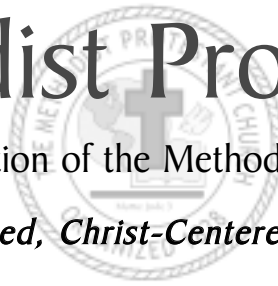


The Methodist Protestant Faith

The Official Publication of the Methodist Protestant Church

Providing Bible-Based, Christ-Centered, Holiness Material.



Volume LXII/Number 7

August/September 2008



The Fruit of the Spirit is

Love,

Joy,

Peace,

Longsuffering,

*Gentleness,
Goodness,*

Faith,

Meekness

Temperance

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The Methodist Protestant Church
Organized 1828

Our Motto . . .

Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. Jude 3

We Believe . . .

. . . That God created the Heavens and the Earth

. . . That the Bible is the inspired, infallible, and inerrant "Word of God"

. . . That Jesus Christ is the Virgin-born Son of God

. . . In the divine nature of Jesus Christ

. . . In the atoning blood of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of sins

. . . In Sanctification as a second definite work of grace

. . . That believers may know the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit

. . . In the bodily Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ

. . . In the soon return of Jesus Christ in power and great glory

. . . In an actual heaven, the reward for the saints, and an actual hell, a place of eternal punishment for the wicked

. . . In the sanctity of life

. . . In holy matrimony between man and woman

President's Message -



Rev. LaDon Dawson, General Conference President

At the General Conference, we declared like Caleb, "Give me that mountain." Caleb an old man by our standards, felt the power of God on him. He went for that for which he knew God wanted him to have. I'm so glad that today, in the twenty-first century, God still wants to bless the church. Jesus gave us our promise and our commission in Matthew 28:19-20 where he says: *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

God has promised us our mountain. Can we do any less than Caleb and go and share Jesus with a world that needs Jesus? Don Hawks quoting John Wesley: "Asking God to give us our daily bread should not encourage us to stand around waiting for it to fall from heaven." Churches will not grow; people will not find Jesus unless those of us who know Him will share Him with the world.

It has been my privilege to visit all four of our Annual Conferences this year. Without a doubt, God was with us and blessed in each one. A desire to move ahead seemed to be prevalent. We need to remember those elected to serve, from the presidents to all the standing committees. We lift you in our prayers and trust that God will bless you in your work.

You may contact me by calling 601-587-4147, writing to 4 Divide Road, Monticello, MS 39654, email: ladondawson@bellsouth.net or calling General Conference Headquarters 601-765-0029 on Tuesdays - 9 AM-5 PM.

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for the following issue.

Marriage Seminar

A marriage seminar is being planned. The seminar will be led by Dr. John Neihof, Jr. and his wife, Beth. The theme is "Marriage, can there be anything better?" and will focus on holiness in the marriage relationship. The seminar is scheduled Saturday, January 24, 2009. We are tentatively planning to begin at 9:00 AM.

In order to better prepare for the seminar, we need your input.

Please go to www.themethodistprotestantchurch.com, click on "Marriage Seminar Survey", mark your preferences and submit. Thank you in advance for your help and suggestions.

Sand Hill Church Building Project Belize, Central America

Men with Mission (MWM) is working with the Sand Hill Church on the construction of a new church at Sand Hill in Belize, C.A. Sand Hill has out-grown the present church building. The present church building has no class rooms. They have been using the Sand Hill School class rooms for Sunday School classes. The Sand Hill Church has an average of 135 in attendance each Sunday; of which 50 percent are young people. The church has shown a steady increase for the past two years. [The Sand Hill Church Ministries includes a mens group, ladies group, youth, care, prison, funeral, Scholarship program, Evangelism Committee, Fund raising committee and of course a Building Committee.] The new church will be 50 by 141 feet. The building will consist of a sanctuary and class rooms. The new church will be built in phases with Phase I being to construct the foundation and slab. Additional phases of construction will be implemented as funds become available. A MWM work team will begin work in November laying out the foundation and helping the Sand Hill building committee lay out plans to get foundation and slab work completed.

This is a major undertaking for the Sand Hill church. With gas at an all time high of \$11.48/gallon (\$5.75/gal US\$) and other costs on the rise, you can see how this affects their pocketbooks. We here in the U.S. are seeing the same financial impacts to our wallets. However, there is a big difference between Belize and U.S. Their

per capita income is significantly lower than ours and costs still continue to increase. It takes two Belize dollars to equal one US dollar.

Bro. Claudio continues to ask me if the Methodist Protestant people in the U.S. would help them build their church. The Sand Hill Church is doing what they can with limited funds. The access road for the new church building has been constructed which cost \$7000 (US\$). You can see the access road and Sand Hill property on Google Earth at Latitude 17° 37 '51" and Longitude 86° 22' 07".

The first phase requires approximately 175 yards of concrete for the foundation and slab. With concrete costing \$174.35/yard (BZE\$), the foundation and slab will cost over \$30,000 (BZE\$). Since the property is approximately five miles from the coast line, the floor of the building will be elevated three feet above ground surface. To raise the floor three feet requires 1000 yards of backfill material (sand). With sand costing \$7.00/yard (BZE\$) delivered to the site, the backfill material will cost approximately \$7,000 (BZE\$).

The concrete blocks for the project cost \$1.50 (BZE\$) a piece. The foundation work requires approximately 3820 blocks. The church building exterior wall requires approximately 3570 blocks. The interior walls requires approximately 3250 blocks. The total number of blocks required for the project is over 10,000 blocks.

What will you do to help with the project? Join one of the work teams that will go down in the future on different phases of the project. Make a donation toward purchase of materials such as donate so many blocks, or donate so many yards of concrete or donate so many yards of sand. Maybe you can't go on a work team but know someone who can go but can't afford to go; how about buying their plane ticket or making a donation toward the plane ticket. Ask the Lord for guidance in what he would have you do. It will take all of us working together to get this project completed. Work Team members are required to fund their own plane ticket. However, food, vehicle and shelter are provided through voluntary donations made to MWM.

Please mail donations for the Sand Hill Building Project to; Byron Carlisle, Treasurer, General Conference MP Church, 31 Cammack Drive, Grove Hill, AL 36451. If interested in going on a work team or willing to help purchase air fare for others, please call Tony Russell at 601-587-0061 or email: tonyrussell@bellsouth.net.

P.S. Send me your email address and I will keep you abreast of the project as it moves forward.

Who Christ Is . . .

Rev. B.F. Gerald



To those who sit in darkness, He is the light of the world.

To those who are thirsty, He is the water of life.

To those who are hungry, He is the living bread come down from heaven.

To those who are afraid, He is the ark of safety.

To those who are lost, He is the Good Shepherd who giveth His life for the sheep.

To those who are on the wrong road, He is the strait and narrow way that leadeth to life eternal.

To those who are hurting, He is the balm in Gilead.

To those who seek a sure foundation for their lives, He is the Rock of Ages.

To those whose hearts are troubled, He is the peace that passeth understanding.

To those who are filled with sorrow, He is the God of all comfort.

To those who are searching for happiness, He is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

To those whose lives are empty, He is the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

To those whose lives are barren, He is the true vine. He that abideth in Him bringeth forth much fruit.

To those who are in bondage to sin, He is the kinsman Redeemer.

To those who seek the truth, He is the living Word.

To those who fear death, He is the resurrection and life.

To those who are uncertain about the future, He is the Alpha and the Omega.

To those who truly put their faith in Him, He is "My Lord and My God."

The Resume of Jesus Christ

Address: Ephesians 1:20

Phone: Romans 10:13

Website: The Bible. Keywords: Christ, Lord, Savior and Jesus

Hello. My name is Jesus -The Christ. Many call me Lord! I've sent you my resume because I'm seeking the top management position in your heart. Please consider my accomplishments as set forth in my resume.

Qualifications

- I founded the earth and established the heavens, (See Proverbs 3:19)
- I formed man from the dust of the ground, (See Genesis 2:7)
- I breathed into man the breath of life, (See Genesis 2:7)
- I redeemed man from the curse of the law, (See Galatians 3:13)
- The blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant comes upon your life through me, (See Galatians 3:14)

Occupational Background

- I've only had one employer, (See Luke 2:49).
- I've never been tardy, absent, disobedient, slothful or disrespectful.
- My employer has nothing but rave reviews for me, (See Matthew 3:15-17)

Skills Work Experiences

- Some of my skills and work experiences include: empowering the poor to be poor no more, healing the brokenhearted, setting the captives free, healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind and setting at liberty them that are bruised, (See Luke 4:18).
- I am Wonderful, Counselor, (See Isaiah 9:6). People who listen to me shall dwell safely and shall not fear evil, (See Proverbs 1:33).
- Most importantly, I have the authority, ability and power to cleanse you of your sins, (See I John 1:7-9)

Educational Background

- I encompass the entire breadth and length of knowledge, wisdom and understanding, (See Proverbs 2:6).
- In me are hid all of the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, (See Colossians 2:3).
- My Word is so powerful; it has been described as being a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path, (See Psalms 119:105).
- I can even tell you all of the secrets of your heart, (See Psalms 44:21).

Major Accomplishments

- I was an active participant in the greatest Summit Meeting of all times, (See Genesis 1:26).
- I laid down my life so that you may live, (See II Corinthians 5:15).
- I defeated the archenemy of God and mankind and made a show of them openly, (See Colossians 2:15).
- I've miraculously fed the poor, healed the sick and raised the dead!
- There are many more major accomplishments, too many to mention here. You can read them on my website, which is located at: [www dot - the BIBLE](http://www.dot-theBIBLE.com). You don't need an Internet connection or computer to access my website.

References

- The great teacher- my Father, JEHOVAH (Psalms 83:18)
- Believers and followers worldwide will testify to my divine healings, salvation, deliverance, miracles, restoration and supernatural guidance

In Summation, now that you've read my resume, I'm confident that I'm the only candidate uniquely qualified to fill this vital position in your heart. In summation, I will properly direct your paths, (See Proverbs 3:5-6), and lead you into everlasting life, (See John 6:47). When can I start? Time is of the essence, (See Hebrews 3:15).

Where Do We Go From Here?

Acts 1:1-12

Rev. B.F. Gerald

Jesus had been crucified. The impact of the glorious truth of the resurrection had hardly dawned upon the hearts of the disciples when Jesus ascended to heaven. The promise of the second coming was a very distant glimmer of hope in an otherwise hopelessly clouded sky. The future of the world, and the salvation or damnation of a multitude of souls, was in the hands of this small discouraged, and uncertain band of Galileans. As they turned their faces toward Jerusalem and made their way from the Mount of Ascension to the Upper Room, I'm sure that the question in their minds and on their hearts was this: *Where do we go from here?*

Our church has also faced the full spectrum of trials and conflicts, fears and discouragements, empty promises and shattered dreams, through the years. It is not enough to talk about our glorious past, or to speculate about a future bright with promise. We are here today! it is the only day we have. The future will see no more of promise fulfilled than we claim of promises realized today. The building blocks of the future are in our hands today. What we do in our day is the foundation on which the future will be built. What we do today is the carving on the tablets on which a glorious past is written. The only way to have a glorious past is to experience the glory today, for today is yesterday's promise of the future and tomorrow's glorious history. As the song writer put it, *We have this moment to hold in our hands . . . as it slips through our fingers like sand.*

Where do we go from here? Let me suggest three things which I feel will help us to realize the promise of the future fulfilled in our lives today, and which, we trust, will blaze a trail of courage, faith, hope, and love which our children and our children's children may safely follow all the way to heaven!

I. Let us first go to the Upper Room - the place of prayer. E.M. Bounds, one of the greatest writers on prayer American Methodism ever produced, said, "Prayer is the contact of a living soul with God . . . Prayer lifts men out of the earthliness and links them with the heavenlies. Men are never nearer heaven, nearer God, never more God-like, never in deeper sympathy and truer partnership with Jesus Christ, than when praying . . . The Church is looking for

better methods; God is looking for better men . . . men of prayer." Dr. Adam Clarke, the great Bible scholar and theologian associated with the Wesleys in the earliest days of Methodism, says, "A proper idea of prayer is a pouring out of the soul unto God, as a free-will offering, solemnly and eternally dedicated to Him, accompanied with the most sincere desire that it may know, love and serve Him alone. The eloquence of prayer consists in the fervency of desire, and the simplicity of faith." Wesley adds, "Indeed, all the words in the world are not equivalent to one holy desire. And the very best prayers are but 'vain repetitions' if they are not the language of the heart." It was Phillips Brooks who said, "Do not pray for easy lives! Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then, the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be a miracle."

*God is Looking
for better men!*

I believe we should stay in the Upper Room, the place of prayer, until four things happen: (1) Until self is crucified with Christ. Elisha Hoffman put it this way in his beautiful consecration hymn: "*Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid? Your heart, does the Spirit control? You can only be blest and have peace and sweet rest, As you yield Him your body and soul.*" It is not easy to lay our ambitions, our business, our pride, our selfishness, our families, in short, our all, on the altar. But God will never be satisfied, and our hearts will never be fully blest, until we can say with all our hearts, "*I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord, O'er mountain, or plain, or sea; I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord, I'll be what you want me to be.*" (Charles H. Gabriel)

I believe that we should stay in the Upper Room until (2) division and strife have melted into love and unity. In John 13:34-35, Jesus said, *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* In John 17:21-23, Jesus prayed for the disciples and for the church in all ages, *That they may be one, even as we are one.* If love is the proof of our discipleship, and unity was one of the major concerns of Jesus in His great high-priestly prayer, over and over again, I have asked myself the question,

“Why not unity?” Why not make a deliberate effort to seek and promote unity in the local church, the annual conferences, and the General Conference? I realize that there will always be differences of opinion, as happened in the history of the early church. Why cannot we, in those areas which are a matter of personal opinion, personal preference, or personal taste, give each other the liberty to be as distinct as the fingers? And, why cannot we, in those principles, programs, and purposes which are essential to our common welfare, our commitment to eternal truth, the progress of our church in the world, and our hope for a brighter tomorrow, be as united as the hand? I believe that we should stay in the Upper Room until our hearts have been melted in love one for another and have been joined in unity behind the great principles, programs, and purposes of our church. In the Upper Room, the disciples came to the point that they were all *in one accord*.

Go then and make disciples

I also believe that we should stay in the Upper Room until (3) “Pentecost is fully come.” Most of us could testify to a Pentecostal experience at some point in our lives. It is not enough to revel in past blessings. Is the experience present, personal, and vital? It is not a denial of the faith to admit a need for a “renewing of the Holy Ghost.” After the glorious experiences of Acts 2, and the first real conflicts with a Godless world in Acts 3 and 4, the disciples felt a need for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 4:31, we read, *And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.* Oh, how my heart longs for such an experience of the fulness and power of the Holy Spirit in the church today!

Finally, (4) let us stay in the Upper Room until God has transformed our weakness with His power, our littleness by His greatness, our doubts and fears with an unshakable faith, and our sinfulness with His holiness. May the fires of God’s altar burn so intensely and so deeply in our hearts that only the pure gold of a godly character remains, and until the very image of Jesus is reflected in our faces. In other words, let us wait on God until He has made us into the men and women He wants us to be. As E.M. Bounds said, “The Church is looking for better methods; God is looking for better men.” The church will never reach its potential or fulfill its divine purpose until we, the men and women of the church, reach our spiritual potential, and become the Peters and Pauls, the Wesleys and Luthers, the Elijahs and Isaiahs whom God can trust with the work of

the kingdom in our day! Let us stay in the Upper Room until God has transformed us into His likeness! You ask, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? He is still waiting for another Elijah to call on Him!

II. *Where do we go from here?* To the World! While we should not turn a deaf ear to the cry of the hungry, nor should we as Christians neglect our responsibilities as citizens in a democracy, the Great Commission of the church is to “Preach the gospel to every creature.” The mission of the church is not primarily social, or political, but spiritual. In one way or another, all four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles record the command of Jesus. While there are different shades of meaning, the essential message is the same.

In Matthew 28:18-20, the emphasis is on *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations.* Or, as translated in the Amplified Bible, *Go then and make disciples of all nations.* This is followed by further instructions, *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* It is not enough to win them, the church must also nurture them, establishing them in the faith *which was once delivered unto the saints.*

In Mark 16:15, Jesus said, *Go into all the world and preach and publish openly the good news (the Gospel) to every creature (of the whole human race).* (Amplified Bible) As long as there is a tribe unreached, a child untaught, a derelict unredeemed, or a sinner still lost, the mission of the church will remain unfulfilled. We have a responsibility to preach the Gospel *to every creature.*

In Luke 24:47, Jesus commands, *And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.* Here Jesus defines the essential content of the Gospel: *Repentance and remission of sins . . . in his name.* Just as all have sinned, all must repent and believe the Gospel. Too many church members have made an easy profession of faith without ever having experienced the deep conviction and sincere repentance for sins committed, or the miraculous transformation of their lives which makes them abhor sin and love righteousness. We must preach sin black, hell hot, repentance essential, salvation real, and grace free through Christ our Lord.

In John 20:21, Jesus shows the spirit in which we must go: *As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you.* When we consider the glory He left behind, the poverty He endured, and the sacrifice He made of Himself on the cross,

Stay in the Upper Room

(Continued on page 10)

A Layman's Point Of View -

Larry Davis, General Conference Laymen's President

All Thoughts Great and Small

Driving home from work one afternoon, I saw an oddly shaped cloud in the sky. It was shaped roughly like a cupped hand and extended arm. As I turned through a curve in the highway, the late afternoon sun seemed for a moment to float in the hollow of the cupped hand. The picture reminded me of Isaiah 40:12

The Lord Jesus, as He created the Universe, holds the Universe between His outstretched thumb and little finger, the span of His nail pierced hand. He spoke "Let their be..." and the power of His words created light, physically and in concept and in exacting measure, from nothing. In His thought, exact measure of elements, and the composition of the elements themselves were understood. The understanding was unleashed in limitless power by the spoken word of the Lord standing in the darkness of eternity past.

So, we see God in limitless power and might; beyond human measure in all things. While it is true that Lucifer has momentarily corrupted a small measure of love to lust, and power to greed and hate, it is only for a season. In the near future, all things will be put right by the Lord forever. Such matchless attributes, it staggers my mind to attempt to capture the essence. He reminds me that He chose me and loves me,

in spite of all the thoughts and things that I have toyed with and done.

He created every star, knows its location, the day it fired to life and the day it will die out or nova. He sculpted the delicate, intricate and varied leaves of the plants. He spoke the word and all the worlds were created and placed into their courses. And yet, He has the hairs of our heads numbered. He values us far more than many sparrows and knows when a sparrow falls to the ground. The Psalmist asks (Psalm 8:4) "What is man, that Thou doest take thought of him?" Please take a moment and read Psalm 8. It is the perfect companion to these thoughts. God is all these mighty things and cares for us all so much that He willingly sent His own Son to die in our place, to pay our price.

Lord Jesus, Your magnificent power and wisdom are so far beyond our minds that we stagger at the thought of them. And yet, it all this might and knowing, you care for each of us. It is your will, your desire that no one would perish. Your hand is reaching out to everyone. You know our names, our cares, our likes, our heart's desires and our days. Thank you for that love and care. Keep us mindful of it. Teach us to love you and each other better as the days pass.

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The Missionary Record

Mrs. Jane Boyd, Woman Executive Secretary, Editor

Secretary of Temperance

Mrs. Susie Smith

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. . . Daniel 1:8

Daniel is probably most remembered for his night in the Lion's Den; however, there would not have been the successful lion's den account recorded if Daniel had not first purposed in his heart that he would be true to God. If you remember, when Daniel was taken to Babylon to live in Nebuchadnezzar's palace, he would not drink or eat the king's wine and food. He made up his mind ahead of time that he would not defile himself with these things. Daniel had made a commitment to God to serve Him, and all his daily choices were weighed against that commitment.

Recently, at the Mississippi Bible Camp, the evangelist mentioned that he still had his Temperance Pledge Card from the Women's Christian Temperance Union. I began thinking that we should make commitment/pledge cards for our youth today. We could teach lessons on drugs, tobacco, and alcohol and how they harm our bodies; how they are addictive so that your bodies need more and more; and how they alter our behavior and thinking by quieting our conscience and lowering our natural inhibitions. The definition of "defile" according to Merriam Webster's Dictionary is: "To make unclean or impure; to corrupt the purity or perfection of." Using this definition we can see that to use drugs, tobacco or alcohol would most definitely defile our bodies. Let's work together to help prepare our young people to do as Daniel, and "purpose in their hearts" not to defile their bodies with any form of alcohol, tobacco or drugs. Let's see if we can raise a "Daniel" for today. Maybe even more than one. Youth who will commit themselves to God whole-heartedly and keep themselves from the evils Satan sends their way. He seeks to devour and destroy: let's seek to build up, educate, and empower them instead.

Wouldn't it be great if at the end of our WMS year, each State Secretary of Temperance could report back to the Convention Secretary of Temperance so we could see how many of our youth made a commitment this year? Commitment Cards could be printed up and given to each church based on the number of youth who made the commitment to stay away from alcohol, drugs and tobacco. Let's equip our youth to recognize and avoid these snares that the world has gotten so caught up in.

Operation Christmas Child

Jo Betty Thomas, Sec. of Benevolence

The WMS Convention adopted this program as a project to share God's love with children around the world. Take an ordinary shoe box, or purchase a plastic, see through shoe storage box with lid, fill it with toys and other items to make an extraordinary gift for a child in need of joy and hope. You may also include Gospel literature to tell children about Jesus.

Decide whether your box is for a boy or a girl, and the age category: 2-4, 5-9, or 10-14. Fill with a variety of gifts.

Ideas: Toys - small cars, balls, dolls, stuffed animals, kazoos, harmonicas, yo-yos, jump ropes, small Etch A Sketch, toys that light up or make noise (with extra batteries), Slinky, etc.

School Supplies - pens, pencils and sharpener, crayons, or markers, stamps and ink pad sets, writing pads or paper, solar calculators, coloring and picture books. etc.

Hygiene items - toothbrush, toothpaste, mild bar soap (in a plastic bag), comb, washcloth, etc.

Other - Hard candy and lollipops (please double bag all candy), mints, gum, T-shirts, socks, ball caps; sunglasses, hair clips, toy jewelry, watches, flashlights (with extra batteries).

In a separate envelope you may enclose a note to the child and a photo of yourself or your family. If you include your name and address, the child may write back.

DO NOT INCLUDE: Used or damaged items; war-related items such as toy guns, knives or military figures, chocolate or food, liquids or lotions, medications or vitamins, breakable items such as snowglobes or glass containers, aerosol cans.

Please include \$7 for each shoe box to help cover shipping and other project costs. You may find location nearest you and dates to drop off and make donation online - www.samaritanspurse.org/occ or call 1-800-353-5949. Children will enjoy helping with this project.

(Continued from page 7)

can we be satisfied to give less than our best for Him? If we loved as He loved, gave as He gave, and suffered as He suffered, no sacrifice would be too great, no distance would be too far, no hardship would be too much, and no life so precious that we would not gladly lay it all at His feet, *a living sacrifice*. The commitment of the church to the Great Commission of her Lord must be the same as that of the soldier, who, when sent on an extremely dangerous mission by his commanding officer, said to a friend, who feared for his life, "It is not necessary for me to live. It is necessary for me to go." I believe that this is the real meaning of *As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you*.

The emphasis in Acts 1:8 is a bit different. After Jesus urged the disciples to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit, He said, *And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth*. Two words in this statement deserve our consideration. **Witness** is by definition "One who has personal knowledge or experience of something." Let me remind you that there were only twelve 'preachers' in the Upper Room, but there were one hundred twenty 'witnesses.' To be a witness does not require that we be scholars, or theologians, or professional preachers. It requires only that we have a personal experience of God's redeeming grace and a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord. The best witness is often the one who can say with enthusiasm and conviction, "This is what Christ has done for me, and I know He'll do the same for you!"

The other word we should consider here is **both**. There are those who feel that so much is needed at home that nothing should be done for missions around the world. Too often this results, not in greater things being done to win those who are lost in other places. We should not neglect those who are closest to us, our children, our neighbors, our communities, and our nation. But we should remember that our mission is also to *preach the Gospel to every creature*.

III. **Where do we go from here?** Go on with the work of the Kingdom, the mission of the church. How long? Isaiah 6:11 says, *Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate*. With the multiplied billions of people in the world today, most of whom have never heard the good news of Jesus and His love, the church has not yet reached the point where it can stop its work, relax, and say, "Mission accomplished!" In fact, the parables of Matthew 24 and 25, which deal with the second coming, teach us that we must be faithful until Jesus comes. In Matthew 24:45-46, we read, *Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he*

cometh shall find so doing. When the lord returned and asked for an accounting of the servants to whom he had delivered the talents, two of them had been wise and faithful, and had used the talents given them to gain other talents. To them he said, *Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord*. Matthew 25:21 and 23.

In Revelation 2:25-26, Jesus said to the church at Thyatira, *But that which ye have already hold fast till I come. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations*.

Of course, some of us may not live to see Jesus in His second coming. To those, he speaks in Revelation 2:10, *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life*. When we face Jesus, the question will not be, "Were you great? or successful? or popular? or rich?" But the question all of us will face is, "Were you faithful?" God does not require greatness, but he does require faithfulness. The best of us can really do no more, and the least of us can do no less, than to be faithful to the mission God has given us.

Please permit me these closing comments with regards to the question **Where do we go from here?** I believe that we should go together, in unity and love one for another. This will lend strength and credibility to our witness before a skeptical, unbelieving world. We should go under the anointing of, and with the power and guidance of, the Holy Spirit. Without Him, we are nothing. With Him, all things are possible. We should go with an unshakable faith, and an undying commitment to Jesus Christ as our Lord. He must be first and last, center and circumference, heart and soul of our being. He is our Saviour, our God, King of Kings and Lord of Lords! Amen!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Reprinted from March 1988 MPF.



WMS PRAYER CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER - Hebrews 4:16

- General Conference Officers and Boards;
- Annual Conference Officers and Boards;
- Pastors and Church Leaders;
- Secretaries of Temperance;
- Sabbath Observance;
- Spiritual Maturity - .

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Secretary of Temperance:

Lessons on temperance should be prepared.

Secretaries of Spiritual Life:

Preliminary Promotion of Ladies Prayer Retreat.

2008 BELIZE BLITZ

The Board of Missions recently approved 29 people to go to Belize to conduct Vacation Bible Schools and revival services in six villages. Unlike other trips, this annual undertaking never seems to become just a memory, or something we file away in our minds under 'been there, done that'! Honestly, I would be scared if it did. The entire experience is what keeps me fired up all year long to give to missions, pray for missionaries, and our brothers and sisters so far away.

This year's Blitz had eight first timers. I like to think of them as "fresh meat". As the trip began, I could not help but wonder how the week would go for them. Would they crumble under the pressure or heat and demand a return ticket back to their comfort zone? Well, little did I know, they would prove to be sheer inspiration for all the old timers. There is something about seeing the experience through fresh eyes that reminds us it is always about God! Maybe, that is why He told us to stay fresh in His word. Do not rest on what you think you know, but dig deeper in God's Word.

There was one team that stood head and shoulders above everyone else. I hate to put one group ahead of the others but their sacrifice cannot be ignored. The Arkansas-Louisiana team came to work. It was even said this team made the rest of us look like we were on a vacation. Rev. and Mrs. Donald Smith lead this team, and they ministered in three villages. Since personnel and funds were short, two villages, Progresso and Fireburn, were going to be left out of the Blitz until the Smiths found out. They decided that their team of 8 could go to Progresso the week before and Fireburn and Guinea Grass the week of the Blitz. That is exactly what they did. I think they ministered to between 450 and 500 children over those two weeks. The Smiths were assisted by Frank and Dena Robinson,



Brad Lemons, Danny and Mary Morris, and Tammy Clarke.

The remaining 21 people covered Hattieville, Sand Hill, and San Lazaro Villages. There were between 400 and 425 children ministered to in these churches. The San Lazaro team was overjoyed to have Rev. Wayne Sellers as their evangelists and tour guide. Although he was new to the Blitz, he is certainly not new to Belize. I know that Florene Carlisle, team leader, and Catherine Sumerlin had him towing the line in record time. Seriously, I have heard only raving reports of his contribution. Again, I thank Newton church for sharing him with us. The remaining members of that team were Joy, Lauren and Jake Kiracofe, Larkin Sumerlin and John Sims.



Jami Ballard was the team leader for the Sand Hill team. This team had most of the first timers on it. In fact, Wesley Lambert was the only experienced Blitz worker Jami had to lean. If Jami was nervous about that she did

not let it show nor did she need to be because these first timers were very good. They included Rev. Nate Ballard, Gene, Marie, and Brooke Armistead, Jessica Bridges, and Sam Curtis. They were so excited about every aspect of the trip. They were able to see some of the sights of Belize but never lost focus of their mission. They did everything that was asked of them and more. As we were eating a meal on Day 2, I noticed Marie tearing up and asked what was wrong. She replied, "I am so proud to be here." That was the feeling from this entire team all week. Again, I thank the Wimberley Church for sending Rev. Ballard and his wife. They were *enfuego* (on fire).

Charity Lambert served as team leader for the Hattieville group. She started the week out afraid of how her daddy, Rev. Mark Lambert, would respond to being under her authority since he was to be the team evangelist. It appeared that Rev. Lambert submitted himself quite nicely to her leadership. In fact, she only had to remind him a few times that she was the boss. This team also included Tracy Sims and first timer, Josh Andrews. This church is made up mostly of young people who love to sing and be a part of the service. The young people were so open and inviting. Tracy told everyone that she went prepared to protect her heart and keep it from being taken this trip. However, she was not successful. The people of Hattieville 'stole her heart' just as the people of August Pine Ridge, San Lazaro and Progresso had in trips past. I thank Springfield Church for sharing Rev. Lambert with us. His experience and knowledge of Belize was a boost to everyone.

As I think over the week and all that goes in to planning such a trip, I can only say that it is all worth it. I send a special thank you to Bro. Claudio, Bro. Emmanuel, Bro. Rueben, Bro. Maurisso, Bro. Daniel, and Sister Mariella for letting us come into their churches and worship. You were a blessing to each one of us. I also thank all of you who contributed to this year's Blitz through prayer and finances. The work in Belize is extremely important: it began many years ago and continues to grow daily. We should always be willing to contribute of our time, prayer, and financial support. None of us are rich, but what we give to God is blessed and multiplied. Would you like to experience the mission work first hand? Then make your plans to go next summer. You too can experience the freshness of seeing the Belize mission field for the first time.

FRIENDSHIP (MS) - You are invited to attend and enjoy the Homecoming and Open House on October 4th, at 1 PM and Dedication and Singing at 2 PM. Larry Davis will be the Chairman for the singing which will feature Larry Davis, Summit Blackwell, Rex Ainsworth, Spencer Bankston, and others. Please come prepared to participate in this event. For more information call: Bro. Tony Lambert 601-670-5752 or 601-764-6711 (nights); or Kathleen Read 601-764-2579. Friendship is located at 2772 Hwy 18 East, 12 miles East

WMS LADIES PRAYER RETREAT
OCTOBER 17-18, 2008
MP HEADQUARTERS
& CAMPGROUND
COLLINS, MS

A NOTE OF THANKS AND PRAISE

By Byron Carlisle

James 5:13-16 states/promises: *Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; And the prayer of faith shall save*

the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another; that ye may be healed. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

I would like to take this means to express my deepest and most sincere thanks to all of my brothers and sisters in Christ for their concerns, cards, e-mails, calls and ESPECIALLY their prayers on my behalf before, during and after my recent surgery for colon cancer on Tuesday, Sept. 2nd. James 5:13-16 perfectly describes what I feel in my spirit were (and still are) the type of obedient prayers that my faithful Christian friends carried before HIS throne of grace on my behalf. I want you all to know that I am eternally grateful. I obeyed the DIVINE PRESCRIPTION contained in verses 14 and 15; during a meeting of our AL Layman's Fellowship meeting on Aug. 30th at Wimberley Church I asked for the Elders who were present (Reverends Benny Crawford, Mark Lambert and Martha Headley) to pray for me and to anoint me with oil in the name of the Lord. I continue to faithfully claim the promise of HIS word. It is my strong hope, belief and trust that it is within HIS providential will that HE has granted my body perfectly complete and forevermore healing from the affliction of cancer. So, that makes my heart, soul and Spirit MERRY: *speaking to myself in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in my heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ* (ref. Eph. 5:19-20)

Again, thanks to all of you and Praise be to our merciful GOD and SAVIOR!!!

Your Fellow Servant,
Byron

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