



The Alabama Baptist

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Vol. 185, No. 6
Informing. Inspiring. Connecting.

INSIDE



God's design not for women to be physically, spiritually exhausted

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



VAPING

THE TRUTH & THE DANGERS

Are e-cigarettes really healthy alternative to smoking?

By **Shawn Hendricks**
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

E-cigarettes have exploded in popularity since they were introduced to U.S. consumers a little more than a decade ago. The smokeless battery-powered devices that vaporize a liquid mixture containing flavors, chemicals and usually (but not always) nicotine were marketed as an alternative to cigarettes and even as a way to quit the habit.

Instead the devices, also known as vapes or by the common brand name Juul, enticed many, especially teens, with their colorful packaging and "pods" featuring minty flavors and

sweet flavors such as glazed donut, peach, honeydew and lemon twist.

Health experts have warned users about the potential dangers of

using e-cigarettes, or vaping, since the product's introduction, but it wasn't until a rash of vaping-related deaths that many parents and users understood the potential problems of e-cigarette use.

Overall awareness of vaping is low, noted Adrienne Duke, associate professor in the human development and family studies at Auburn University.

Duke is researching vaping prevention programming for middle school and high school students in Alabama.

Her research also assesses the changes in youth and college-age students' attitudes and beliefs about vaping, their vaping use and how it impacts health.

"Vaping is relatively new, growing in popularity since 2017," she wrote on the university's website. "Parents who don't smoke typically don't know what these devices look like. Most parents hear vapor and think of water, not chemical aerosols."

Some devices, Duke noted, "are designed to be easily (See 'Understanding,' page 8)



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TAB editor-in-chief speaks about missions journey

By Michael J. Brooks
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Jennifer Davis Rash, president and editor-in-chief of The Alabama Baptist/TAB Media, said it was a “God thing” when she committed her life to missions as a college student.

“It was 26 years ago, but I can still feel the exact moment,” she said. “Though I don’t remember all that the missions speaker said that Sunday morning, God used her to change the course of my life.”

Rash shared her missionary testimony at Siluria Baptist Church, Alabaster, on Jan. 26.

“I grew up in church, but I didn’t truly commit my life to the Lord until my sophomore year in college.”

Rash said a call to full-time Christian service wasn’t too far behind and then came that moment when she felt the tug toward missions. It was the final semester of her senior year at the University of Alabama and she and her roommate, who was from the same hometown, spontaneously decided to drive home for a Sunday at their home church and for some “home cooking.”

They were surprised to find their pastor away that day. Instead, a guest missionary shared her story and how she served through communications.

“I was a journalism major, and while I didn’t know exactly what would be next I pretty much had my life all planned out,” Rash said. “But God used this woman’s story to im-

press upon me that missions would be my next step.

“I can’t say this was my choice in that moment, but the call of God was obvious, and it was one of those things you do because you can’t not do it. It was amazing, scary, exciting and frustrating all at the same time.”



Photo by Debbie Campbell

Rash applied to the International Mission Board short-term missions program and completed a battery of tests.

“I had a mixture of excitement and fear as I took this step,” she said. “I felt inadequate, and I had the fleeting thought that I might be ‘cut’ and sent home to do what I’d always planned to do: report events, interview people and tell their stories. Perhaps this was an ‘Abraham’ moment, and God wanted me not to go overseas but be willing to do so. But that’s not how it turned out.”

And she’s so glad, Rash said. “The opportunity to serve the English-speaking Caribbean through the publication ministry there was truly fulfilling, and the people I met became forever family.”

After her missions term wrapped up two years later, Rash found her way to *The Alabama Baptist* and recently passed her 24-year mark.

While Rash focuses on telling the stories of Baptists across the state, nation and world she also wants her own story to bring honor to God.

“All of us have a story, and I want others to see Jesus in my life,” she said. “What’s your story going to say to others?”



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

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MY RASHIONALE

By Jennifer Davis Rash
President and Editor-in-Chief

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Be willing to share with others what really matters to you

One thing we could always count on at Granny and Papa McCaig's house was home-cooked meals. They ate almost every meal around that modest kitchen table — Granny in the seat closest to the refrigerator and stove and Papa on the side with the best view of the backyard.

Dining out, going to restaurants, picking up to-go orders wasn't really their thing.

But on occasion a reason to eat lunch out would surface, maybe a morning filled with doctor's appointments or a special event a good distance away.

When those moments came, we never spent time thinking about where we would eat because we all knew the answer — KFC, or Kentucky Fried Chicken, in those days.

Papa didn't like to eat out, but somewhere along the way he discovered KFC and enjoyed the two-piece dark meat meal — original recipe, of course.

We all knew not to attempt to convince him to try any of the other menu items (well, we learned that the hard way, but we eventually learned).

He found a meal that worked for him, and he was content. It would always be the meal he chose when eating out. Yes, he did enjoy the taste, but more than that he knew what to expect. He understood the system and knew how to order.

We learned quickly that forcing Papa to walk into an unfamiliar restaurant would cause him great anxiety because of the sheer volume of selections and

the pressure to order quickly. If we knew no KFC existed where we were going, then we would plan to order for him.

But if we could get to a KFC, then that's where we went because Papa helped us understand why it was important to him and why it mattered.

Because he mattered to us, we wanted the experience to be the best it could be for him.

My husband's Granddaddy Stroupe also mattered to us but he wasn't quite as forthcoming about a meal preference in one of our visits with him.

He enjoyed eating out and going to restaurants, so experiencing different tastes and selections didn't bother him.

As he aged, however, the variety of foods allowed on his plate slimmed down and one of his favorite foods — pizza — was no longer an option.

Jason and I are pizza fans ourselves, and Granddaddy Stroupe knew this, so on one of our visits he devised a plan to send us out for pizza.

And, well, what was he to do if we came back with a pizza, right? He didn't want to be rude.

The only option would be to eat pizza that night. I mean, he wouldn't have a choice, right?

However, he didn't let us in on his plan, and we thought he was only requesting pizza for us. We didn't realize how hard he had worked to get a taste of pizza — until we saw his disappointment when we brought back the same ol' same ol' he ate every day.

Yes, he needed to follow a strict eating plan most days, but a slice of pizza enjoyed with his grandchildren would have been a special moment for him, and special for us, too — if only he had been willing to tell us. 🍕

Special moment for Beeson Divinity School



Photo by Kyle Thompson

Douglas A. Sweeney (kneeling in prayer) is formally installed Jan. 28 as the new dean of Beeson Divinity School of Samford University in Birmingham. While Sweeney has been in the position since July 2019, the installation was held in conjunction with opening convocation at Beeson. Timothy George (at lectern), founding dean of Beeson who transitioned from the position to research professor at the end of May 2019, leads the congregation in the prayer for Sweeney. Sweeney's mentor Kevin Vanhoozer (standing to the left of Sweeney) of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, and Samford president Andrew Westmoreland (standing to the right of Sweeney) led the ceremony.

Photo by Deidre Futh

Your Voice



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

Madagascar prepares to send missionaries

By **Barbara Singerman**
International Mission Board

In October of 2019, my husband, Jeff, and I set out on a remarkable journey.

I cannot speak to leafy golden hues or trees of burgundy brilliance dancing in the cloudless skies. We were far from our rainy or dry central African home and even further from countries with dramatically changing seasons.

Instead, October found us on the island nation of Madagascar, where the sun reflects off rice fields in cultivated areas, burns against the desert grasses, touches the baobab trees' reaching fingers and barely glances the rainforest floor.

Malagasy Baptist leaders invited International Mission Board (IMB) personnel to participate in an inaugural event: Baptists from Madagascar taking first steps toward sending their own indigenous missionaries.

IMB representatives led the group through discussions on topics such as a biblical overview of missions, recognizing those who are called to go, training methods and facets of support.

Through leading discussion, IMB personnel allowed for local leadership to adapt biblical missional knowledge to their cultural context.

Gathered with the Baptist leaders were Malagasy Baptist church planters, who know well the extreme hardships of going to the unreached in difficult places.

Bush taxis may bounce, lurch



IMB photo

and throw passengers against each other for 10 long hours to cover only 90 miles.

Where the bush taxis can't go, the church planters pedal hard-seat bikes countless miles.

Where bicycles can't go, they walk rough paths.

Some travel four days on foot and pass through dangerous forests rife with criminals to reach their target peoples. Where they cannot walk, they paddle dug-out canoes.

When they sleep, they sleep on the ground using watermelons for pillows. Their wives struggle to help place food on the table for their families when they are away.

One beautiful young woman, with her 3-year-old hiding behind her skirt, shared her contribution to the family needs. "Every day I make hundreds of fried meat pies

to sell. The oil splashes on me and is scarring my face."

Another said, "My husband and I live in one room. That room is our bedroom, living room, church and Bible school."

A common vision brought these Baptist men and women together. Their desire is for the Malagasy people of Madagascar to know Jesus Christ. They have counted the cost and are willing to make sacrifices to accomplish their goal.

As the conference was drawing to a close, the participants — deeply struck by the lostness in their country — gathered around a large drawing of Madagascar.

Carefully, they mapped out the areas of their work. Stepping back, the gathered believers examined the large areas with no evangelical work. Nothing. They suspect that no voice is proclaiming Christ and that lives are being lived and lost, eternally, without Jesus.

In quiet reverence, they dropped to their knees and earnestly prayed to the Lord of the harvest.

I felt incredibly privileged to participate in this event — to see men and women desiring their nation to know Christ, seeking to send out missionaries from their poverty, falling on their knees in humble supplication that Christ be made known.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Barbara Singerman serves with the IMB in West Africa with her husband, Jeff.

Jesus is the standard by which humans judge our participation in the kingdom of God. We read the rest of Scripture, our own lives and our communal life together in view of how Jesus lived, with special attention to how Jesus listened and yielded to the Spirit. Jesus helps us to imagine what is possible.

Angela Williams Gorrell
"Always On: Practicing Faith in a New Media Landscape"

In God's kingdom, all are family, all are equal, all are of worth and have dignity — male/female, young/old, black/white, Asian/Hispanic, rich/poor, citizen/immigrant, born/unborn. Let us dignify and celebrate such life!

Pastor Juan Sanchez
High Pointe Baptist Church
Austin, Texas

Love TAB!
Keep up the good work.
Maurene Guffin
Gardendale, Ala.

Share online or email news@thealabamabaptist.org

“It is impossible to be right with God and not be right with God’s family.”

VANCE PITMAN

“Unburdened: Stop Living for Jesus So Jesus Can Live through You”

All who value religious freedom must stand firmly against anti-Semitism and other forms of religious hatred to prevent the horrors of the Holocaust from being repeated.

Chairman Tony Perkins
U.S. Commission on Int’l Religious Freedom

If Roe v. Wade is overturned — and please God may it be — and if state legislature after state legislature decides that the atrocity of abortion should be ended in their states — and please God let them do that, let us all live long enough to see that — that will not be the end of [the pro-life movement]. That will be the beginning of it. It means that we have to have an infrastructure in place to be able to

love and to care for people that we don’t even know about right now.

Russell Moore
President, Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, SBC

You have heard the phrase “OK, boomer.” It basically means: Get out of the way. Whether those words come from a dismissive 25-year-old, or from a dismissive 45-year-old who thinks that he or she is doing wise church or synagogue planning, it not only hurts, it is counterproductive.

News flash. We [Baby Boomers] are now on the brink of retirement. Many of us stand to inherit significant money. Many of us have nice pensions. (Others of us don’t.) We will have a lot of leisure time. We

are still (mostly) healthy. We are smart. We read — as in: books. We are part of the world. ... As the psalmist wrote: “Cast us not off into old age.”

Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin
Hollywood, Fla.

It’s great to see [participants] become someone that they didn’t think they could be. It’s because somebody believed in them and somebody invested in their lives. That’s what Christian Women’s Job Corps is all about.

Christie Gambrell
Executive director
Christian Women’s Job Corps of Rusk County
Henderson, Texas

From the *Twitterverse*

@scottdawson

A discerning leader communicates what must be known. A deceptive leader doesn’t share the whole picture. A discernor may not share everything but will communicate the essentials. A deceiver will only share what is advantageous for personal gain.

@ThomRainer

The sound of crying children in church can be a blessing. If you don’t hear them, your church may be dying.

@BarnabasPiper

If Jesus spent three years pouring into Judas’ life, what are the implications for Christians and “cutting toxic people out” of our lives?

@trillianewbell

Today, I resolve to find the evi-

dence of God’s beauty and grace reflected in those around me.

@BillyGraham

“Many Christians who profess Christ do not live as though they possess Him.” #BillyGraham

@carmenlaberge

Jesus talked a lot about His impending death and the reality of mortality. So why do we, as Christians, shy away from the topic? We know we’re all going to die, why don’t we talk more about it? #HealthyFaith

@jasonkeithallen

I love pastors. They often receive unjust criticism. Large-church pastors are often accused of pride and ambition. Small-church pastors are often accused of lack of gifting and ambition. I know hundreds of

pastors and find these stereotypes almost always untrue. Love your pastor.

@DanaWatson

1. People die. (Heb. 9:27)
2. Money can’t stop it. (Matt. 19:16–30)
3. Tomorrow isn’t promised. (Prov. 27:1)
4. Life is fragile. (James 4:13–15)
5. Put your trust in Jesus. (John 14:6)

@bobgoff

When you’ve got a guide you can trust, you don’t have to worry about the path you’re on.

@PaulTripp

On your worst day Jesus won’t walk away, won’t suspend His promises and won’t replace His mercy with judgment. Grace.



University of Mobile photo
Lonnie Burnett is president of University of Mobile.

Don’t give up the window seat

I will never forget my first commercial flight. I booked months early so as to claim a window seat in order to experience what I knew would be the wondrous sights.

Fast forward several decades. I still book early but now my goal is an aisle seat for more leg room and for getting off the flying cattle car as soon as humanly possible.

Somewhere along the way, I traded the thrill of the ride for personal convenience.

The sad reality is that many have applied this same course to life — trading joy for just an existence. We have lost the awe of simple things.

I have four strategies for realizing the more abundant life of which Jesus spoke.

First, never stop learning. If a University of Mobile graduate walks across the stage thinking he or she knows it all, we have failed.

Second, never stop laughing. We have got to stop taking ourselves too seriously.

Third, never stop leaning. This is not a lazy dependency but rather a trust in others and especially in Christ.

Finally, never stop loving. By this I mean love what you do, love people and, most importantly, love God.

It’s time to reclaim the window seat.

—Lonnie Burnett

Right *to* rest

Many women are exhausted physically, emotionally, spiritually, but that's not God's design

By Denise George
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

A frightening trend is growing among church women today. Christian women today work too hard and rest too little. They are always multitasking — working, running, moving and trying to beat the clock rushing to meet yet another demand or deadline.

Author John Eldridge describes the exhaustion of today's Christian women: "Walk into most churches in America, have a look around and ask yourself this question: 'What is a Christian woman? ... Don't listen to what is said, look at what you find there. There is no doubt about it. You'd have to admit, a Christian woman is ... tired.'"

Why aren't Christian women resting?

Some women admit they have no time to rest. There are just not

enough hours in the day to take a break. They recognize they have too much to do at home and work; their family needs the extra paycheck from their job. Others admit to "feeling guilty" when they rest. They never want to appear "lazy."

They believe Christian women must continually give sacrificially to others even at the risk of their own health. They consider taking time for themselves selfish, unspiritual and so unlike the hard-working woman in Proverbs 31.

Today's Christian women are not just tired physically but are also exhausted mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Unfortunately these women have never learned or understood the biblical principles of rest. God designed bodies, minds and spirits to rest, not to be dragged along by demands and constantly race against the clock. He created bodies and minds to enjoy balance, wellness and wholeness. Women who work too hard, carry too many



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Many Christian women get too little rest because they are always multitasking to meet deadlines and demands.

responsibilities and try to meet too many demands will live in a continual state of unease.

Day after day, year after year of this fast-paced living will cause physical distress. They will become sick and suffer serious health problems. It's just a matter of time.

God gives busy women permission to rest

God gives His daughters the gift of rest. In the physical sense, rest

means ceasing work and allowing one's body to relax and repair itself. Scripture clearly teaches the value of and need for rest. God's word is filled with His advice and examples encouraging rest. For instance:

► God Himself rested: Genesis 2:2-3 states that when God had finished the work of creation, He rested from all His work on the seventh day.

► Jesus rested regularly and told



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God created bodies, minds and spirits to rest, not to be dragged along by demands. Women who work too hard, carry too many responsibilities and try to meet too many demands will live in a continual state of unease.

"Today's Christian women are not just tired physically but are also exhausted mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Unfortunately these women have never learned or understood the biblical principles of rest."

Denise George, author

His overworked disciples: “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest” (Mark 6:31).

▶ Jesus offered His tired children permission to rest in Him when He stated: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28–29). He encouraged and promised them: “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

▶ When Elijah suffered severe mental and emotional stress/fear after the dramatic incident at Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:16–46), God sat the weary prophet under a tree and put him to sleep. Later God sent a food-carrying angel to Elijah commanding him to “get up and eat” (1 Kings 19:5). Rest and sleep, nourishing food and water proved the healing recipe for Elijah. After a time of rest, his strength renewed and Elijah continued his God-directed journey.

▶ In His word, God encourages rest through stillness and quiet: “Be still, and know that I am God” (Ps. 46:10). A still and tranquil heart — far away from noise, conflict, anxiety and distress — comes to know a special restful freedom in Christ, the “peace of God” that the Apostle Paul describes in Philip- pians 4:7, “... which transcends all understanding”

▶ Jesus gave His own example of rest throughout the Gospels. He regularly rose early in the morning and found a solitary place to rest and pray (Mark 1:35). He often retreated to the mountains, wildernesses and gardens to rest and recuperate from life’s non-stop activities and anxieties.

▶ Jesus corrected a busy and angry Martha when she criticized her sister, Mary, for sitting at Jesus’ feet and not helping her in the kitchen. “Martha, Martha,” Jesus said. “You are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her” (Luke 10:41–42).

EDITOR’S NOTE — Denise George is author of 31 books, including the Bible study book “A Woman’s Right to Rest: 14 Types of Biblical Rest That Will Transform Your Life” (Leafwood Publishers, Abilene Christian University Press, 2012).



Unsplash.com

Women need time to gather together regularly to study God’s word, pray and enjoy community. Through these activities women will naturally minister to each other and understand the benefits of rest and taking care of themselves.

8 ways churches can help women rest

Here are some practical suggestions for pastors, church leaders and congregations to encourage and minister to overworked, highly stressed and overwhelmed women in their congregation:

1. Teach the women in the congregation through preaching events and special programs/classes that God gives them permission to rest. Encourage them to maintain a balanced life.

2. Resist the temptation to place too many church responsibilities on their shoulders, even when they usually respond to your work invitations with an immediate “yes.” (Some women believe that refusing an offered church job is unspiritual, even if her plate is already overflowing.)

3. Never criticize a woman for not taking official church roles or jobs when asked. Know that most women are already doing exhausting full-time ministry in an “unofficial” way in their homes, communities and work places.

4. Create opportunities for women in your church to gather together regularly to study God’s instructions for rest and well-being. Through study, prayer, conversation and laughter, women will naturally minister to each other in these enjoyable settings.

5. Talk with the women in your church. Ask them how the church leadership can minister to them in needed ways.

6. Minister to the women in your congregation by providing

child care for church-sponsored events, helping them with heavy care-giving duties and planning special church-sponsored events/retreats to offer occasions to get away and rest.

7. Observe the physical, emotional and mental condition of the women in the church. Are the women overworked and struggling, trying to balance home, work and church responsibilities? If so, lighten their church workload.

8. Help women in your congregation keep a Christ-centered perspective throughout their daily lives, resting in the “bigger picture” of life with eternity as their reward and a future home with the Lord. (Denise George)

Understanding dangers of e-cigarettes, vaping

(continued from page 1)

hidden and mimic the look of other devices, like flash drives, watches or droppers.”

The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) reports on its website that flavored products, especially brands like Juul, have driven “the skyrocketing youth e-cigarette epidemic, which is addicting a new generation of kids and threatening the decades-long progress the nation has made in reducing youth tobacco use.”

And Juul is just one of around 460 different brands, noted Duke, pointing to the importance of education in understanding the risks associated with vaping.

Many adults and youth don’t understand “what they are inhaling and how e-cigs work,” she wrote. A majority of students responded in a survey that they believe electronic nicotine delivery devices are less harmful than cigarettes, she said.

“So there is a misunderstanding around these devices,” she wrote. “It’s also the same for the general public.”

And though smokers have been warned for decades about the dangers of nicotine, “youth often don’t understand what nicotine can do to the body and brain,” Duke said.

“I really think if youth understood better that they are breathing in an aerosol of nicotine, ultra-fine particles, volatile organic compounds and other toxins, they would be less likely to say that it’s harmless,” she wrote.

Despite previous laws restricting purchase of e-cigarettes to those 18 and older, high school students have been top consumers of the devices. According to the 2019 National Youth Tobacco Survey, 5 million middle and high school students report using e-cigarettes, with 1 million teens reporting daily use.

In December the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) officially raised the age to buy tobacco products, including e-cigarettes and vaping products, to 21. And in early

January, the FDA issued a policy “prioritizing enforcement against flavored e-cigarette products that appeal to kids, including fruit and mint flavors.”

Under this policy, according to ADPH, “companies that do not stop manufacturing, distributing and selling unauthorized flavored cartridge-based e-cigarettes (other than tobacco or menthol) within 30 days risk FDA enforcement actions.”

In addition to federal laws regulating e-cigarettes and related products, changes in Alabama’s vaping laws went into effect on Aug. 1, 2019, ADPH reported. Among those changes:

- ▶ The Alcohol Beverage Control Board is responsible for the regulation of e-cigarettes and vape products.

- ▶ Advertising cannot categorize alternative nicotine products as healthy options to replace smoking.

- ▶ Vape shops are required to have a tobacco permit.

- ▶ Opening vape shops within 1,000 feet of a school, church, youth center, day-care center or public library, playground or park is prohibited.

Even with the new restrictions, health experts urge more education on the risks associated with e-cigarettes and other vaping devices.

As of Dec. 10, the ADPH said more than 2,400 cases of vaping-related lung injuries have been reported to the Centers for Disease Control from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

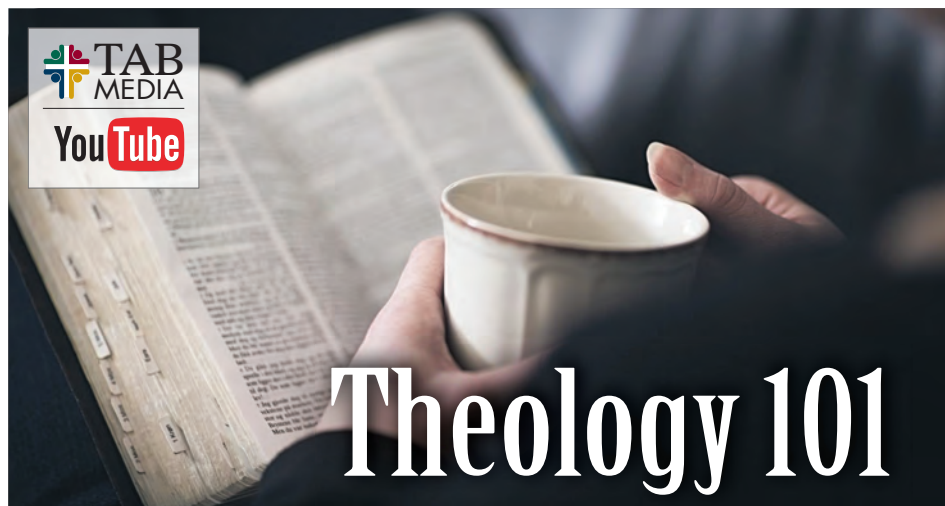
In Alabama, the ADPH has reported 13 cases of lung disease associated with e-cigarette product use or vaping, and one resident has died due to this lung disease.

“While education may not completely eliminate use (of e-cigarettes),” Duke said, “it would definitely reduce the number of people smoking and those who try for the first time.”



commons.wikimedia.org

For more resources about e-cigarettes and vaping, go to tabonline.org/vaping.



Theology 101

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY FOR PEOPLE IN THE PEW

What's New?

A New Birth

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

Among the new things that Theology 101 has considered in previous weeks are a New Covenant, a new commandment, a new creation and a new name for believers. The One who sits on the throne and declares, “Behold, I make all things new” (Rev. 21:5) also makes possible a new birth for repentant sinners. We commonly refer to the doctrine of regeneration as truth about a new, spiritual birth that God works in believers by His Holy Spirit.

The well-known passage in John 3 is basic to this truth. In that passage Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about the necessity of being “born again” in order to “see the kingdom of God” (v. 3). In His explanation to Nicodemus, Jesus distinguished between physical birth and spiritual birth with the reminder that physical birth results in physical life, while the spiritual birth results in new spiritual life (v. 6).

In elaborating on this new birth, Jesus spoke of it as being “born of the Spirit,” which He compared to the invisible and humanly uncontrolled action of wind blowing where the wind wishes (v. 8). Thus, we might think of the new birth as a gracious and sovereign action of the Holy Spirit in which the inner being of a person is reborn within a new relationship with God the Father through faith in God the Son.

It is helpful to think of regeneration or new birth alongside of

justification. Justification speaks of a change in the repentant sinner’s relationship to God in which condemnation due to our sin is replaced with acquittal by God (Rom. 8:1). New birth, on the other hand, speaks of a change in the sinner’s heart or inner nature. Justification is the gospel’s answer to the reality of guilt, while regeneration is the gospel’s answer to the depravity caused by sin.

It also is helpful to distinguish between regeneration and sanctification. The regeneration of new birth points to the beginning point of new life in Christ, whereas sanctification addresses the life-long process by which a sinner’s inner nature is being transformed progressively into Christlikeness.

It is also helpful to think of new birth as occurring through the personal agency of the Holy Spirit using the means or instrumentality of God’s word. Thus, the Bible speaks both of being born of the Spirit (John 3:6, 8) and being begotten or brought forth by the word of truth (James 1:18).

Considering the importance and necessity of the new birth, we understand the old adage that holds being born is an eternal calamity unless a person also is born again.

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.



PILLARS

of the youth group

“There’s no doubt in our mind that every one of these girls had a saving relationship with Jesus and are now in a beautiful heaven.”

Pastor Ed Scott, FBC Geneva

Christmas Day car accident claims lives of 3 students, changes FBC Geneva forever

By Grace Thornton
The Alabama Baptist

Ed Scott said he can’t remember how many people were already there when he got to the accident scene, but it was at least 100 or 150, maybe even a lot more.

It felt like most of the town.

“Geneva’s not a big town — it’s a small place, and everybody is closely connected,” said Scott, pastor of First Baptist Church, Geneva.

And on Christmas Day, when three students in his church’s youth group died in a single-car accident, everybody showed up — the families, the neighbors and every minister in town.

And, Scott said, they continued to show up.

“God has been incredibly gracious to us,” he said.

One teen death is a horrible tragedy, but three on Christmas from the same church — it’s a lot for a community to bear. And the three students — Cassidy Dunn, Emilee Fain and Addyson Martin — weren’t just casual attenders, Scott said. They were pillars of the youth group.

Compassionate response

On Facebook, someone labeled Dunn a fast talker and a fast friend. Fain, they wrote, brightened everyone’s day with her smile and “amazing sense of humor.” Martin was “passionate in everything” and loved making people’s lives better.

All three touched more people than they could’ve ever known, the post said.

That was evident as the crowd waited out on the road that day.

First responders graciously held up



CASSIDY DUNN



EMILEE FAIN



ADDYSON MARTIN

tarps to curtain off the scene as they worked, and the community surrounded the families as they went through the first stages of grief.

“My hat is off to our church and community and to the first responders and funeral home staff,” Scott said. “Those guys just did a magnificent job.”

A couple of days later, First, Geneva, opened its doors to offer high school students a place to go and express their grief.

“We didn’t have a plan, we just wanted to give them a place,” he said, noting that ministers from other churches also came to be with the students. “Every few minutes a minister would get up and say a word and pray and read a passage of Scripture. It started off with a group sitting over here and another over there, and by the time it was over, it was one big group hug, which was exactly what they needed. We were there for about four hours.”

Then on the Saturday, Sunday and Monday following the accident,

First, Geneva, had three funerals back to back.

“Our church absolutely rose to the occasion,” Scott said, noting that they prepared meals for the families all three days.

The rest of the Geneva faith community also came through.

Other churches came to serve the meals and set up chairs. One church offered to buy the meat for one of the meals, and others brought food too.

“It was amazing to see the way God’s people came together,” Scott said. “In all of that, God blessed and kept the people doing the funerals strong. It was a blur, but I know God was with us — I felt sustained. He was with all the ministers and absolutely positively with the families.”

Journey ahead

Every Christmas is going to be a hard day from now on for the families, and they have a long grief journey ahead, he said.

But something has shifted in

the church, Scott said. They saw what they were able to do with “all hands-on deck,” and now with a fresh perspective on how short life really is, he encouraged them to “do that all the time.”

‘The job of the church’

“There’s no doubt in our mind that every one of these girls had a saving relationship with Jesus and are now in a beautiful heaven. They were solid kids,” Scott said. “We realize now that we’re surrounded by a whole community of folks who may not have that assurance, so we surely can’t let up doing the job of the church now.”

He said they “paid a high price” for that new awareness of the closeness of eternity, and they can’t afford to let that go.

“It has changed the character and the thought process of our church,” Scott said. “We’re a mess, but there’s no doubt that God has been involved and that He will get good from a bad situation.”

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Reaching businesspeople

Shades Mountain launches monthly Power Breakfast in downtown Birmingham

For years, it's been one of Danny Wood's favorite times of the month.

For more than 20 years, Shades Mountain Baptist Church, Birmingham — the church where he serves as pastor — has hosted a Power Lunch for businesspeople on the first Tuesday of the month.

They've offered a bargain-priced lunch

and a time to network followed by a short leadership talk delivered by Wood, who worked in the business sector before becoming a pastor.

"It's given us a great chance to get a gospel word to them," said Wood, who noted that he weaves the gos-

pel into his leadership talks. "I've become their pastor in a way, and some of them call me that, even if they don't go to our church or have a church of their own."

The lunch has been so successful they recently expanded into a monthly Power Breakfast held in downtown Birmingham on the second Wednesday of the month. Held at the

Harbert Center

at 6:45 a.m., it's an opportunity to engage downtown businesspeople who may not have time to drive to the church for Power Lunch.

Tommy DeRamus, Shades' minister of community engagement, said both events offer great opportunities to

build connections with other businesspeople and receive professional development.

"It's not a fluff message, 'let me throw something at you and we'll be done.' It's very practical professional development," DeRamus said. "That's Danny's gifting and passion, and I think people recognize that. They feel comfortable in that environment and know they're going to leave with something they can implement right away at their jobs."

Wood said he's had a heart for the business community ever since he worked in marketing for South Central Bell (now AT&T) in Birmingham.

"I understood what it was like to be there, and it gave me a real burden for those in the marketplace," he said.

He first tried out the Power



Photo by Jordan Cox

Pastor Danny Wood shares about becoming a growth-oriented person during the January Power Breakfast in downtown Birmingham.

Lunch idea at the church where he served in Ruston, Louisiana, then brought the idea with him to Shades.

But the breakfast idea also has been on his radar for years, and this year with DeRamus' help, they've hit the ground running. They've dis-

tributed flyers at downtown businesses but mostly used word of mouth, encouraging church members to attend and invite their friends. They also encourage businesspeople to buy a table and bring their entire team. (Grace Thornton)

Hear more about the Power Breakfast on the TAB News podcast at tabonline.org/podcasts, at shades.org/powerbreakfast or by calling 205-822-1670.



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Family influence leads Joe Ward to pastorate at Mount Carmel

Joe Ward says when his wife told him she thought God would put him in a pastorate one day, he laughed.

"I was a worship leader and a youth minister, not a pastor," he said. He grew up playing guitar with his dad, Ralph Ward. Music was where he felt comfortable.

But now as he steps into the pulpit every Sunday at Mount Carmel Baptist Church, Coffee Springs, it makes him smile.

The family influence is apparent in more ways than one. At one time his grandfather, J.H. Ward, served as Mount Carmel's pastor. His dad, at 88 years old, leads worship. And Joe Ward can feel the seeds of that family faith sprouting up and coming to life.

'Dynamic workers'

"I'm grateful to the Lord for giving me the parents that I had," Joe Ward said. "My mom was active teaching Sunday School and Vacation Bible School, and Dad has always been active in church. He didn't just send us to church — he took us to church."

Ralph Ward said his own father passed that down.

"We had a big family and we'd get out on the porch at night and sing old gospel songs," he said. "I grew up in church and gave my life to Christ at 12 or 13. I'm still in that same church now."

James Preachers, director of missions for Sardis Baptist Association and also a former pastor of Mount Carmel, said he's always been impressed with the way Ralph Ward has influenced the people around him to be committed to ministry and missions.

"He and his wife have always been dynamic workers for the Lord," he said. "He's a family man and



JOE WARD

he's inspiring to be around. He's very involved in ministry work."

And Mount Carmel, the

church he's always loved, is growing. Around 30 come for worship on Sunday mornings, and they're focusing on children's ministry and young families. Right now, the church has four people waiting for baptism. They've just got to get the heater in the baptistry up and running again.

"It's all going well," said Joe Ward, who became Mount Carmel's pastor in October 2019. "We're seeing a lot of good things happening here." (Grace Thornton)

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TAB CLASSIFIEDS

CHURCH POSITIONS

PASTOR

Fairhope Avenue Baptist Church is seeking a full-time pastor. Send resumés to: Fairhope Avenue Baptist Church, 8717 Fairhope Ave., Fairhope, AL 36532, or email to: fabc@att.net.

MINISTER OF MUSIC & EDUCATION

First Baptist Church, Clanton, is seeking a full-time minister of music and education. Send resumés to: First Baptist Church, 210 Sixth St. North, Clanton, AL 35045 or email resumés to: office@clantonfirstbaptist.org.

MINISTER OF MUSIC/YOUTH

First Baptist Church, Leeds, Alabama, is seeking full-time congregational minister of music/youth minister with other ministerial duties as assigned by senior pastor. Email resumé to: rbras699@aol.com.

MINISTER OF STUDENTS & RECREATION

First Baptist Church of Portland, Tennessee, is seeking a full-time candidate for minister of students and recreation. This position will include the overseeing of student ministry, grades 7-12, as well as, being ministry leader for our Family Recreation Center. All applicants must have answered the call to full-time Christian service and have faithfully served the Lord in ministry. All applicants must support the Baptist Faith & Message 2000. First Baptist, Portland, will receive resumés through the end of April 2020. All interested applicants may learn more about our church at fbcportland.org. Resumés should be sent to: First Baptist Church, 106 N Broadway, Portland, TN 37148 or yps@fbcportland.org; ATTN: Student & Rec Search Team.

BIVOCATIONAL YOUTH PASTOR

New Beginnings Baptist, Graysville, Alabama, searching for a bivocational youth pastor. Please send resumés to: nbccbaptist@gmail.com.

BIVOCATIONAL YOUTH DIRECTOR

First Baptist Church, Union Grove, is seeking a bivocational youth director. Send resumés to: FBCUG, P.O. Box 125, Union Grove, AL 35175.

OTHER POSITIONS

DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS

The Coosa River Baptist Association is an association of 66 churches in Talladega County. The DOM serves as mission strategist, leader of the associational body and ministers to the

churches and pastors of the association. Ministry experience in the local church with active participation in associational ministry required. College/seminary education preferred. Email cover letter and resumé to: DOMsearchteam@crba.org.

DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS

Sulphur Springs Baptist Association consisting of 20 churches accepting resumés for bivocational director of missions. Send to: DOM Search Committee, 4501 Greathouse Road, Dora, AL 35062, or email to: SSBAoffice@gmail.com.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR CCM

Shelby Baptist Association, Columbiana, Alabama, is seeking an assistant director for Church and Community Ministries. Job description, application and submission information located at <https://shelbybaptist.org/job-opportunities>. Please submit by Feb. 7.

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Later this month, members of **Women of Compassion** will join together for our first annual luncheon, where they will be voting on one of a variety of project ideas submitted to be completed in 2020. If you haven't joined yet or would like to gift a membership to someone, you can do that today! Membership is extended to women who give \$1,000 annually to the Women of Compassion fund at Alabama Baptist Children's Homes and is renewable each year.

In addition to supporting our children and families in care through their project vote, attendees will also enjoy a great time of food and fellowship, corporate worship, and will hear from Liz Huntley, child advocate, motivational speaker, attorney, and author.

Through Women of Compassion, each woman's generosity and voice are essential to the impact made on the lives of those we serve.

LEARN MORE:

Email Allison Combs at acombs@alabamachild.org.

Visit alabamachild.org/womenofcompassion.

Call (205) 982-1112.



Alabama Baptist
CHILDREN'S HOMES
& Family Ministries

3 stories you should know



AP photo by Patrick Semansky

On Jan. 24, President Donald Trump became the first sitting president to attend the annual March for Life gathering in Washington. The president called it his 'profound honor' to be present at the 47th annual event, held on the National Mall. 'Every life brings love into this world. Every child brings joy to a family. Every person is worth protecting,' Trump said, prompting loud cheers from the many thousands attending the event. 'Every human soul is divine, and every human life — born and unborn — is made in the holy image of Almighty God.'

Bolivia's interim president brings Bible back to palace

Hoisting a large leather Bible above her head, Bolivia's new interim president delivered a message hours after former president Evo Morales fled.

"The Bible has returned to the palace," said Jeanine Añez as she walked into the presidential palace where Morales had removed the Bible from official government ceremonies and replaced it with acts honoring the Andean earth deity called the Pachamama.

Añez declined to be interviewed by The Associated Press but told a Bolivian newspaper she will respect indigenous beliefs. She also said if Christians like her had to endure the Bible being taken out of the presidential palace and respect that some people didn't believe in God, then others should respect her devotion to God. (AP)

Vatican urges visiting Iraqi president to protect Christians

On Jan. 25, the Vatican urged Iraqi President Barham Saleh to guarantee the safety of Christians and ensure they have a future place in the war-battered country.

Saleh met with Pope Francis, the Vatican secretary of state and foreign minister back-to-back on his second visit to the Vatican.

The Holy See said the meetings focused on promoting peace and security in Iraq, especially for Christian minorities, many of whom have fled communities dating from the time of Christ to escape persecution.

Saleh's office said peaceful coexistence between Muslims and Christians was the only way to eradicate extremism.

The meeting came just a week after four aid workers for a French Christian charity disappeared in Baghdad. (AP)

— NEWSBRIEFS —

Longtime Southern Baptist, Alabama Baptist pastor Penn dies at 85



Longtime Southern Baptist pastor Jessie Wayne Penn died Jan. 13. He was 85.

Penn attended Bob Jones University in Greenville, South Carolina, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. He served churches in South Carolina and Louisiana before coming to Alabama.

In Alabama, Penn served as pastor of numerous churches, including Enon Baptist, Falkville; Underwood Baptist, Florence; Daleville Baptist; Parkview Baptist, Decatur; First Baptist, Colbert Heights, Tuscumbia; Pine Ridge Baptist, Union Grove; Unity Baptist, Decatur; Forest Hills Baptist, Florence; Liberty Baptist, Hartselle; and most recently Mount Zion Baptist, Hartselle, where he served for more than 10 years before retiring in December 2018.

Penn was preceded in death by two sons, Philip and Michael, and is survived by his wife of 65



PENN

years, Gloria, two daughters, eight grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. (TAB)

Churchgoers divided about armed congregants, LifeWay study shows



In the aftermath of several high-profile church shootings, most Protestant pastors say their churches have taken precautions to protect those in attendance.

Since 2000, 19 fatal shootings have taken place at Christian churches, while gunmen also have taken lives at other religious sites like Jewish synagogues, a Sikh temple and an Amish school.

Around 4 in 5 Protestant pastors (80%) say their church has some type of security measure in place when they gather for worship, according to a survey from LifeWay Research.

"Churches are some of the most common gatherings in any community, and that makes them targets," said Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research.

The most common form of preparation is making an intentional plan. Almost 2 in 3 pastors (62%) say their church has an intentional plan for an active shooter situation.

The question of guns in church is very much a live debate among pastors, as close to half of pastors (45%) say part of their security measures include having armed church members.

Combining this with the percentages who say they have uniformed police officers or armed security personnel on site, 51% intentionally have firearms at their worship services.

Other churches place their emphasis on keeping all guns away from the worship service.

More than a quarter (27%) have a no-firearms policy for the building where they meet and 3% have metal detectors at entrances to screen for weapons. (BP)

Faith-based organizations honored as 'Certified Best Christian Workplaces'



On Jan. 28, Best Christian Workplaces Institute (BCWI) honored 189 faith-based organizations as Certified



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News near you

BALDWIN ASSOCIATION

▶ **First Baptist Church, Silverhill**, will host the Baldwin Baptist Association ministers conference Feb. 11 at 11 a.m. in the multipurpose building. Bill Wilks, pastor of NorthPark Baptist Church, Trussville, will be the guest speaker. Pastors, retired pastors and staff ministers are invited to attend. RSVP to office@baldwinbaptist.com.

BETHEL ASSOCIATION

▶ **Chris Kynard** is the new pastor of **Linden Baptist Church**. His first Sunday was Feb. 2. He previously served as pastor of Pine Hill Baptist Church. He also has served at Bassett Creek Baptist Church, Grove Hill; Taylorville Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa; and Calvary Baptist Church, Linden. He holds degrees from University of Alabama, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Kynard also currently serves as a trustee for the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions. He and his wife, Diana, have



KYNARD

been married for 26 years and have four children.

BIBB ASSOCIATION

▶ **First Baptist Church, Woodstock**, will host the Blackwood Brothers Quartet in concert Feb. 15 at 7 p.m. Steven Hicks is pastor.

BLOUNT ASSOCIATION

▶ **Pleasant View Missionary Baptist Church, Holly Pond**, will host its third Sunday night singing Feb. 16 at 6 p.m. featuring Living Faith Quartet. For more information call 256-796-5986. Randy Burtram is pastor.

COVINGTON ASSOCIATION

▶ **Covington Baptist Association** will host the third annual Refresh retreat for minister's wives and staff wives March 6-7 at Blue Lake Camp in Andalusia. Shirley Flowers will speak on Friday, and Diane Nix will speak on Saturday. To register call 334-222-3009. For more information call 205-239-1263 or email sflow1011@gmail.com Space is limited. Otis Corbitt is director of missions.

ETOWAH ASSOCIATION

▶ **Randy Hagan** is the new pastor of **Dwight Baptist Church, Gadsden**. He will begin his new role Feb. 16. He previously served as associational missionary for Coosa River Baptist Association for more than 11 years — a position he stepped down from at the end of January. Hagan also previously served as pastor of Hepzibah Baptist Church,



HAGAN

Talladega, and First Baptist Church, Weaver. Hagan and his wife, Mary Alice, have two children and two grandchildren.

GENEVA ASSOCIATION

▶ **Maple Avenue Baptist Church, Geneva**, will host its monthly 39ers CLUB on Feb. 11 at 11 a.m. Jeff Brannon, CEO of Wiregrass Medical Center and Nursing Home will present the program. For reservations call 334-684-9617. Teddy Ward is pastor.

MORGAN ASSOCIATION

▶ **Jimmy Meek** is the new pastor of **Parkview Baptist Church, Decatur**. Meek is a native of Alabama and has pastored churches in Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee and Arkansas for more than 19 years. He also preached at the 2017 Southern Baptist Convention Pastors Conference. He is married to Beth Ann.



MEEK

RUSSELL ASSOCIATION

▶ **Cottontown Baptist Church** will host comedian/musician Billy Bob Bohannon on Feb. 16 at 11 a.m. EST. Robert Rhodes is pastor.

TUSCALOOSA ASSOCIATION

▶ **Piney Grove Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa**, (12123 Sellers Lane) will host a popcorn and movie night Feb. 16 from 5:30 to 8 p.m. "Overcomer" will be shown. Nursery will be provided up to age 3. Wayne Davis is pastor. 🇺🇸

— NEWSBRIEFS —

Best Christian Workplaces for 2019.

These organizations met the certification standard determined by exemplary ratings of their employees who completed BCWI's Employee Engagement Survey between January and December 2019. All 189 organizations evaluated their workplaces based on BCWI's proprietary "FLOURISH Model:" fantastic teams, life-giving work, outstanding talent, uplifting growth, rewarding compensation, inspirational leadership, sustainable strategy and healthy communication.

According to BCWI President Al Lopus, the record number of BCWI-Certified honorees points to three significant trends:

▶ The health of workplace culture in Christian-led organizations is the highest in BCWI's 17-year history.


▶ Fifty-three percent of employees identified as engaged in their work in churches, parachurch organizations and Christian-led business. Engaged employees have high energy, great enthusiasm, strong commitment and a passion for their work.

▶ Employees in Certified Best Christian Workplaces feel a greater sense of impact. More than 60% of employees in Certified Best Christian Workplaces strongly agree their organization's

mission causes them to feel their job is important.

Organizations across the country and the world were certified including two in Alabama: KUDZU in Rainsville and Highlands College in Birmingham. (AP)

Tidwell celebrates 10 years at New Harmony Baptist, Attalla

 Billy Tidwell says 10 years may sound long to younger pastors, but for him it flew by. The beginning of the year marked a decade since he answered the call to serve as pastor of New Harmony Baptist Church, Attalla.

"We're doing really well," he said. "Only God knows His plans, but I hope we're here a long time."

Tidwell answered the call to preach after coming to faith in Jesus at age 30. He felt his call was clear, and he said God "has blessed ever since." Before coming to New Harmony, he also served as pastor at Liberty Hill Baptist Church,




TIDWELL

Boaz, and Flat Rock Baptist Church, Geraldine.

When he came to New Harmony, he said he and his wife, Bonnie, "just fell in love" with the church.

"When you're at the church where God wants you to be, it's like family," Tidwell said. (Grace Thornton)

Plea change scheduled in African-American church arson case

 A suspect set for trial next month in a series of fires at African-American churches in Louisiana is now scheduled for a change-of-plea hearing.

Holden Matthews has pleaded not guilty to federal charges arising from the arson fires at south Louisiana churches. However, a new court filing says a plea-change hearing now is set for Feb. 10.

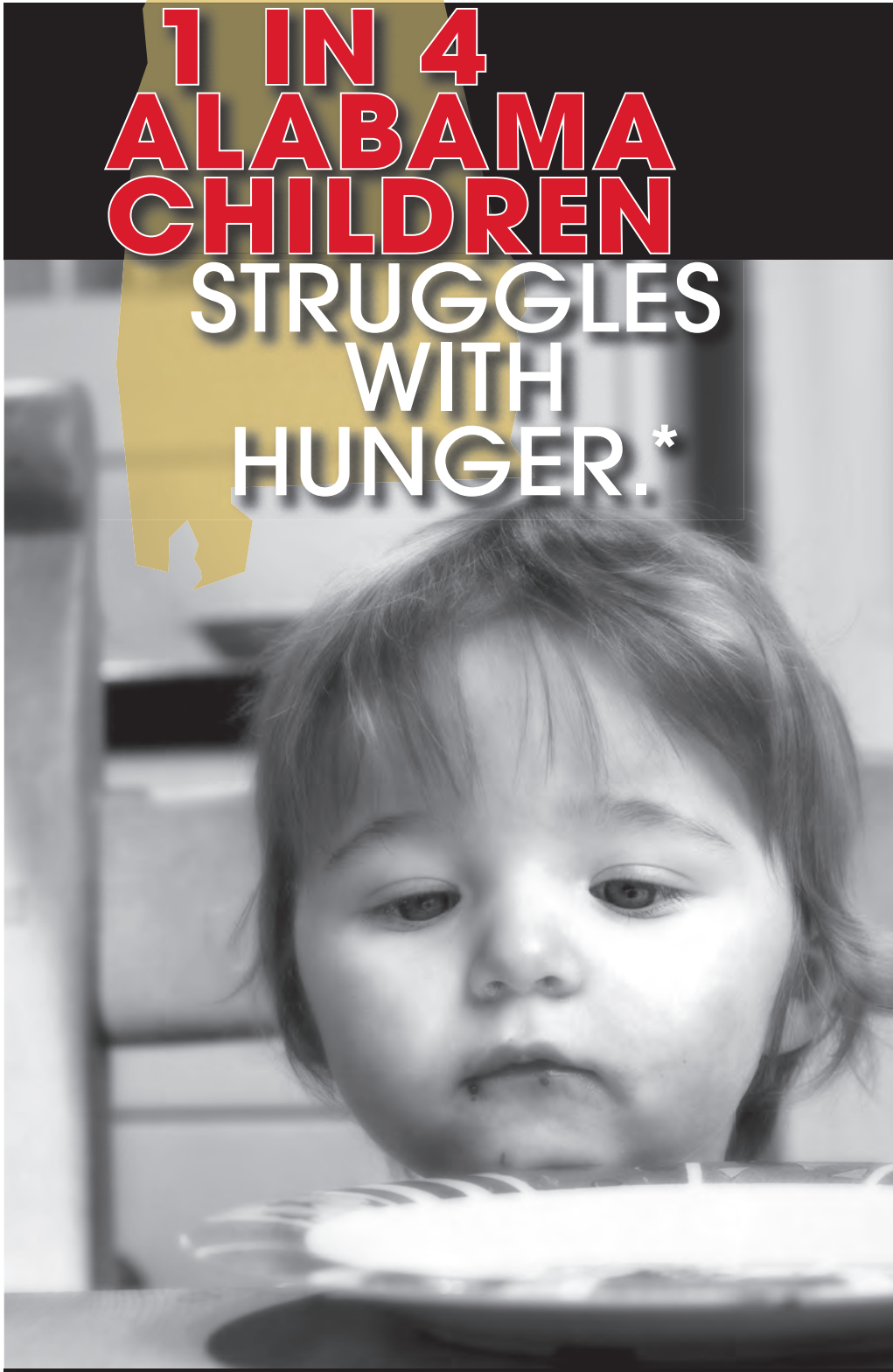
Three historic African-American churches were burned in a span of 10 days, beginning in late March 2019, in and around the city of Opelousas, about 140 miles west of New Orleans.

The indictment does not mention racism as a motive. It says the fires were set "because of the religious character" of the properties. (AP)



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Event and location is followed by SBOM contact person and extension. For more information on these events, call 1-800-264-1225 or (334) 613-2 + the extension, or visit alsbom.org/events.

FEBRUARY

- 9 **Racial Reconciliation Sunday**, Keith Hinson, ext. 289
- 11 **Minister's Tax Conference**, FBC Decatur, Lee Wright, ext. 241
- 13 **Minister's Tax Conference**, Birmingham Baptist Association, Birmingham Lee Wright, ext. 241
- 15 **Children's Missions Day**, Trish Jackson, ext. 224
- 16 **Hunger Sunday**, Jim Swedenburg, ext. 283
- 18 **Minister's Tax Conference**, Mobile Baptist Association, Mobile, Lee Wright, ext. 241
- 20 **Minister's Tax Conference**, Eastern Shore Baptist Church, Daphne, Lee Wright, ext. 241
- 21-22 **Pursue**, First Baptist Church, Montgomery, Mike Nuss, ext. 276
- 21-22 **Bivocational Minister/Spouse Retreat**, Linda Hicks, ext. 263
- 22 **Renew...a day away with friends**, Westwood Baptist Church, Alabaster, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223
- 23-24 **State Evangelism Conference**, Heritage Baptist Church, Montgomery, Lori McGough, ext. 258
- 23 **Disciple Making Ministries Dinner**, Heritage Baptist Church, Montgomery, Daniel Edmonds, ext. 285
- 24 **Reaching Gen Z**, Heritage Baptist Church, Montgomery, Lori McGough, ext. 258
- 24 **Ministers' Wives Luncheon**, Heritage Baptist Church, Montgomery, Kathryn Helms, ext. 325
- 24 **Sharing Hope Conference for Pastors and Leaders (Hispanic)**, Heritage Baptist Church, Annel Robayna, ext. 270
- 27 **Minister's Tax Conference**, Calvary Baptist Church, Dothan, Lee Wright, ext. 241
- 28-3/1 **Children's Honor Choir Tour**, North Alabama area, Karen Gosselin, ext. 318

MARCH

- 1-8 **Week of Prayer for North American Missions and Annie Armstrong Easter Offering**, Laura Glass, ext. 226
- 5-6 **Ministry Evangelism Retreat**, Shocco Springs, Talladega, Kristy Kennedy, ext. 311
- 5-6 **Uplink on the Road**, State Board of Missions, Prattville, Scooter Kellum, ext. 280
- 6-7 **Complete...A gathering for teen girls**, Eastern Hills Baptist Church, Montgomery, Kathryn Helms, ext. 325
- 7 **Central Alabama Spring Library Workshop**, Shoal Creek Baptist Church, Deatsville, Marty Woodall, 334-569-3854
- 8-11 **Alabama Association of Baptist Secretaries Conference**, Shocco Springs, Talladega, Lee Wright, ext. 241
- 12 **2020 Singin'**, Cottage Hill Baptist Church, Mobile, Eileen Mitchell, ext. 221
- 12 **Who's Your One District Training**, Stapleton Baptist Church, Stapleton, Bailee Dixon, ext. 258
- 15 **OneVoice Honor Choir Tour**, Southside Baptist Church, Greenville, April Brewer, ext. 279
- 19 **Who's Your One District Training**, Mobile Baptist Association, Mobile, Bailee Dixon, ext. 258
- 19 **The Basics of Church Security**, State Board of Missions, Prattville, Mark Wakefield, ext. 267
- 20-21 **Adventure Weekend**, Shocco Springs, Talladega, Monica Thompson, ext. 227
- 20-21 **Hispanic Worship Retreat/Taller de Adoration**, Shocco Springs, Talladega, Annel Robayna, ext. 270
- 21 **State Disaster Relief Admin Training**, Disaster Relief Center, Prattville, Mark Wakefield, ext. 267
- 21 **State Disaster Relief Child Care Training**, Disaster Relief Center, Mark Wakefield, ext. 367
- 22 **Substance Abuse Prevention Sunday**, Keith Hinson, ext. 289
- 26 **Who's Your One District Training**, Millry Baptist Church, Millry, Bailee Dixon, ext. 258
- 28 **State Disaster Relief Communications Training**, Disaster Relief Center, Prattville, Mark Wakefield, ext. 267
- 28 **State Disaster Relief Shower & Laundry Unit Training**, Disaster Relief Center, Prattville, Mark Wakefield, ext. 267
- 30 **Who's Your One District Training**, New Vision Baptist Church, Prattville, Lori McGough, ext. 245

APRIL

- 2 **Who's Your One District Training**, FBC Dadeville, Dadeville, Lori McGough, ext. 245
- 2-4 **State Disaster Relief Training**, Disaster Relief Center, Prattville, Mark Wakefield, ext. 267 (visit sbdr.org/events for details)
- 3 **Themanchurch.com Training with Rick Burgess**, Taylor Road Baptist Church, Montgomery, Larry Hyché, ext. 268
- 3-4 **Mom & Me Spring Fling**, WorldSong, Amanda Armstrong, ext. 223

Someone You Should Know

BERTHA EVERETT

By Leigh Pritchett
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

For more than 65 years, Bertha Everett has been a familiar face in children's ministry in churches she has attended. Vacation Bible School, missions groups, Sunday School — no matter what the min-

istry is, if it focuses on children, she has been happily involved.

Q: Who was or is one of the most influential people in your faith life? Why?

A: My husband, Ralph. He has been right behind me in

all my teaching of children. He has just been there with me through the ups and downs, just like I have been with him through NASA (and several relocations related to his work). He started at the beginning of NASA in Florida.

Q: What has God been teaching you lately?

A: I just need to trust Him more and be healthy so I can teach the boys and girls as long as I can.

Q: Have you ever read a book or heard a song that changed the way you think about God and faith? What was it and what did you learn from it?

A: I love "When We All Get to Heaven." When I get to heaven, I'll see all the ones I've missed through the years, and I'll see all those boys and girls.

Q: Does your church have any special traditions that mean a lot to you? What are they?

A: Our church has many different ministries that meet there — an academy for children with autism, an African-American church, an international group; and the third floor will be used for seminary courses. That's kind of special to me — that



MINISTRY:
Working in children's ministries

CHURCH NAME:
University Baptist Church, Huntsville, in Madison Baptist Association

LIFE VERSE:
"But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be My people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you." (Jer. 7:23)

we have four or five different groups who meet in our church — and we invite them to do things with us. We have a child development center. We have lots of activities going on.✝

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June Hudson, Sign Committee Member
New Prospect Baptist Church, Jasper

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CELEBRATING 25 YEARS 1994 - 2019

Christian Crossword

By Joann Horn Copyright 1994 ©Barbour Publishing Inc.

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Across

- To request earnestly. (Gen. 3:13)
- Except ye ___, ye shall perish. (Luke 13:3)
- What ___ thee, Hagar? (Gen. 21:17)
- Daybreak.
- To cook.
- Talking horse.
- Army Transport Service. (abbr.)
- The ___ of Kish ... were lost. (1 Sam. 9:3)
- Could.
- Father of Jr.
- As the ___ cometh out of the east. (Matt. 24:27)
- Greeting.
- Sackcloth and ___. (Luke 10:13)
- Neither be ___ of other men's sins. (1 Tim. 5:22)
- He ___ the more afraid. (John 19:8)
- Disturb.
- Middle French. (abbr.)
- Medicinal plant.
- Person afflicted with sores.
- The serpent beguiled

- me, and I did ___. (Gen. 3:13)
- Avenge.
- TV brand.
- Ready for sudden action.
- Thy disciples ___ and drink. (Luke 5:33)
- Interject to express uncertainty.
- Thy brother ___ against thee. (Luke 17:3)

Down

- Moral story.
- Children not accused of ___. (Titus 1:6)
- Exclamation of sorrow.
- Opposed to "no."
- ___, thou that destroyed the temple. (Mark 15:29)
- My joy might ___ in you. (John 15:11)
- Having itching ___. (2 Tim. 4:3)
- I ___ toward the mark. (Phil. 3:14)
- The ___ shall serve the younger. (Rom. 9:12)
- New York (abbr.).

- Tea time. (abbr.)
- No room in the ___. (Luke 2:7)
- He rode upon a ___. (Ps. 18:10)
- Yesterday ___ the seventh hour. (John 4:52)
- Holy ___. (Rom. 16:16)
- Robes.
- Cure.
- Housewife. (abbr.)
- ___ the word. (2 Tim. 4:2)
- Artery in the heart.
- Lung disease.
- Christ is ___. (Col. 3:11)
- Guard.
- Thither.
- Day of the week. (abbr.)
- Keep thyself ___. (1 Tim. 5:22)
- Mom.
- Red or Dead.
- Whereas thou ___ been forsaken and halted. (Isa. 60:15)
- Lieutenant. (abbr.)
- Technical Sergeant. (abbr.)

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS

For February 9

Explore the Bible

By Douglas K. Wilson, Ph.D.
Dean of Christian Studies, University of Mobile



GOD IS REVEALED Deuteronomy 18:15–22

In order to understand the context of this passage, Bible students need to read its prelude in Deuteronomy 18:9–14.

The Israelites seemed to be susceptible to idolatry. They sojourned among polytheistic Egyptians for generations. Recorded for us in Numbers, they also witnessed firsthand how Israelite men succumbed to seduction and worshipped false gods with the Moabites at Baal-peor.

Previously in Deuteronomy, God warned Israel in the commandments that idolatry was a demonstration of disdain, even hatred, for God (Deut. 5:8–9). He had warned them about the temptation of forgetting God and worshipping idols in the same chapter that contains the greatest commandment (Deut. 6:10–16).

Now in chapter 18, the Lord reminds this new generation of Israelites that they must decide ahead of time not to follow the practices of the Canaanites who seek spiritual knowledge and power apart from Him.

The Need (15–17)

Israel needed a human messenger who would speak for God. For nearly 40 years, Moses had served in that capacity. The cultures surrounding them in the ancient Near East discerned the will of their deities through various forms of divination (see Ezek. 21:21, for example). By contrast, God's prophet was to convey God's words to His people.

Beyond the immediate scope of the Mosaic period, the prophet of whom Moses wrote was the promised Messiah.

The Provision (18–19)

John the Baptist denied being this prophet when asked by religious leaders (John 1:21). By contrast, Jesus stated Moses wrote of Him, though the religious leaders would not believe Him (John 5:46–47).

Later, Peter was preaching at Solomon's Colonnade in the Court of the Gentiles to interested temple visitors. There he quoted from this passage in Deuteronomy and indicated that Jesus was the fulfillment of the promise from God through Moses (Acts 3:22–23).

This promised Prophet would speak everything that God told Him to speak, and those who did not heed His words would be called to account.

Jesus spoke of such accountability in Matthew 7, when He delineated between those who hear and obey His words and those who hear but ignore His words. The doer is compared to a man who builds his house on a stone foundation, while the hearer—only is like the one who builds on the sand (Matt. 7:24–27).

James writes further about this theme, saying that the person who only hears the words of Jesus but does not do them is self-deceived (James 1:22–25). God has provided the Messiah, who spoke His words and called us to repent, believe and follow Him.

The Test (20–22)

Regarding God's prophets, their one test was accuracy. Since the primary role of a prophet was to speak forth the words of God, his words must be true because God always speaks truth. After all, God is not a man that He should lie (Num. 23:19). God remains faithful to His own character (Ex. 34:6–7). If a people hear of God's judgment and repent, God will turn away His judgment (Jer. 18:7–8). This consistent character of God leads Jonah to rebel (Jonah 4:1–3). He wants judgment!

In addition to forth-telling words of God, the prophet must accurately foretell the work of God. If he speaks words he claims to be from God but are not, he is a false prophet and stands under the judgment of death.

The kings of Israel and Judah would later ignore this Torah instruction. During the final years of the nation of Judah, false prophets quoted each other and contradicted the words of Jeremiah, claiming that peace would come without Jerusalem's repentance or God's judgment.

These men had not heard from God (Jer. 14:13–15). Jeremiah prophesied that Judah would be exiled for 70 years and then they would return.

The authenticity of Jeremiah's prophecy was confirmed because God's words were fulfilled. 🌿

Bible Studies for Life

By Dr. Jim Barnette, Professor, Samford University
Senior Pastor, Brookwood Baptist Church



DOES GOD REALLY UNDERSTAND MY PAIN AND SUFFERING? Isaiah 53:2–12

Jesus suffered from rejection. (2–4)

Skepticism existed regarding this "arm of the Lord" who would deliver God's people. There were two reasons for this skepticism.

First, the unattractive perception of the suffering Servant implied no one cared to look at Him. Second, the Servant was despised and friendless. The word "despised" needs to be understood in its Hebrew sense.

The English word connotes intense contempt. The Hebrew word does not have so much of the emotive content; it connotes considering someone as worthless and unworthy of attention. So the suffering servant was given a hasty dismissal.

This unprecedented revelation of God was met with shock, distaste, dismissal and avoidance. Little did anyone realize that by His suffering, humanity would be offered a way to reconciliation with God Almighty.

Jesus suffered from affliction and death. (5–9)

"But" emphasizes the contrast between the suffering Servant and us. The perception had been that God was punishing this man for His sins and failures. But in fact He was wounded and crushed as a result of our sinfulness and guilt.

Isaiah calls sin "transgression," which means rebellion against God; Isaiah also calls it "iniquity," which refers to the crookedness of our sinful nature. The Servant was not merely participating in the suffering of others; He was taking on and taking away their suffering and separation due to their own sin.

Old Testament prophets had voiced the brokenness and iniquity of Israel, but no prophets had laid themselves vulnerable to terrible suffering for the sake of Israel and, ultimately, for all people.

Not only had the Servant done nothing worthy of pain and death, He was actually receiving the treatment that all others deserved. There was "no deceit in His mouth," yet He took on the death sentence of which

He was completely innocent. Only one who had never rebelled against the holy

God could effect reconciliation to the holy God. Thanks be to God for His Son who took on our shame so that we might be rescued from our sin.

Jesus suffered for our benefit. (10–12)

Ultimately the suffering Servant would prosper and be victorious, for His sufferings were a crowning part of God's purpose. God would prolong the Servant's days and bring success to all of the Servant's efforts. And because of His success, many would be made righteous. The Servant would attain a position of exaltation comparable to that of the noblest of warriors. In that exalted position, He would not only bear the sins of many, but He would also make intercession for transgressors.

"Therefore" in verse 12 anticipates Philippians 2:9 where Jesus Christ is exalted and given the name above every other name. In faithfulness, the suffering Servant emptied Himself and descended to the lowest depths. He fulfilled His Father's will to the last degree. Because of that faithful obedience, God exalted His Servant to the highest heights.

The image here is of a victory parade, with the Servant leading the parade as the conqueror of the evils of this world. This powerful passage of Isaiah does not use the word "resurrection," but these verses display the Servant as "alive after His suffering" (see Acts 1:3).

An additional part of His "reward" is found in verse 10: "He shall see His seed (descendants)." To die childless was a grief and shame to the Hebrews, but Jesus gave birth to a spiritual family through His death and resurrection. The statement about Isaiah's natural family (Isa. 8:18) is quoted in Hebrews 2:13 and applied to Christ and His spiritual family.

Believers look back at this passage from the vantage point of the living Christ. It makes complete sense to the Christian that Philip's reading of the verses could lead an Ethiopian to recognize Jesus as the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. 🌿



Media reviews

MOVIES/TV

Netflix's 'The Repair Shop' leads February's family-friendly lineup

By Michael Foust
Correspondent, The Alabama Baptist

Years ago, our grandparents and great-grandparents didn't toss things when they broke. They repaired them.

From clothing to furniture to gadgets, our ancestors knew what to do when things became damaged or stopped working — and it didn't involve throwing them away.

Times certainly have changed.

The repair culture has been replaced by the throw-away culture. We no longer fix stuff. We throw it in the dumpster — and then we log onto Amazon to find the newest and best replacement.

Restoring the broken

A new BBC reality program might help us change our mindset.

Appropriately named "The Repair Shop" (TV-PG) and now streaming on Netflix, the series follows expert craftspeople as they restore family heirlooms. It stars furniture restorer Jay

Blades but includes other experts who work in the same picturesque English shop, including specialists on carpentry, metal, leather and ceramics.

"The Repair Shop" is one of my family's new favorite shows, and it leads this month's list of family-friendly entertainment.

In one episode, the experts restore an old jukebox, transforming it from a non-working hunk of junk into a shiny music box straight out of the 1950s. In another episode, they restore a century-old piano bench and an old-fashioned telephone.

Netflix is home to the first two seasons of "The Repair Shop" and more than 30 episodes.

It's entertaining and nostalgic, yes, but it's also a reminder of the joy that can be discovered in fixing things. Perhaps that's because we serve a God who restores — and because we're made in His image.

"Nowadays things are not made to last, so we've become part of this throw-away culture," Blades said,



'The Repair Shop'

Photo courtesy of Netflix

explaining that the series is "all about preserving and restoring."

Of course, repairing things has other benefits: Saving money, learning a new skill and not needlessly filling landfills.

Also worth watching this month:

► **"The Inbestigators" (Netflix)** — Four Australian tween-aged kids conduct investigations into day-to-day mysteries, such as missing money in a piggy bank and even a missing girl at school. They always solve the case, and they always have a blast along the way. "The Inbestigators" is a comical, child-friendly "crime" documentary free of the nonsense found in many modern children's series. (And mostly free of

the name-calling too.) The first two seasons are now on Netflix. Rated G.



► **"Adventure Force 5" (Vudu)** — If you haven't discovered Vudu's free family-friendly content, then now is a good time to start. "Adventure Force 5" is an original free movie on the

Vudu streaming platform that follows the story of five teens after their parents — and the other adults in town — disappear. "Adventure Force 5" borders on corny at times, but my 11-year-old son loved it. It contains no coarse language or sexuality. Rated TV-PG, it may be too scary for small children though. If you don't like this one, check out Vudu's collection of hundreds of filtered mainstream movies.

► **"Inexplicable: How Christianity Spread to the Ends of the Earth" (TBN)** — It's a six-part original TBN documentary that charts the spread of the gospel — from its origins in Judea to every continent on the planet. Featuring interviews with historians and hosted by actor Dennis Haysbert ("Breakthrough," "24"), "Inexplicable" is educational and well-done. Episodes will be released each month through July. Part one is already available to stream for free at TheStateofFaith.com. 🙏



'Adventure Force 5'

Photo courtesy of Vudu

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.

'Just as we are'

God's grace overcomes duty in Japan; missionaries prepare for Olympic missions field

The family histories of Carlton and Cornelia Walker were intertwined with Japan long before the Walkers landed there as International Mission Board (IMB) representatives 40 years ago.

Cornelia's father was a U.S. Army Air Force pilot who flew bombing missions in Japan during World War II. Carlton's father was in the infantry and served in Japan after the war ended.

Carlton remembers his father's compassionate heart for the Japanese people.

'Amazing freedom'

"He never spoke critically of the Japanese. In his mind, they were the most hard-working, disciplined, studious people in the world. He learned a little Japanese and would still try it out on us up until the last years of his life," Carlton said.

Carlton and Cornelia have devoted four decades of their lives to telling the Japanese people about God's love for them.

Carlton said Japanese people have a deep understanding of duty and obligation. Frequently these values override what they see as the luxury

of personal opinion and feelings.

"It is our desire as missionaries that the same country that barter and trades in obligation and duty will soon come to Christ in record numbers, and their commitment and loyalty to Christ will be an inspiration to all," Carlton said.

Making personal and individual decisions goes against Japanese cultural mores, so choosing to follow Jesus, not out of a sense of duty, but because of a change of heart in response to the grace and mercy of God, is difficult for Japanese people.

"We speak of the amazing freedom, the no-strings-attached acceptance and the unconditional love that Christ provides, which is, in essence, the good news of the love of God found in Jesus," Carlton said. "For those

who struggle with layers and layers of duty, obligation, responsibility and pressure to conform, we voice the good news that we can come to Christ just as we are."

One of the major challenges for the Japanese is this free gift sounds too good to be true. Or if it is true,



IMB photo

IMB missionary Carlton Walker shows a U.S. Army Air Force fabric map of Japan during a training event for volunteers hosted in preparation for ministry opportunities that will be available during the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

Visit the [Connect 2020](#) site to find out how you can be involved with IMB missionaries during the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.



IMB photo

At a Rugby World Cup viewing party hosted by Tokyo Baptist Church, two women sample foods from the countries represented by teams in the championship tournament. The church, along with IMB partners, will host similar viewing parties for the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

then it must cost something. In Japanese culture, gifts come with the obligation to give something in return.

"Japan is a reciprocal society. Generally speaking, when a Japanese receives a gift, they mark it down figuratively and often literally. If you give me something today, then I feel an obligation to give you something of equal value," Carlton said. "It won't do if I give you less in return. Or if I give you far more in return, I obligate the other person, which often serves to make them uncomfortable."

"So, often we present Jesus as the One who breaks this endless cycle of obligation," Carlton said. "We can never pay Him back enough, even if we tried, so just rest in the reality that He will not love us any more if we do or don't. [We] can truly learn how to love recklessly and extravagantly when we are freed from obligation, duty and shame."

The 2020 Olympics in Tokyo will give the Walkers and other IMB missionaries in Japan an opportunity to share the gospel with many more Japanese people. Volunteer teams from the U.S. will join IMB missionaries and Japanese Christians to

spread a message of hope and grace that transcends personal and national duties. Ongoing engagement with the people they meet during the games will be a long-term strategy of IMB missionaries, Japanese churches and English-speaking churches.

Carlton, who is looking forward to serving during the Olympics for a second time, recalled the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano.

"It was a marvelous time because I got to be with Japanese people, and that's who I'm called to be working with," Carlton said. "That's what makes me alive, that's what makes me cry, when I realize there are not as many here [in the church] that need to be."

'Holy, holy, holy'

And Carlton shared his vision for the future of the Japanese people.

"I dream of the day when Japanese people will stand up in heaven and say, 'Seinaru kana, seinaru kana, seinaru kana' to the Lord God in heaven, which means 'Holy, holy, holy Lord God' in Japanese," Carlton said. "That's what I want to see in heaven." (IMB)

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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