachild.org/videos](http://alabamachild.org/videos) to view or download a video.

**HOST A NEEDS LIST DRIVE** | We have a variety of specific needs at our locations across the state, ranging from household items, cleaning supplies, pantry items, and more. Encourage your church to host a drive: [alabamachild.org/needslist](http://alabamachild.org/needslist)

**INVITE A SPEAKER** | Request a speaker to share with your church the many ways you can all make an impact on children and families in need across Alabama: [alabamachild.org/speakers](http://alabamachild.org/speakers)

**More details and resources for Stand Sunday are available at [alabamachild.org/StandSunday](http://alabamachild.org/StandSunday).**



Alabama Baptist  
**CHILDREN'S HOMES**  
& Family Ministries

(888) 720-8805

// [alabamachild.org](http://alabamachild.org)



stand  
sunday

*\*Photo has been changed.*

# We must 'hunger and thirst for righteousness,' says Moore

All over the world in different ways it can be a status symbol to kill your hunger, according to Russell Moore, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

In some places being obese can mean that you have enough wealth to satisfy any hunger you have, he said. In other places being thin can be a status symbol because it shows you have the means to fund a healthy lifestyle.

## By bread alone

"In both cases what the person is displaying is, 'I don't need to be hungry; I have what I need,'" Moore told those present at the Southern Baptist Convention Pastors Conference in Birmingham on June 10. "But the biblical language

says those blessed are those who know what it is to be hungry and thirsty."

He said the text of Matthew 5:6 — "blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness" — shows it's possible to be both blessed and hungry at the same time.



MOORE

Jesus is pointing us back to Deuteronomy 8 where God says He made His people be hungry so He could

feed them with manna and show them man doesn't live by bread alone but by every word that comes from God.

"You can kill the human appetite with anorexia. You can stop eating for so long that you don't even feel hungry anymore," Moore said. "The same is true spiritually."

That's the reason Jesus takes His followers to a

table and tells them to remember Him as they eat and drink — so their hunger pushes them to Him. That's also the reason fasting is so tied to spirituality — it helps Christians develop an appetite for God.

## 'Have mercy'

Our longing shows us that we were meant for something more, Moore said. "The very fact you have a sense that things aren't what they're supposed to be, that's a sign God has a resolution to that in the age to come."

But often Christ's followers don't lean into that hunger, he said. "We decide somehow that we need this as little as possible. We decide we need to put the body of Christ on a low-carb diet. When

we hunger and thirst for righteousness, what we inevitably say is, 'God, have mercy on me.'" (Grace Thornton)

**2019**  
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## Christian Crossword

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14			15					16				
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59	60	61				62	63	64			65	
66						67					68	
69						70					71	

**Across**

- Computer key
- Parable of the \_\_\_ and weeds
- Broker
- That girl
- Hallway
- Genetic identical
- Touch affectionately
- Had by Joseph, Joseph and magi
- Book after Daniel
- Unwilling
- Wharf
- A Roman emperor
- Rhythm
- Young Men's Christian Association
- First man
- Panels
- Hearing part
- Brother of

**Moses**

- Something very small
- Literature categories
- \_\_\_ of Eden
- Canteen
- Composure
- Insult
- Sacrificial table
- Account (abbr.)
- To incite
- Street
- KJV pronoun
- Ancient Indian
- Had by Joseph, Joseph and magi
- Strike (KJV)
- Movie
- Kitten
- Devout
- Burp
- East northeast
- Scorched
- Looks for
- Limited (abbr.)

**Down**

- Spain (Sp.)
- Scraped
- Et \_\_\_
- Gobs
- Employ
- East southeast
- Wing
- Sacred building
- Throb
- Give \_\_\_ to God
- Aurora
- North northeast
- Thirst quencher
- Book near Acts
- \_\_\_ A Small World...
- Country in SE Asia
- No room for them in the \_\_\_
- Word interpreted by Daniel
- Adam's son
- Extremity
- Before (prefix)
- Noah's \_\_\_

- Married woman
- Envisage
- Slick
- Alleviate
- Instrument to guide oxen
- Atmosphere
- Food and drug administration (abbr.)
- School group
- Electric spark
- Five \_\_\_ and three fishes
- Place of worship
- Binder
- Tried
- NT epistle
- Bird's home
- Stack of cards
- Decays
- Resort hotel
- Center
- Promissory note
- Wrath
- Owed

# SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For September 15

## Explore the Bible

By Robert L. Olsen, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Christian Studies, University of Mobile



### RESURRECTED Ephesians 2:1–10

#### Once Dead (1–3)

Having presented who God is and what He has done for us in chapter 1, Paul now turns to who we are. The picture is not pretty. Whereas God is holy and worthy of honor and glory, humans are sinful and live in ways contrary to God's will.

For many people this is a difficult concept to grasp. If asked, most people do not see themselves as "bad" or sinful. In fact, if asked, most people who believe there is a heaven think they deserve to go there.

The problem with this is they are judging by their own standard and not God's holy and perfect standard. According to God's standard, one sin is enough to separate us from God (see Rom. 6:23).

For those who are Christians the penalty for sin has been paid in Christ's redemptive work on the cross.

This is why it is so important to share the gospel throughout the world. Since everyone has sinned and deserves to be separated from God and because the only way to be made right with God is through the atoning death and resurrection of Christ, everyone needs to be told.

In today's America this prospect is not popular — people don't want to hear they are sinners and in need of a Savior. People don't want to hear about an almighty, just and holy God of the universe who is worthy of our respect, admiration and obedience. But it has been this way since the gospel was first preached.

Everywhere the gospel is preached some will stand against it. Our job is not to try to convince others to accept the gospel; our duty is to follow God's command in the Great Commission and preach the gospel and allow the Holy Spirit to convict.

#### Now Alive (4–7)

Since Paul tells his readers they were all dead in their sins, how were they made alive? They were

made alive in Christ by grace. Dead people can do nothing; God has to be the one to resurrect us.

Grace means receiving what we do not deserve. When God saves us by His grace we receive what we do not deserve: salvation from death and a forever relationship with God.

#### Through Grace Alone (8–10)

Because we have done nothing to deserve being saved we have no reason to boast. If salvation were based on works then the one who did more works or was nicer, kinder, helped more people or made better decisions would be better than one who did not.

So a person who never broke the law and did what was right and obeyed God would be closer to God than a murderer on death row. But with God this is not the case. We are all separated from God — from the nicest person to the worst — and it is only by God's coming to us and saving us that we become righteous (see 2 Cor. 5:21). God's saving grace doesn't rely on anything we do or don't do. This is a wonderful reality considering our sinful nature.

Throughout history many religions focus on what we can do to earn our salvation. The problem with this is you can never know if you are truly saved or not — when have you been good enough or done enough good work to deserve to go to heaven?

Christianity, however, is not about humans working toward God but God coming to us. Through Christ, God meets us right where we are — flaws and all. Because of this we do not have to worry about being good enough — after all we can never be good enough to deserve or earn salvation.

Christ, being perfectly man and perfectly God, suffered and died on the cross on our behalf making it possible for us to be reconciled to God and to live with Him for eternity.✠

## Bible Studies for Life

By Jeffery M. Leonard, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Biblical Studies, Samford University



### THE KEY TO CONTENTMENT Philippians 4:10–20

One of the most famous verses in the Bible is Philippians 4:13: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

I confess this is not one of my favorite Bible verses. When I was a wee lad of only six I was excited to take part in my very first year of Little League Baseball.

Unfortunately the realities of the baseball diamond did not line up with my outsized expectations for the sport.

The coaches quickly discovered my lack of fielding skills and shuttled me off to right field, the place where I was least likely to see any action and least likely to wreak havoc on the rest of the team. There was no hiding my performance at the plate, however.

Even down in the dreaded ninth spot I would inevitably come up sometime. And each and every time I came up to bat the result was the same: I struck out. More than half the season slipped by and I had not even managed to foul a ball off. It was miserable.

Perhaps seeing my frustration after a couple of swings and misses one particular umpire decided to offer some words of encouragement. He looked me straight in the eye and said, "It's OK, son, the Bible says, 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.'"

Sadly I swung and missed the very next pitch. It was a bucket of cold water over the head of a young boy's faith.

If I couldn't hit a ball what did that say about my faith? Or worse yet what did that say about the Christ who was supposed to strengthen me?

Thankfully I now know Philippians 4 is not about getting a hit in baseball, scoring a touchdown, acing a final exam or accomplishing any other difficult task.

It is a passage ultimately about contentment and specifically finding contentment in the person of Jesus rather than in status or possessions or circumstances.

### Acknowledge the strength and provision of God. (10–14)

In the preceding paragraph of his letter to the Philippians the Apostle Paul charged his readers to rejoice in the Lord always and to take their concerns to God in prayer rather than being anxious over them. Now Paul turns to his own circumstances.

We know from elsewhere in his letters that Paul had experienced extraordinary suffering and persecution in his ministry (see 2 Cor. 11:22–33).

Paul tells the Philippians that even in the midst of these difficult circumstances he has learned to be content. Whether in need or in abundance Paul finds his strength and his contentment in Christ.

#### Give generously from God's provision. (15–18)

If Paul's contentment was ultimately found in Christ that did not mean other believers could not play a role in lending a hand along the way.

Out of their concern for him the Philippians sent Paul what was apparently a very generous gift.

Though Paul insists he could have been content even in need, the Philippians' gift had nevertheless proved to be a tremendous help to him. He commends them saying, "It was kind of you to share my trouble" (v. 14).

#### Trust God to supply your need. (19–20)

When we take similar steps and share others' troubles we ease the burdens they carry and show that our own contentment is not found in the possessions we keep to ourselves.

Though it may seem counterintuitive to give to others, especially when we may be in need ourselves, it is in the act of giving that we truly live out our contentment.

We give as an act of faith affirming with Paul, "My God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."✠



# Media reviews

## Ken Burns' documentary 'Country Music' leads September lineup

By Michael Foust  
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

More than a few of my childhood nights were spent sitting in my bedroom, wondering why my father was watching a “boring” PBS documentary on the Civil War.

But then I grew up.

And then I developed a love for documentaries.

And then I discovered that the same filmmaker who had produced the epic PBS series “The Civil War” made many other documentaries too — about the Brooklyn Bridge, the Statue of Liberty and Lewis and Clark.

### Newest project

His name was Ken Burns and he quickly became one of my favorite filmmakers.

This month Burns' newest project — “Country Music” — debuts on PBS. It leads this month's family-friendly spotlight.

“Country Music” is just as good as Burns' other in-depth documentaries, including “The War,” “The National Parks,” “Baseball” and “The Vietnam War.” It's massive — at eight parts and 16 hours. It's entertaining — even if you're not



Photo courtesy of PBS

a country music fan. It's engrossing — so grab a big bowl of popcorn. Most of all it's educational and it helps you understand the roots and development of this unique genre of music.

It includes interviews with dozens of well-known singers, including Charley Pride, Willie Nelson and Dolly Parton, but also a few names you might not recognize.

The documentary tells us how church played a major role in the birth of country music and in the lives of the singers.

I screened two episodes. One episode (the first one)

contained no language but a few adult themes. Another episode included brief strong language. Caution is advised for children.

It airs nightly on PBS Sept. 15–18 and Sept. 22–25. Check local listings for times.

### Also worth watching

► “*The Long Goodbye*” — Kara Tippett was a minister's wife and mother of four when she was diagnosed with stage four breast cancer. She eventually died but not before teaching the world how life should be lived.

“*The Long Goodbye*” is one of the most powerful documentaries I've ever watched — and one of the most Christ-centric too. It's streaming now on Netflix.

► *College football documentaries* — This year is the 150th anniversary of the first college football game,

which pit Rutgers against Princeton. To commemorate the date, ESPN is launching three sets of documentaries:

“*The American Game*,” an 11-part series about the history of college football; “*The Greatest*,” an 11-episode series ranking the all-time best in the sport on various subjects; and “*Football is US*,” a two-part overview of the sport.

They air this month and all fall. Expect minor language.

► “*The Lord of the Rings*” films — Fans of Middle Earth rejoice. The final two films in “*The Lord of the Rings*” trilogy come to Netflix in September. “*The Return of the King*” (2003) and “*The Two Towers*” (2002) will join “*The Fellowship of the Ring*” (2001) which entered the lineup earlier this year. The series is based on writer J.R.R. Tolkien's novels and

include powerful Christian themes. All are rated PG-13 for battle sequences and scary images. They might not be appropriate for young children.

► “*Aladdin*” — It's Disney's live-action remake of its Oscar-winning animated film. This “*Aladdin*” is rated PG for some action and peril but is still mostly family-friendly. There's no coarse language or sexuality, and unlike the original movie, Jasmine doesn't wear belly-revealing outfits, minus a very brief scene or two. Yes it has a “magical” lamp but it contains thought-provoking messages about temptation.✝



'Aladdin'

IMDb photo

### Meet the reviewer

Michael Foust covers the intersection of faith and entertainment as a media reviewer for The Alabama Baptist. He also is the husband of an amazing wife and the father of four young children.

# ‘Hear their story’

## Hospital chaplains stick to heart of the job amid health care industry changes

**H**ospitalized with a serious illness a 55-year-old lawyer found himself taking stock.

He’d gone to Ivy League schools, supported a beautiful family, run a prosperous business, bought a second home on the coast. But what had he contributed? What had been the point of it all?

### How to pray:

▶ Pray for strength and wisdom for chaplains across the country as they minister to the patients and employees of hospitals.

▶ Pray those who Christian hospital chaplains come into contact with will be open and receptive to the gospel. (TAB)

Lying alone in the stillness of the wee hours he remembered what he had really wanted to do was become a teacher.

“So what do you do with that, when you realize a life has been spent in a way that wasn’t the best?” asked Jim Rawlings, who retired recently as head of Duke University Hospital’s pastoral services staff.

“Most people live in such denial that anything can happen to them. It’s one of the times they confront their mortality. And there’s anxiety often,” said Rawlings, who spent more than 30 years as a hospital chaplain.

A common perception of clergy who work in hospitals is that they are there to perform last rites for the terminally ill or prompt 11th-hour conversions. But chaplaincy has little to do with religion per se.

“We try to hear their story,” said Rawlings. “To be able to tell your



Photo courtesy of Auteur Productions

A chaplain prays with a nurse in a scene from ‘Your Health: A Sacred Matter,’ a documentary discussing the connection of religion, spirituality and health.

story is a way to become known and thus become less lonely.”

With American society becoming increasingly disconnected and less religious the chaplain’s role has become particularly important.

### ‘Improving patients’

A 2013 study by Harvard researchers illustrated patients whose spiritual needs have been met have chosen less aggressive care. A 2015 Mount Sinai paper showed that chaplain visits boost patient satisfaction.

“I see a very clear movement toward chaplains being involved in improving patient outcomes,” particularly in cases of life-threatening illness, said Torrie Fields, senior

manager for advanced illness and palliative care at Blue Shield of California. “I think they’re able to see the big picture.”

Society needs that, said Trace Haythorn, executive director of ACPE, the main organization for accrediting spiritual care advisers and education programs.

“So much of our public discourse is oppositional rather than listening deeply for the core of who you are as a person,” Haythorn said. “The very best chaplains help people go to those deep places where very little in this culture is allowed to go safely. The biggest and most important questions in life are often asked in moments like that.” (RNS)



Hospital patients and their friends and family often need words of encouragement and hope from hospital chaplains.

A special thank you to WXJC Radio, our partner in producing TAB News, which airs Saturdays at 2 p.m. TAB News is also the first part of the podcast released each Tuesday along with the audio digest of that week's issue.



## WEEKDAY MORNINGS ON WXJC

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