

# BAPTIST TIMES

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## CULTURAL RELEVANCE

By GIBF Moderator Kevin Folger



Recently articles have been written that speak of the fact that the latest fads in evangelical Christianity are beginning to lose their luster. I recently read one author that wrote about the Baby Boomer generation having bought into the "Seeker Sensitive Movement"; but those who are part of generations X and Y have not. They are not into the glitz and glitter of the trendy, materialistic buildings and the latest technology that make dramas and music the focal points of such ministries and movements. What the author said was that generation X and Y were looking for something with substance that was not constantly changing. I also read recently that the latest trend among the evangelical "Seeker Sensitive" crowd is to remove the word "church" from their name. It is "The Gathering," "The Vineyard" or "The Fellowship" because they don't want to cause people that have an aversion to church to stay away.

I am all for being culturally relevant, and certainly things have changed in the last twenty years. There are things that we can do that are good things that give us more opportunities in our world to get our message out and heard.

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## READY FOR YEAR EIGHT

By Sam Davison President, Heartland Baptist Bible College



Years ago, in the back roads of the Ozarks, a man owned a country store. It was a small operation; the man and his wife did all the work. One year they hired a kid, who didn't do much, but the couple wanted to help him; this kid's name was Joe.

A traveling salesman liked Joe and looked forward to talking to him each trip he took through those back roads. One day he noticed Joe wasn't at the store anymore. "Where's Joe?" he inquired. "Joe ain't here no more," the backwoods proprietor replied. "Oh yeah? Well who's fillin' the hole he left?" the salesman asked. Still going about his work, the store owner nonchalantly said, "Joe didn't leave no hole."

Last May was our largest graduating class at Heartland Baptist Bible College. We didn't have any "Joes" – but they left a hole, so to speak. They will be missed. In the class of 2005 were an exceptional number of mature students, many of them married students. It is not to say at all that this was the first graduat-

ing class with such leadership and potential, but the class was blessed in that regard, and the class size made the impact more noticeable.

There is a tremendous upside to all of this. Many of the students who departed blossomed into the blessing they became, right before our eyes. In other words, some that would be called "mature leaders" when they left the college they did not initially show signs of what they became in their four years at Heartland. Such development is one of the most thrilling aspects of working closely with the student body.

The upperclassmen this school year are also a fine group of mostly young men and women. (A few are just past young.) Are we worried about the "holes" left by an excellent graduating class? Not at all! They grew and blossomed by the same grace of God that will enable those following them to grow and develop.

It is hard to explain the excitement and sheer energy that new and returning students bring to what has been a quiet campus, not to mention how Southwest Baptist Church is affected. Our eyes are peeled; we are looking the students over. We are not looking for the ones who show traits of failure and remind us of some in the past who fell by the wayside. No, sir! We are looking at them with great expectation. "Who will be the next \_\_\_\_\_?" and we

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## UPDATE ON MAY MEETING

By Jerry Stonehouse



The early morning rush, the drive at rush hour to the airport; the long lines in security, half undressing and redressing to please the electronics system, only then to find out the plane was missing a needed part, creating a two hour wait, a two and a half hour flight; finding the car rental; and then, finally unpacking at the motel..... Will this be worth it I asked myself. It didn't take long into the Graduation Fellowship Meeting at Heartland Baptist Bible College to answer that question – it was a great big YES!!!

Monday night started off with the pleasure of meeting up with old friends and their wives. What a blessing it is to know that old friends are still in the ministry working hard and laboring for the king. We got to Southwest

Baptist Church and the congregational singing, and special music was wonderful. I thought to myself, "Did Delta flight #4288 accidentally land in heaven?" What a lift to a battle worn, work-weary soul. The theme of the meeting was "Young Men on the Old Paths". Each one of the twelve men selected to preach was under forty-two years of age. It was evident by their messages that "old men" are not the only ones on the "Old Paths". These young men did an outstanding job of preaching. Every message was well prepared, scriptural, and biblically "Old Paths". I was personally challenged to come home to do a better job.

Monday night's preacher was Kerry Nance, pastor of Southside Baptist Church in Tampa, Florida. He preached a powerfully challenging message; it was a great way to start. Southwest Baptist Church hosted a time of fellowship and food for the guests each night of the week. The "snack" turned out to be more like a dinner, and the hospitality was second to none. Brother Sam Davison and the folks at Southwest Baptist are certainly

deserving of our thanks and for making us feel truly welcome. Thank you! Thank You!

Tuesday morning came fast, but we were eager to get to the campus of Heartland Baptist Bible College to be a part of the morning meeting. The course had been marked, the pace set, and the blessing of God clearly ours. Once again the music reached the heart, as in all the meetings. Whether it was Heartland's men's quartet, "Glory Bound" or "Witness", various other trios, quartets, and choirs at both the

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**FROM THE  
EDITOR**  
**Ambiguous By  
Design**  
*By Rich Farinella*



Am I the only one irritated by the intentional vagueness of certain religious publications that hide their colors? One could sift through an entire book, brochure or video without ever having a clear identification of it's source till a meager afterthought clarification or maybe an identification logo is buried in the credits. What are they trying to hide? Indistinctness is an intentional art! Some have not only mastered, but have earned their doctorate in perfecting the quality of being unclear.

I wasted over 15 minutes of conversation at my doorstep one day, agreeing with a creationist viewpoint, the degradation of the public school system and general immorality of society before discovering that the doorknocker was a Jehovah's Witness. And that was only forced because I asked the point blank question, "Are you a Jehovah's Witness?" I suppose this conversation could have gone on without finding the true nature of the visit till the fourth home "bible study" would have been scheduled and completed!

There are television commercials advertising Metazine-proaxitol, or some such similar sounding drug, that makes people happy.

Scenes of fully clothed smiling people are splashing around the seashore. We are given no clue as to what the synthetic chemical is supposed to do. It may whiten teeth, eliminate excess gas, reduce your fat content, generate brain cells or strengthen your continent muscles. Who knows why they are smiling? No matter... just buy these pills and swallow them. You'll be happy too!

But I'd really like to know what I am swallowing. And that goes for what I am buying into, what I endorse or what church I attend. Alas, churches today seem to be proficient at masking their nature. They are "fellowships", gatherings, studies, families, associations, ministries, reflections, faith centers, the center for family love, center for positive living, Father's house epicenters, refuges, rock pads, beginnings, common grounds, potter's house, etc. My favorite in our area is named "His Place". Sounds like the pad where you can rap with your home boy, Jesus.

Recently a building contractor shared an awkward situation when a large congregation hired him to build their church building. They didn't want it to look like a church. They designed their edifice to resemble an office complex. The vestibule was to give the impression of a coffee shop. Their classrooms would be chat rooms. The sanctuary was to emanate a mall type mood. The contractor asked them a truly pathetic question, "When do you plan on telling the people that they came to church?"

We can expect those who are outside the close instruction of the Word to attempt to outreach in unscriptural ways. We are not to love the world, copy the world or try to sneak the Gospel in under the radar scan by using a masked approach. The Scripture is clear that we not "*handle the word of God deceitfully*" - 2 Cor 4:2, but present it in the honest light that is typical to its message. God has chosen to showcase His plan through the open, on the table public proclaiming of His book - Titus 1:3 ... *manifested his word through preaching.*

When our brothers stoop to the same indistinct methods of communication we need to call their hand and stop the foolishness. I've read through more gospel tracts soft on repentance, articles of faith, church and school brochures that were supposed to identify... merely to walk away sure of one thing. I had no idea where they stood! The way things are worded could mean one thing from one perspective, or another to a different group. How about stating clearly when the church was started, who Jesus died for, who can partake of the Lord's supper or if hell is a real place of torment forever? Let's talk like Jesus talked. Leave the ambiguity to the fuzzy minded.

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"Courage is being scared to death but saddling up anyway."  
(John Wayne, quoted in the  
*Charlotte, N.C. Observer*)

**Roadrunner, the Coyote's  
After You**

*By Cary Monaco*



Any Pastor who says he never gets frustrated has got to be lying. We can look into the Bible and see the Apostle Paul express frustration. Indeed, Jesus Himself expressed a form of frustration over the disciples' lack of faith and understanding as recorded in the scriptures.

In one aspect, it seems God calls every pastor to the same state, the "state of frustration."

A good picture of frustration is "Wile E. Coyote." As a child, after a few years of watching the "Roadrunner" make a fool out of that poor, mangy coyote each Saturday morning, I started hoping with every fiber of my being that Wiley would catch that annoyingly smug bird and rip its head off.

Most preachers can relate quite well with the coyote. Remember how he'd always get a shipment from "Acme" with some new contraption that would enable him to finally catch the roadrunner? Yet, despite high hopes, all of his efforts ended up with him either being blasted into a charcoal briquette or smashed into a furry pancake.

In a way, we preachers spend our lives chasing roadrunners in the highways and byways of this world. However, instead of trying to get them into a pot of boiling water, we labor to get them saved and into church. And, although we may use the latest products from "Acme Church Programs and Promotions" our success in roadrunner catching can seem about on par with that of Wile E. Coyote. As with him, the frustration level can be extreme. The self-pity can be too.

But do you know the great redeeming quality of that crazy coyote? It's his perseverance. He never quit! Regardless of experiencing frustration after frustration - after painful frustration - he kept laboring to catch the roadrunner.

Things blew up in his face all the time. He fell to new depths of failure and embarrassment each week. Either Acme Products didn't work at all or they didn't work for him. Nevertheless, he kept on coming, inspired by a constantly clear vision of Roadrunner stew. To Wile E. Coyote the potential reward at the end was worth the long, frustrating chase.

Howl to the heavens in joy fellow coyotes, its roadrunner season!



*Rich Farinella, Editor*

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## "Sioux-weet" – Fellowship Meeting in Sioux City By Dave Lydick



It has been my joy to witness, both at a distance and as a yoke-fellow together in the harvest fields of the High Plains, the ministry of Dan and Bonnie Thornton and the Buchanan Avenue Baptist Church of Sioux City, Iowa. God has done a good work through them. The days of September 19-21, 2005 will afford all who attend the GIBF National Fall Fellowship Meeting to witness for themselves what God has done and is doing in Sioux City, because the pastor and people of Buchanan Avenue Baptist Church will be our hosts.



In July of 1986, after graduating from Baptist Bible College in Springfield, Missouri, the Dan Thornton Family (including two children) returned to their hometown and planted the Buchanan Avenue Baptist Church (then named Bible Baptist Church). As the new work began to grow, they moved meeting places from the Thornton home living room to their two-car garage and after nearly a year to a Lutheran church building which God led them to purchase. That old wood frame building served well for ten years, until, in 1998, when God led again, providing the purchase of the current seven-acre site. New church facilities were

constructed, the name was changed accordingly, and a move to the present location on Buchanan Avenue was completed in September, 1999. (And the church is debt-free!)

God always rewards faithfulness. What is seen physically today at 1567 Buchanan Avenue is a testimony to hard work, personal sacrifice, spiritual surrender, and God's goodness.

Physical accomplishments are noteworthy, however, the goodness of God in His work and

to His work is primarily manifested in the spiritual realm (not physical), for spiritual interests are the very purposes for existence. In that regard, and over the course of Buchanan Avenue's nineteen-year history, scores of souls have been saved, and fellow-soldiers have been recruited, trained and enlisted in The Cause of Christ. (One such soul saved was Bro Tim Hewitt, an Iowa church-planter who, together with his wife and family, recently surrendered to go to the foreign field of Sri Lanka, and who will be among the first of several missionary families who have sought identification with and endorsement from GIBMissions.) Buchanan Avenue Baptist Church currently supports 44 missionaries in twenty countries, and is also active in promoting and helping church-planting in its own "Judea." Faith-promises currently total \$80,000. In addition, Heartland Baptist Bible College is supported and promoted, and Bro Thornton serves on its Board of Directors.

As a fellow "Judean" pastor who has watched and benefited from the ministry of Bro. Dan

Thornton and his church, I can testify to the faithful, strong stand that they have established and maintained amid current trends of compromise and drift. I am thankful for their ministry -- I am thankful for their faithfulness, for their fellowship, and for their friendship. And I am thankful the Global Independent Baptist Fellowship is meeting in Sioux City, Iowa in September to share in those things firsthand. It will be a blessed week!



## READY FOR YEAR EIGHT

*continued from page 1...*

fill in the blank with the name of some departed student we hated to see go. Oh yes, it is an exciting time.

On August 11, Pastor Bill Mitchell of Hillcrest Baptist Church of El Paso, TX challenged our entire faculty in many ways. One thing that the Lord impressed upon my heart by his teaching is the incredible privilege we have to work with the men and women God sends here to be a part of Heartland Baptist Bible College.

I want to thank God for every parent who sends their children to Heartland Baptist Bible College and Southwest Baptist Church. I praise God for every pastor and youth pastor who recommends Heartland Baptist Bible College. Finally, I praise God for every pastor and church that sends students and supports the school with the offerings of God's good people. Thanks to all who love and pray for HBBC.



## RELEVANCY IN OUR CULTURE

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When I think about our church, we do some things that give us an opportunity to reach people that we did not do twenty years ago. We are utilizing the World Wide Web to place our church in a realm where it can be visited. We make sure that all of our literature has our web address on it. At our church website one can listen to the messages preached from the pulpit of our church and learn about the church and its ministries. We are now looking at the possibility in the near future of providing our services in both audio and video on the web. We have also gone from two color literature to having everything in full color.

With that being said, I want to emphasize that there is a difference between being culturally sensitive and being culturally relevant. The culture should not dictate our positions, and we should not change in areas where the Bible is clear. I really think the thing that sets fundamental Baptists apart from the evangelical crowd is not the fact that we are unwilling to adapt and use modern technology, but the fact

that we know where to place the emphasis. The "Seeker Sensitive" crowd has moved away from preaching, toward drama, dance, music and some Bible "sound bite" teaching. They have de-emphasized preaching. They have moved away from a local church to a gathering or a fellowship. They have moved away from the great hymns of our faith filled with great biblical truth and doctrine to sound bite choruses that appeal to the flesh. They have moved away from biblical separation from the world and now bring movies and other worldly things in to illustrate and emphasize that they are relevant, sensitive, and worldly.

Truthfully, I think the unsaved person is looking for a church that knows that the world is worldly and that God's people ought to be different. There is no way to improve on God's plan of soul winning, discipleship, and church building. There is no drama in this world that can do what a red hot, Holy Spirit-anointed sermon can do. There is no gathering or fellowship that can accomplish what God can do through a local church that is biblical and Savior sensitive. There is no praise and worship chorus that can do in my heart what the great

hymn "Amazing Grace" can do.

What this world needs is a fundamental Baptist church and a spirit filled preacher in every community. The purpose of this fellowship is to encourage men of God, preachers, missionaries and evangelists to keep doing the biblical things that have always been done to reach people for Christ. God's plan works in every culture and it is able to change lives in every generation. Go soul winning, take a neighborhood and go door to door, stand up on Sunday and preach the message God gave you when you were on your face in your study begging for a message and the power to deliver it. Be excited on Sunday morning, thrilled on Sunday night, fired up on Wednesday night, and lead the charge on Soul winning night. God still can and is building His churches across the face of this world.

If we will do it God's way we will never have to worry about being irrelevant in a changing culture.



**UPDATE ON MAY MEETING**

*continued from page 1...*

college and Southwest Baptist Church, were Christ honoring, and heart warming. I heard a



piano quartet for the first time in my life, and a violin solo (or was that fiddlin' ?) that brought a shout from the bottom of my "Old Paths" heart. (By the way, I didn't know they made a violin with 88 strings.)

Darren Myers, from Landmark Baptist Church in Rolla, Missouri preached first on Tuesday morning, with a message from Hebrews 12 about us getting in on that line of men God has used through the ages. Dalton Robertson, pastor of Liberty Baptist Church in Callahan, Florida was next with a message "Five Distinct Marks of Baptists". His message was prefaced by, and sprinkled with Baptist history in America, and reminded us again of our Baptist heritage. Jason Gaddis, a Heartland teacher and staff member at Southwest Baptist Church preached last about "Setting things in Order". I doubt that I will forget his "old time barber shop" illustration. What tremendous messages. It couldn't have been better.

Tuesday night, Kenny Baldwin, who serves under his father Dr. Lou Baldwin, preached from the old paths text Jeremiah 6:16. It was a well developed message, preached with a lot of energy. He was as much fun to watch, as he was to listen to.



The first message Wednesday morning was preached by Pastor Aaron Denson, from Highland Baptist Church in Hobbs, New Mexico. He preached from Acts 5 on the subject of Purity and Power, and what God produces through these elements in our ministries. Brother Jeff Copes, Executive Vice-President of Heartland Baptist Bible College preached the message leading into the May Offering, and preach he did. It was tremendous. Brother Copes was motivated to give half again as I came prepared to give; good job, Brother Copes. The offering which followed came to right at \$640,000. Praise the Lord! Brother Wayne Hardy, pastor of Bible Baptist Church in Stillwater, Oklahoma

	CASH RECEIVED	AMOUNT PROMISED	TOTAL
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$346,734</b>	<b>\$270,235</b>	<b>\$624,969</b>
EAST	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
MIDWEST	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
NORTH CENTRAL	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
NORTHEAST	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
SOUTH CENTRAL	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
SOUTHWEST	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
INDIVIDUALS	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000



preached Wednesday night out of I Corinthians 2 on Paul's message being right, and his methods being right, so the results were right. What a great day.

Heartland students also had a part in speaking during the

week. During the day sessions and testimonies were given by various students concerning their years at the college, and what it meant to them. The evening services featured some of the college's senior preacher boys.

Thursday morning started with the pastor of Lighthouse Baptist Church in Pampa, Texas,



Brother Kyle Ohsfeldt, who preached from Judges 12. Pastor Merv McNair, who pastors Lighthouse Baptist Church in Lebanon, Indiana, preached next, on the power of God from Psalm



62:11. The power of God was a frequently mentioned subject throughout the meeting, and I believe appreciated by those who ministered very long at all. Brother Craig Houston, pastor of Westside Baptist Church in Bremerton, Washington,



finished out the morning with a message from I Chronicles 29. He called out the different people in the church who are investors in the work of God and pointed out the investments made which bring many returns. Thursday night Pastor Bill Mitchell who pastors Hillcrest Baptist Church, El Paso, Texas, closed out the commencement



service with a bang. He charged the graduates and the congregation to stay on the "Old Paths:" graduates from all across the world "commenced" in their new life in the ministry.

Throughout the week my cup was filled again and again; I often wished I had a bigger cup. Thank you Heartland Baptist Bible College for your hospitality; what a blessing it was to see what God is doing there.

My trip home once again involved security lines, delayed aircraft, and rush hour trip on the freeway, but it was somehow different this time. All of us returning home were full, enthusiastic, and ready to go on for God. It was worth it.



**From the Mailbag • • •**

Dear Bro. Rich Farinella, I am glad to see the offer to receive the *Baptist Times* again. I had asked before to receive it, but only received one copy I believe, many months ago. If you could add my mailing address, it would be appreciated. Because I am retired military, I have access to the military APO system, and it is definitely DOMESTIC RATE mail, and can be mailed EXACTLY the same way as any other subscription to a USA address. *In His Service, For Souls, DR. CLARENCE W. MOORE* *Missionary to Korea and ALL Asia (Since 1976)*

*The following was a forwarded message to Bro. Lewis through the GIBF website.*

If you're having a GIBF Fellowship meeting, monthly or bi-monthly, at your church why not let us all know? If we are traveling we might be able to come, also it allows missionaries and other pastors to know. We are not all on the mailing list. It took me almost a year to find one in my state. *Pastor James*

*Pastor James,* Let me chime in with the same sentiment. We'd all like to know the happenings around the country and in different regions. I have, and I will be glad to include that kind of information in the *Baptist Times*. I'll publish informational news releases, complete with pictures and commentaries about meetings affiliated with our GIBF. That's part of the purpose of the *Times*! It truly is encouraging to see the Lord doing the same kind of thing with others that He is accomplishing in us.

And, by the way, submit addresses of preachers you know that would be blessed to get the paper. We might as well use it. That's what it is for! The *Times* is provided free to all interested pastors, missionaries, evangelists and full time Christian workers. (\$15 per year for all others.)

*Glad to be of service, Bro. Rich Farinella*

Dear Rich, Thanks for sending me a copy of *Baptist Times*. It is always good to see God's blessings upon His people. Hope to see you sometime soon. How long has it been? I think at least 20 years! *Take Care, Missionary Don Mingo In South Africa*

Hi Rich, I appreciate the commendable job you are doing with the *Global Baptist Times*. Keep up the great work! *Brother JC Joiner*

Thank you for a great paper. I want to subscribe to the *Baptist Times*. What is the cost of a subscription? Would it be possible for it to be mailed directly to me in South Africa? I will include both my USA and my South African addresses. I will send a check directly from my bank in Springfield, MO as soon as I know the amount required. *Rex Switzer* *Missionary to South Africa*

*Bro. Switzer,* Thanks for the interest in the *Baptist Times*. The subscription amount is \$15 a year, but provided free to all, like yourself, who are in full time ministry. If it is all the same to you, we'll use your stateside address. It has become prohibitive to mail abroad. You may also download every back issue of the *Times* through the GIBF website. Click on to [www.gibf.org](http://www.gibf.org), then go to the Resources page to access the *Times*. I will look forward to our meeting as you furlough in the states.

*Bro. Rich Farinella, Editor, Baptist Times*

## Historic Authenticity Tracing the Old Baptists by Their Principles and Practices



By Dolton W.  
Robertson II  
Pastor, Liberty  
Baptist Church  
Callahan, FL  
August 24,  
2005

Desperately needed among independent Baptists is a contemplative journey to some high places and hard times in their own history. Walking with men from centuries past helps the modern saint to fortify himself against the relentless assault of materialism and acquaint himself with timeless Baptist principles now dilapidated from neglect. The contemporary, market-driven, Christian culture is flooding our churches with a torrent of “feel-good” pabulum, leaving the majority of Christianity to drown in its own irrelevance and misinformation. This trend of doctrinal and methodological declension is most difficult to accept when found in Baptist churches. It is downright nauseating when discovered in *independent* Baptist churches. Our heritage should produce better things.

We need to know who we are and who we are defined by what we believe and do. Faith and action make up our character as Baptist people. Sadly, today’s generation of independent Baptists is more familiar with Billy Sunday, D. L. Moody and R. A. Torrey than they are the likes of John Clarke, Obadiah Holmes, Samuel Harris, John Gano and Shubal Stearns. These amazing champions of freedom sacrificed their own sweat and blood for our liberty and we don’t even know them. Every Baptist should travel back into their rich past and walk with these giants for awhile.

Volumes could be written on the history and principles of the Baptist people. In this article, I only wish to point your minds and hearts to two salient factors that identify the integrity and soul of the old Baptists: their *book* and their *blood*. The historic Baptist people had a profound faith in the Word of God and their faith led them into the hottest imaginable fires of persecution. They believed the Book and they bled for those beliefs.

### THEIR BOOK

Baptist people have always been people of the Book. The *sine qua non* of our faith is strict adherence to biblical authority in all matters of faith and practice. If the Bible teaches it, we embrace it. If it isn’t in the Bible we feel no obligation to believe it and are dogmatically reluctant to include it in our ecclesiastical practices (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 3:14 – 4:4; 1 Co. 15:3). We do not baptize infants, sprinkle converts, pray to saints, Mary or utilize the Rosary; nor do we recognize any sacramental ordinance, sacerdotal or prelatic system because *these things are nowhere to be found in the Word of God*.

We emphasize more than the “cardinal doctrines”. We are committed to much more than “the fundamentals”. Though we interpret Scripture literally as the historic fundamentalist position would require, and though we take a militant position on these matters, we are much more than fundamentalists. We are in line with those ancient souls, much derided for “having their Bibles on their laps”. As Jeremiah Jeter said, “The oracles of God are the only test of truth.”<sup>1</sup>

This matter of biblical authority has produced some traceable marks through the ages. First, an amazing simplicity is always found among them. While simplicity is said to be “the badge of antiquity”, complicated theological systems are never superimposed over clear Scripture. Denominational and partisan notions are not allowed to hinder free thought and a clear conscience (Ro. 3:4; Col. 2:8; Gal. 2:1 – 6). Second, a miraculous unity prevails. Through the ages people from different and totally disconnected parts of the world have maintained a common belief due to their careful and simple adherence to the clear teachings of Scripture. J. M. Carroll said, “One of the outstanding miracles in the whole world’s history – according to my way of thinking – is the nearness with which God’s people have thought and believed together on the main and vital points of Christianity.”<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Jeter said, “Wherever there is an open Bible and religious tolerance, there Baptist principles to a greater or less extent, prevail.”<sup>3</sup> They are “traced by their vital principles and practices”<sup>4</sup>. Finally, Baptist principles, those distinctive beliefs that set them apart, serve to *protect* the fundamental doctrines. Again, I quote Jeter who said concerning Baptist principles, “The peculiar principles of Baptists, while they do not constitute the main doctrines of Christianity, deeply affect the purity, progress and triumph of the kingdom of Christ.”<sup>5</sup> Those fundamental, central truths of the Christian faith are guarded well when kept within the confines of the disciplinary administration of Baptist beliefs.

### THEIR BLOOD

No other mark distinguishes the Baptists more than their historic record of persecution. Like a dark river of bloody sorrow, their story has flowed throughout the twists and turns of church history, often invisible but never dissolved. Their songs have been hymns of suffering and their legacy one of unimaginable tribulation. It has been said that it would be easier to number the sands along the seashore than to count the Baptist martyrs. This would be the reason for the title of J. M. Carroll’s famous lectures, *The Trail of Blood*.

While preachers, professors and theologians everywhere are fawning over the Reformers like Ulrich Zwingli (Zurich, circa 1525) for example, they ignore a host of stellar individuals who followed the logic of truth further than their Protestant contemporaries and were consequently persecuted by Protestants as well as the Papists. Few are aware of the severity of Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and others like them and those who are excuse such atrocities as

their being “men of their times”. According to Armitage, Zwingli literally organized a Protestant Inquisition, leaving dead Baptists in its wake. Bible preachers like Balthasar Hubmeir, Felix Mantz, George Blaurock, Conrad Grebel and Ludwig Hetzer were burned, beheaded and drowned for no other reason but refusing the sacrilege of infant baptism and baptizing their own converts by immersion.

The Baptists can be traced rather easily. Look for their adherence to the *Book* and the principles and practices that such an adherence would produce, and look for the *blood* of persecution in their tracks. Though they have always been oppressed, they have never joined with government for the sake of coercion. Though they have had differences even among themselves, their differences have always been over interpretation of Scripture, never extra-biblical impositions from princes and prelates. Let us learn of these principles and the grand souls that extolled them.

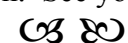


- 1 Baptist Principles Reset; Jeremiah Jeter (The Religious Herald: Richmond, VA: 1901) p. 18.
- 2 The Trail of Blood; J. M. Carroll; p. 36.
- 3 Baptist Principles Reset; Jeremiah Jeter (The Religious Herald: Richmond, VA: 1901) p. 133.
- 4 A History of the Baptists; Thomas Armitage (The Baptist Standard Bearer; Paris, AR: 1890) p. vii.
- 5 Baptist Principles Reset; Jeremiah Jeter (The Religious Herald: Richmond, VA: 1901), p. 14.

## FROM THE EDITOR *continued from page 2...*

### IN THIS ISSUE

Bro. Stonehouse reports on the May meeting as only Bro. Jerry can. You can read a small excerpt of the message Dalton Robertson preached at that meeting in OKC on this page. Robert Lewis presents poignant perspectives from the angles of the Global Independent Baptist Missions facilitators on page 8. (By the way, we’ll hear more about the first Annual GIBMissions Deputation School in the next issue. Till then you can keep current on these events and the 12 missionaries currently using the help of the GIBM in the GIBF website at [www.GIBF.org](http://www.GIBF.org)) Along with other bits and pieces, learn of the next GIBF Meeting in Iowa on pages 3 and 10, disclosing the history and labor of the good folk at Buchanan Avenue Baptist Church, hosts for our fall meeting. With the line up of speakers and the promised hospitality, this should be a meeting to help us keep on keeping on. See you there!



## It May Sound Good, But...

### A refutation of the teachings of Michael and Deb Pearl

By Kevin T. Boekhoff

"I follow no man, only the Lord!" A Bible Institute student and member told me one day after we had discussed and debated the issue whether he should put his child in nursery.

"You have no right to tell me what to do, especially with my child," he challenged.



We had already spent hours in discussion and looking at Bible verses. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," he quoted, saying that this was his conviction. I responded that people can have convictions in wrong things and wrong doctrines. Yet: "I am not subordinate to you, I answer to a higher authority," ended up being his philosophy.

This nursery issue had become a problem because he believed his 12 month old child should be able to sit through services quietly. This epitome of distraction cried, screamed, and screeched during services because he was restrained to their laps. To "teach" him not to scream they would pinch him prompting more screaming, which obviously disrupted services. I tried to work with him for several months by teaching and tactfully nudging him to allow his child to go to nursery for the child's benefit and to stop the hindering of the Holy Spirit in services. The only thing he would do was to allow his wife take the child to a nearby room (every room is nearby in our small building) where she would continue restraining him in her lap – this was their effort to teach him to respect church. The child continued his fits there, and she continued her "discipline" but everyone in our auditorium could still hear everything.

This issue came to a head when we hosted a preacher's meeting. I announced to the church that ALL CHILDREN would be in nursery or class. He forced me to make a stand by defying my wishes immediately prior to the first service. He continued to challenge it every service and would send his wife and child home to spite me. He defiantly left the church shortly after this dispute.

This man continues to plague me and our church. He tapes messages to the doors of the church, contacts members and calls on our prospects. He has a pious attitude of "listening to no man" as well as feeling he has the right to reprove and rebuke me. The problem is his influence in the members. Since he feels I am a false prophet, he sees no problem in talking to members and prospects of this church in attempts to vindicate himself.

Where had he gotten these ideas? I wondered. Was there someone out there teaching to defy the pastor, especially when it involved child and family issues? I had begun Bible Institute with him to teach him correct doctrine because he was going to the internet for instruction. He felt "called" into the ministry, but proved he was not ready for Bible Institute. He continued going to the internet anyway.

We had a family leave the church a few months prior to all this over similar issues with Sunday School. After they left they gave this man information by Mike and Deb Pearl on child-rearing. This information all sounded good to start with, but upon further examination of their teach-

ings heresy arises. The previous family's kids were old enough to read (oldest was eight), but could not (a doctrine of Mike Pearl[1]). These children were not well disciplined and were major distractions during services with their chatter and rattling of papers etc. The small size of our "auditorium" amplified these problems (seats 25). In all we lost over half of our church, including all of our children, due to the teachings of the Pearl's.

I have talked with other pastors who had experienced battles in their churches over this doctrine. Once day I saw some material, which was taped to the church door of Mike and Deb Pearl ([www.nogreaterjoy.org](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org)) and did some research. I found that their statement of faith did not reveal much. However, couched under various topics I found teachings regarding the issues I dealt with.

Since Mike Pearl considers it correct and right to critique, reprove and rebuke those who are false prophets with the Bible, the door is open to examine him by the same criteria.

**Concerning the Bondage of Religion,** Pearl writes "...in recent years there has arisen a twisted doctrine advocating that the family be constructed around a patriarchal head. This modern heresy has sanctioned the depraved human tendency to dominate by allowing potentates to pose as patriarchs."2[2] He goes on to say that families are stumbling and children are being hurt. He even goes on to say that families are being destroyed. He considers churches as the "pervasive stench of religion." He claims that his message will, "release thousands from the fear of men and from the bondage of religion."3[3] It sounds good but...is it right?

The patriarch he is speaking of is no doubt the pastor, because he advocates the father is the head of the family who answers to no man. Essentially, he is correct that the father is the head of the family. The point he misses is that the church should back up the father's Biblical stand and the father's stand should dovetail with the church's teaching. The issue is not which has greater authority, but that they work together to accomplish the same purpose – to help people become more Christ-like.

The church is very important to God. This is evidenced by the fact that Christ died for the church (Eph 5:25). Also, the word "church" or "churches" is used 114 times in the NT. Most of the NT was written to or about churches or pastors, as well. God meant for the church to hold a very prominent place in our lives.

#### Who is the Head?

"Our Pastor feels he is in the line of authority and that my wife and I should submit. If we don't, we are in rebellion and will be treated as such,"4[4] wrote C.M. to Mike Pearl.

Pearl replied..."Your pastor is deceived... Dictators are made by the people that submit to them... Your preacher will have to answer to God for usurping authority that belongs to God only, and you will have to answer to God for the evil consequences that come upon your wife and children as a result of yielding your conscience to another human being... You have no right to convey your authority as head of your home to your pastor or to an angel from heaven. God placed the husband as head of the home, not the pastor."

Mike then quotes I Corinthians 16:13 and tells people to stand up against their pastors (and their

false doctrine) as men. "There is no mention of pastors having any authority to rule or command the church. His function is that of a teacher of the Word of God."5[5]

What then is the pastor's job? Mike Pearl does not understand that pastor, elder and bishop are used interchangeably in the NT regarding the leader or leaders of a church. Every church had a pastor, elder or bishop that would lead the church. It was his responsibility to feed the flock (Acts 20:28, I Peter 5:2). He is to reprove, rebuke and exhort (I Timothy 4:2) even rebuke sharply at times (Titus 1:13). He is to warn of danger and heresy (I Thess 5:14). Certainly, there are types that would abuse their position by lording over their people. Obviously the pastor is not to be a dictator in your home, but he should preach and teach doctrine that will help the parents raise their children.

Mike Pearl goes on to say that Christ is the head of the church, not the pastor. "Listen up! The head of the woman is her husband. The head of the husband is Christ, and the head of Christ is the Father. There is no pastor or elder in the chain of command. He rules the church by obediently preaching the word. He has no authority to rule a man's wife or his children or the man."6[6] This sounds good, but...is it right?

Christians are to submit to authority whether it is the pastor or boss/master or governmental authorities (I Thess 5:12, Heb 13:7, 17). Mike Pearl's own rebellion to his Amish roots comes through on this issue. He does not seem to hold to Amish tenets regarding modern conveniences, or separation from the world as viewed by the Amish.7[7] So, it appears he has formed his own movement by targeting homeschoolers, many of whom are susceptible to independent-minded philosophies.

#### Pastoral Authority or Meddling?

Pearl comments; "There is nothing that indicates that a minister has the authority to meddle in the personal life of anyone. There is no one example anywhere in Scripture that a minister ever told anyone who to marry, where to live, how to school their children, what job they should hold, or any other matter beyond sound doctrine."8[8]

Who is the leader of a church? Mike Pearl teaches that the elders, apostles and brethren have equal say by the leading of the Holy Spirit based on Acts 15:22-28. Is this really true?

"A minister takes care of the church by ministering the Word of God, not by meddling in personal affairs.9[9]"

We can see that the pastor has authority in the church by studying the terms pastor, elder, and bishop, which describe the same office in the assembly, yet refer to three different aspects of his work.

Pastor refers to the church leader as the shepherd of the flock, speaking of his work of teaching and nurturing and protecting the assembly. "Pastor" is translated from the Greek word *poimen* which is translated "shepherd" 16 times in the N.T. (Mt. 9:36; 25:32; 26:31; Mk. 6:34; 14:27; Luke. 2:8,15,18,20; John. 10:2,11,12, 14,16; He. 13:20). In the Greek language of the N.T., "feed

5 [5] "Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

6 [6] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

7 [7] [www.religioustolerance.org/amish3.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/amish3.htm) (accessed June 30, 2005).

8 [8] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

9 [9] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

1 [1] Pearl, Mike. What Curriculum do you recommend? [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+178](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+178) (accessed June 30, 2005).

2[2] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

3 [3] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

4 [4] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

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“One good things about repeating your mistakes is that you know when to cringe.”  
(Doug Larson, quoted in the *Montreal Gazette*)

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## GIBM Report Don't talk to me about a mission's office.

By Robert Lewis



"I don't believe in anything but my local church"  
"I don't need a mission's board; our church has its own missions program"

These are a few of the phrases I am hearing repeated when the subject of a missionary clearing house is brought up. This is in spite of the fact that the GIBF unanimously adopted a clearly thought out and well presented Missions policy. It is as if some assume we are attempting to do something unscriptural. The logic is usually offered; "Well, you know what happened to the last mission's agency we were involved in." With that kind of logic, a man could withdraw from just about everything. He could in fact, justify (*in his own mind*) not being involved with anybody for anything. Of course, he still buys his gasoline from unsaved people and pays his utilities to giant corporations, and invests his retirement funds on the stock market, but he can't co-operate with other pastors for the cause of missions. He says these "missions agencies" are unnecessary and that they may go bad as others have done in the past. Often men with this mentality claim they are getting more done for the Lord without cooperative efforts with the brethren. But I say they are hiding behind the dirty skirts of the bad examples of the past. I do not believe their churches are getting more done "without the brethren" than they could with them. Even churches go bad as we have seen repeatedly. It is only by the grace of God that any of us can escape the possibility of going bad.

AD 33 - Acts 6:7, *And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.*

The first thing we want to point out in our text is, "The Word of God increased." It did not get bigger: It became greater in acceptance. It did not grow larger: It was more widely accepted; It was more eagerly investigated; It was earnestly pursued. More attention was given to the Bible. More people were being saved. The second thing we notice is, "The number of *disciples* increased." They did not get bigger in size, popularity or notoriety. They got larger in number! Next we notice that, ". . . a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." This was not just unusual, it was miraculous. It was the evidence of the life-changing power of the preached and lived Word of God. In chapter eight we find the account of Stephen being stoned, and Saul making havoc of the church. In chapter nine Saul became a believer, was baptized and began to preach Christ.

AD 34 - In Acts 9:19 we read, "*Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.*" We do not know where these disciples came from. Paul did not lead them to Christ, for he was, himself, only a young believer.

Acts 9:31, *Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.* The churches had rest. The churches were edified. The churches walked in fear of the Lord. The churches walked in the comfort of the Holy Ghost. The churches were multiplied.

AD 44 - Acts 13:1-4 *Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. 4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.*

**"I don't need a mission's board; our church has its own missions program"**

These prophets and teachers were called by the Holy Ghost and sent by the Holy Ghost, although the church laid their hands on them and sent them away. The church was acting in concert with the leadership of the holy Ghost. They could not enjoy the blessing of God if they did not have the blessing of the church as well. From here on the method of obeying the Lord's command to evangelize the world would be carried out by messengers, called by the Lord and approved by the church. Sometimes we quit reading too soon and assume that this conclusion means that there is no need to recognize, endorse, or cooperate with "other churches." Let us look at Paul's Method.

AD 45 - Acts 14:1-7, *And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren. Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them, They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe,*

*cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: And there they preached the gospel.*

Acts 14:19-23

Acts 14:21 . . . *preached and taught, returned to Lystra and Iconium and Antioch. . . . Confirmed the souls of the disciples, exhorted them to continue in the faith. . . . Ordained Elders in every church. . . They prayed with fasting. They commended them to the Lord . . . and they continued on.*

AD 54 - Paul Found certain disciples at Ephesus (Again, he did not lead them to Christ, but ministered to them where he found them).

Acts 19:1, *And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,*

AD 60 - Paul Continued working with "Certain Disciples" where he found them.

Acts 21:15, *And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem. There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge. And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.*

Paul preached, taught, confirmed, exhorted, ordained and commended the disciples wherever he went. He did not win them all to the Lord. He did not even baptize all of them, but He taught them the Word of God every time and in every place he had opportunity!

AD 60 - Paul Raised Money for the New Testament missionary enterprise

II Co 8:1, *Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. vs. 1 this enterprise involved churches (plural). vs. 2 - The physical condition of the churches: ". . . Trial of affliction, Deep Poverty." vs. 2 - The Spiritual condition of the churches: ". . . Abounded in joy; in liberality" This enterprise required the Willingness of the churches to give sacrificially. vs. 5 - They gave themselves to the Lord - corporately. vs. 5 - They gave themselves to the ministers - individually; to fellowship and to minister. This enterprise required cooperation between the churches.*

II Co 8:23, *whether any do enquire of Titus, he is my partner and fellow helper concerning you: or our brethren are enquired of, they are the messengers of the churches, and the glory of Christ. Titus is my partner; Titus is my fellow helper. The brethren are messengers of the churches of Macedonia. This Enterprise was commissioned to examine the sincerity of the Corinthian church. 9:23 "I have sent the brethren." 8:24 show them (The churches of Macedonia!) the Proof of your love and proof of our reason for boasting of you. This Missionary*



Enterprise was supported by other churches that were superior in their carrying the burden! The Corinthians were to increase their faith and their giving.

II Corinthians 10:15-16, *Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, 16 To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.* This missionary enterprise was being presented to an inferior church!

II Corinthians 12:13, *For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong.* They were inferior in taking up missionary offerings. They were inferior in taking care of Paul

II Corinthians 8:7-8, *Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also. I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love.* They abounded in "faith" - They believed a lot. They abounded in utterance - They talked a lot. They abounded in "knowledge" - They knew a lot. They abounded in "all diligence" - They worked a lot. They abounded in "love" - They loved a lot. But their giving was substandard! vs. 7 - "... See that ye abound in this grace also!"

The Biblical model for evangelism is individual soul winning and church planting. The Biblical model for financing the evangelism is faith promise giving. The Biblical model for missions is a fellowship of churches working and giving and cooperating together in order to get the gospel into the regions beyond. In the Book of Acts there were messengers from the churches; the messengers visited other churches and they came to be a blessing not a burden; they admonished the Corinthians to get up to speed with their giving, they were to abound in this grace also to prove the sincerity of their love for Jesus and those for whom He died. Remember, neither Paul, nor Titus, nor were the brethren (messengers) members of the Corinthian church. They came from other churches to partner with him and promote the missionary cause of Christ in this church at Corinth. They may not have gotten in if the pastor had the attitude of some of today's pastors who say, "I don't believe in anything but my local church." I have a hard time believing in the sincerity of those who make these statements. They do not usually educate their own ministerial students. No, they send them to a Bible college in another place and get excited about it. The truth is all colleges are not good and all missions agencies are not bad. Think about it. We hear of men changing their college affiliation, but dropping (?) their missionary affiliation. All churches need some kind of help from other churches. What if your missions program doesn't work? Then get on board with one that does! It is not honest to think there is no need of messengers from other churches to encourage you; It is

not honest to think you have the world's only God-blessed missionary program. The Bible doesn't teach the "universal church." When we say "the church" we mean local, visible, autonomous, independent, Baptist, churches. I think it is a mistake for a pastor to conclude that every church, other than the one of which he is the pastor, is some how flawed; inferior; unworthy of his attention. In the Bible you have churches; churches that help one another; churches that reproduce themselves; churches that cooperate in the cause of Christ.

I got hurt by a fish hook one time. I mean I anchored it deep in one of my fingers till I thought I would surely die with it. Can you imagine the next time that I went fishing . . . I still used a fishhook? Not the same one, not a crooked one, not a rusty one but *ANOTHER* one! Can you imagine a man who got injured by his fish hook saying? "I am never going to use a fish hook again! I don't believe in fish hooks. They are dangerous. You can get hurt by them. You don't need fish hooks to catch fish anyway. In fact I am not so sure that we should be catching fish with fish hooks. I think I will just let the fish who want to get in the boat. I'll use a net, I may use a stick of dynamite, but I will never use another fish hook!"

That is no more ridiculous than a man saying "We don't need a missions board; I got hurt by a missions board; I don't believe in missions boards; you can get hurt by them. I am going to

**"I don't believe in anything but my local church"**

do my own thing; I am not going to risk getting involved with inferior people any more. My missions program is just about my church." If you say these things you may be among those who exclude most of the missionaries and keep the money in the bank for "special projects." The questions I have is "Do you want the Word of God to increase? Do you want the number of disciples to multiply? Do you want the churches to be multiplied?" If you do then you cannot let the failures of others, your feelings, or your own personal opinions keep you from doing the Lord's work the Lord's way. We do not know how much time we have before the end. We need biblical partnering churches! We need biblical preachers who will mentor the next generation in bible methods as well as doctrine! Biblical churches reproduce themselves. Paul's biblical method is the best way to continue doing the job no matter what anyone or everyone else says and does. Everybody loses when we are unwilling to do God's work God's way.



"TACT: The art of thinking twice before saying nothing."

## IT MAY SOUND GOOD, BUT... *continued from page 6...*

the flock" (Ac. 20:28; 1 Peter. 5:2) literally means "shepherd the flock"; it is from the same root word translated "pastor" and "shepherd."

Elder refers to the church leader's maturity and responsibility and the fact that he is to be an example to the church.

Bishop refers to the church leader's authority, to the fact that he is to rule the church. The Greek word translated "bishop" is also translated "oversee" (Ac. 20:28; 1 Peter. 5:2).

"That these terms refer to the same office in the church is seen in their usage. In Tit. 1:5, 7, the terms "elders" and "bishops" are used interchangeably. In Ac. 20 all three terms are applied to the same office. In v. 17 the church leaders are called "elders." In v. 28 the Greek words for bishop and pastor are used. 1 Peter. 5 also uses these terms to refer to the same office in the church. Verse 1 speaks of the "elders," and v. 2 speaks of these elders as overseers (bishops) and shepherds. The fact that these terms are used interchangeably is significant. A pastor is an elder is a bishop. These are not separate offices."<sup>10</sup>[10]

Because everything is to be done decently and in order, God placed pastors to lead churches and members to be subservient to their lead (Heb 13:17); Otherwise confusion results and God is not the author of confusion (I Cor 14:33).

### Be a Berean Christian.

Pearl tells us we should be like the Berean Christians and identify false teachers, strongly implying that those who teach contrary to his teachings are false teachers, consequently if someone is a false teacher you don't follow them.<sup>11</sup>[11]

It is correct to biblically identify and not follow false teachers. The key is to rightly divide the Word of Truth (II Tim 2:15). Too often people will use the criteria, "if you don't think what I think, I think you don't think. Therefore, YOU are the false teacher not me."

Pride is wrapped up in the flesh and jumps at being able to justify itself. The flesh would love the opportunity to claim that the preacher is wrong and therefore dismiss what he says, but Proverbs 12:15 says, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise". To be a Berean in the biblical sense is to use the Bible to seek the truth, not attempt to fortify a fleshly opinion.

### Rebuking False Teachers.

"When the apostle Peter came to Antioch and conducted himself in a way that was misleading to the Christians, Paul rebuked him publicly," Pearl contends. He then quotes Galatians 2:4-6, 11, 14 and I Timothy 5:17-20.<sup>12</sup>[12]

This is based on the concept that if the pastor does not agree with Mike Pearl, he is a false prophet, the danger increases. Here we see "permission" to publicly rebuke a "false prophet," meaning the preacher that does not agree with Pearl, or more importantly, with the church member caught up in his heresy.

This "permission" breeds contempt toward the pastor and feeds the rebellious flesh. Thus public rebuke: "I follow no man, only the Lord!" And "You have no right to tell me what to do."

We have already noted the member's respon-

<sup>10</sup> [10] Cloud, David, Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible and Christianity, Version 3.0, *Pastor: The Pastor's Authority: The Pastor's Title*.

<sup>11</sup> [11] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

<sup>12</sup> [12] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

...continued on page 11

# God's Tender Mercies

(Ps. 145:9) "The LORD is good to all:  
and his tender mercies are over all his works."

*Buchanan Avenue Baptist Church of Sioux City, Iowa,  
invites you to attend the September 2005 Global Independent Baptist  
Fellowship (GIBF) Meeting held the 19<sup>th</sup> through the 21<sup>st</sup>.*

## **Tuesday Morning Services**

9:00 a.m. Pastor Sam Davison – Southwest Baptist Church, Oklahoma City  
Pastor Pete Montoro – Open Door Bible Baptist Church of Astoria, New York  
Pastor Randall Parker – Bethel Baptist Church of Greenfield, Indiana

## **Wednesday Morning Services**

9:00 a.m. Pastor Mario Monette – Eglise Biblique Baptiste Metro Sud of Saint Hubert, Quebec Canada  
Pastor Gary Williams – Bible Baptist Temple of St. Joseph, Missouri  
Pastor Kent Sexton – Solid Rock Baptist Church of Waterville, Maine  
Assistant Director Robert Lewis – Global Independent Baptist Missions of Lewisville, Texas

**Host Pastor**



**Dan and Bonnie  
Thornton**

**Monday Evening  
Speaker**



**Clifton Mizer**

**Tuesday Evening  
Speaker**



**Bill Mitchell**

**Wednesday Evening  
Speaker**



**Bruce Turner**

## **Moderators**

Monday Evening: ..... Pastor Dennis Fountain  
Tuesday Morning: ..... Pastor Clarence Patterson  
Tuesday Evening: ..... Pastor Bob Stevens  
Wednesday Morning: ..... Pastor Dave Moore  
Wednesday Evening: ..... Pastor Dave Lydick

## **Special Music**

Buchanan Avenue Baptist Church Choir  
Silver State Trio  
Doug Ramage  
Gethseman Trio

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## IT MAY SOUND GOOD, BUT...

*continued from page 9...*

sibility to follow the man of God. Certainly, he should not be expected to follow a false prophet, but how does pastoral authority make one a false prophet? Paul addressed church polity in I Corinthians 14:40 when he said "Let all things be done decently and in order." As with government or in the family, there must be leaders and followers.

### Being Critiqued by Others.

When teaching on I John 4:1 Pearl draws a conclusion regarding so-called false prophets. "The passage assumes that there is a spirit behind the prophet, and that one should examine the spirit that motivates a minister. I draw your attention to the fact that ministers were not to be taken on their claim or their credentials. Any minister is suspect. Every prophet should be examined as to the spirit and accuracy of what he says. If he has the wrong spirit, or if his message is false, the Christian has a duty to dismiss him. When a prophet speaks, others should be judging the content for accuracy."13[13]

Pearl carefully words his dissertation to allow the reader to draw the ultimate conclusion regarding his or her own pastor. (David Cloud spends much time on clarifying the issue of pastoral authority in his article regarding the pastor in the Way of Life Encyclopedia. This author encourages the reader to carefully study his article). Remember, Mike Pearl has an Amish background. He was trained not to recognize any one particular leader. The Amish churches have four elders that perform different duties, "(1) the Full Servant or Bishop is the preacher and also performs baptisms, weddings funerals and ordinations. (2) The Servant of the Book or minister. He assists the bishop in preaching and teaching. (3) The Full Servant of the Poor or Full Deacon. He assists with baptisms and preaching. His main role is guardian of doctrinal orthodoxy. (4) Servant of the Poor or Deacon. He reads from the Bible at church services, assists the bishops in various duties, and administers funds to the poor."14[14] Besides that each baptized male has the opportunity after any message to "comment on the biblical correctness of the sermons."15[15] The Bible teaches no such system.

### Domineering Preachers.

Pearl relates the circumstances that he feels create domineering preachers. Difficult circumstances "...tempt a minister to use his office to tighten up on the congregation. He is in an excellent position to dominate, and it is a great temptation to become autocratic (with the best of intentions) to save the church from heresy, immodesty, monetary abuse, selfish controllers, and any number of genuine threats to the body of Christ...It eventually degenerates to a battle for self-survival. Once he crosses the unseen line and makes himself the head of the church, there is nothing to stop him from drifting further and further into making his own rules. He no longer resembles a true minister of the gospel, and the church becomes a corporation with a desperate C.E.O. at the top. This is not the

exception. Sadly, it is the rule."16[16]

This statement leads the rebellious heart to conclude that his preacher is one of those domineering types simply because he is attempting to lead. Difficult circumstances can be trying to a preacher. However, when he sees heresy entering the church, he must sound the warning and possibly even deal with individuals regarding it. Paul addressed this in I Corinthians 11:19-20 when dealing with the Lord's Supper and II Peter 2:1-3 speaks of heresies arising out of the flock.

Where do those in the flock get such heresies today? From the internet, TBN, and Christian radio. In the minds of many, the televangelist or internet preacher has greater authority because of his celebrity status and because he builds a following by teaching something some want to hear.

### The Bondage of Religion.

Pearl's argument (that people who submit to pastoral authority are in the bondage of religion and that it is destroying families17[17]) sounds almost like what Paul dealt with concerning the Jews and the bondage of the Law.

Certainly there are churches and cults that have stepped over the line, but have we as Fundamental Baptists become domineering? If the pastor is preaching the Bible and he is teaching and preaching proper child-rearing as well as a proper marriage relationship, he has not.

Does leadership make him domineering? Does it make it wrong to have Sunday School and nursery? Mike Pearl advocates against such, but the interesting thing is that Mike Pearl has children's activities at his meetings. 18[18] Why would he do so? The same reason we do, to minimize distractions and to teach the children at their level.

### Mike Pearl's Background - Amish.

Pearl's doctrinal stand has roots in his Amish upbringing, which explains his position regarding pastoral authority, he is a traveling evangelist/pastor/teacher who does not seem to answer to any authority, Amish or otherwise. This might explain his rebellious teachings.

Pearl uses a lot of KJV quotations and claims to be KJV only19[19] this is why his teachings sound harmless to Fundamental Baptist parents!

His "ministry" is about raising children, but he subtly slips his heretical teachings in, which causes unwary homeschoolers to unwittingly embrace and integrate them into their lives. Later, these families attempt to bring his teachings into their churches.

Upon further investigation I found that he is anti-church,20[20] teaching that home churches are the way to go because "church is the only remaining corrupting influence on their family... many families are leaving structured Christianity to gather in a protected environment with like minded families. Our larger cities are

dotted with hundreds of home churches."21[21] It is noteworthy that the Amish also meet in homes rather than a church building.22[22]

Mike Pearl is also against Sunday School, teen activities and the like. He promotes the concept that the child should sit with the parent during church services. However, as stated earlier, when he has his Bible conferences, he has children's activities.23[23]

Pearl is anti-school, "God did not make classroom education. It is the invention of humanists seeking to usurp parental authority."24[24] He is even anti-curriculum.25[25] Pearl's teachings prompt rebellious church members to deny their children to attend Sunday School and also for teachers to buck the pastor's wishes regarding curriculum.

Pearl is even anti-doctors (he sells his own herbal products). He says people are to personally take charge of their own diagnosis and treatment.26[26] The danger to this lies in failure to diagnose and treat a serious illness properly. God provided doctors and has blessed with medicines that have been scientifically proven to be effective. No where in the Bible do we see that we should not go to physicians. So there is no reason to abstain from seeing doctors when necessary.

Granted, Michael and Deb Pearl's teachings contain many good ideas regarding child discipline, but they attack the church and pastoral authority. They twist the truth and actually encourage rebellion in the name of family first - which the carnal heart embraces.

Spurgeon perhaps says it best regarding pastoral authority. "The outcry against a 'one man ministry' cometh not of God, but of proud self-deceit. [Some] will not submit themselves to the authorities which God Himself appointed. ...He says, 'Obey them which have the rule over you.' Brethren, I warn you, there is a spirit abroad which would pull down the men whom God Himself has appointed. ...We enter our solemn protest against that spirit which, under pretense of liberty to all, sets aside the instrumentality by which the Lord works. ...Where is there a single church which has existed for fifty years where God's chosen instrumentality of ministry has been despised or rejected? 'Icha-bod' is written upon their walls. God rejects them because they reject God's chosen way of working."27[27]

"I follow no man, only the Lord" is a pious-sounding statement, but as we have seen it is unbiblical. It is a heresy that causes splits and divisions among believers and churches. We must be watchful and wary.

Beware of Mike and Deb Pearl's heresy, which endorses and encourages this mindset.

*I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. (1 Corinthians 4:14).*



13 [13] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

14 [14] [www.religioustolerance.org/amish3.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/amish3.htm) (accessed June 30, 2005).

15 [15] [www.religioustolerance.org/amish3.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/amish3.htm) (accessed June 30, 2005).

16 [16] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

17 [17] Pearl, Mike. "Where are the men?" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+66) (accessed June 30, 2005).

18 [18] Pearl, Mike. Bible Conference Report" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+23](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+23) (accessed June 30, 2005).

19 [19] Pearl, Mike. "New Age Bible Versions" [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+110](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+110) (accessed June 30, 2005).

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22 [22] [www.religioustolerance.org/amish3.htm](http://www.religioustolerance.org/amish3.htm) (accessed June 30, 2005).

23 [23] Pearl, Mike. Bible Conference Report, [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+23](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+23).

24 [24] Pearl, Mike. What Curriculum do you recommend? [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+178](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+178) (accessed June 30, 2005).

25 [25] Pearl, Mike. What Curriculum do you recommend? [www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+178](http://www.nogreaterjoy.org/index.php?id=25&backPID=41&tt-news+178) (accessed June 30, 2005).

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27 [27] Cloud, David, Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible and Christianity, Version 3.0, *Pastor: The Pastor's Authority: The One Man Ministry.*

## The Pastor's Wife

By Karen Hightower, Lebanon, MO

### Ministry Travelers—Lodging the Road Warriors

When I was a pastor's wife, I tried my best to minister to the needs of evangelists and missionaries who came to our church, but if I had known



Karen and Hal Hightower

then what I know now, I would have done many things differently. It wasn't until my husband and I began traveling every week and staying in motels, missions apartments, and homes, that I became aware of some very basic areas to consider when housing a "road warrior." I've also consulted with other ministry travelers while preparing this article and have included some of their suggestions.

Many pastors and their wives travel when they attend conferences or fellowship meetings, but they don't do it every week. Traveling continually gives one a whole new perspective on accommodations. For instance, if you are stop overnight in a motel and leave early the next morning, your main requirement is a good night's sleep. However, if that room becomes your home for a week, there are several things that will make your stay more comfortable. So now when I am in a position to entertain guest speakers for an extended period of time, I will apply what I have learned.

Nearly every speaker would prefer to stay in a place where there is privacy for him and for his family. Not every church can afford to house a speaker in a motel, and not every church has a mission apartment; but when possible accommodations are preferable to staying in a home. Of course, friends do enjoy staying with friends; but when it is necessary to lodge your speaker in a home, privacy is an essential concern. Most guests enjoy fellowship with their hosts, but still will need time for study, prayer, rest,

bookwork, or a simple break from being on display.

If your church uses a motel to lodge guests, it is a good practice to check the facilities at least once every six months. Motels change management often, and can deteriorate rapidly. Don't house your guests in facilities where you would be unwilling to spend a week. Unless your guests have physical limitations, the top floor of a motel is often preferable because it is usually quieter; at least there will be no noise from above. Never book your guest in a room that has an adjoining room with a door between, unless you are housing a family that will occupy both rooms. These are often the noisiest rooms in any motel.

There are some basic considerations that will make your guests' stay much more comfortable and enjoyable. Cleanliness of the room and the motel is essential. Every ministry traveler has a list of horror stories about unkempt places they have stayed. We have encountered our share of crunchy sheets, sticky carpets, dead bugs, live roaches, scummy tubs, and grungy bed spreads. If the place is not clean, Find Another. There is no such thing as "not bad" when it comes to cleanliness, and there is no excuse for lodging your guests in such a place.

Employ some "touches of home" (decorator items, small appliances, desk supplies, refreshments/snacks) to enhance the stay of your guest, and to make their time at your church more enjoyable. The comfort of the bed and pillows is extremely important. When examining the motel room, lie down on the bed.

Provide an iron and ironing board. Remember that ministry guests are not on vacation and wearing casual clothes all week. They will be in church services and need to iron shirts and dresses which have been packed in suitcases. It is a real challenge to iron a shirt or dress on top of the bed.

Internet access is a big help during the time your guests are with you. Ideally, the motel will provide this service, and many are becoming equipped for this. Be aware, however, that many places still do not provide access for the simplest tasks such as e-mail. If there is no internet access available at the motel you use or if you lodge your speakers in your mission apartment or home, it is nice to give the speaker access to the church's internet service. We

are happy to use the computer during a time that is not an inconvenience to secretaries or other staff members. An hour of internet access is a precious commodity.

Laundry is often a real challenge for constant travelers. The convenience of having laundry facilities on site (motel or missions apartment) is ideal. If this is not a possibility, it would be helpful for you to locate a clean Laundromat in a safe neighborhood for the guests to use. Using laundry facilities in a home is often uncomfortable (unless the guest is staying in the home) because the guest does not wish to be "in the way." Several loads of laundry can take several hours to complete using only one washer and one dryer.

The stay is always more comfortable if the room contains a coffeepot, a refrigerator, and a microwave. These conveniences make it possible for a guest to enjoy refreshments throughout the day or evening. Breakfast availability in the motel is also very nice.

Avoid motel rooms that have only a bed and a table. Many rooms now have a couch or high-backed chairs that are comfortable. Remember that your guest will spend several working hours each day in the motel room. It is difficult to relax sitting on a bed all week. Also the ministry traveler has studying, office work, correspondence, and other bookwork each week. The availability of a work desk with sufficient lighting in a room will be much appreciated.

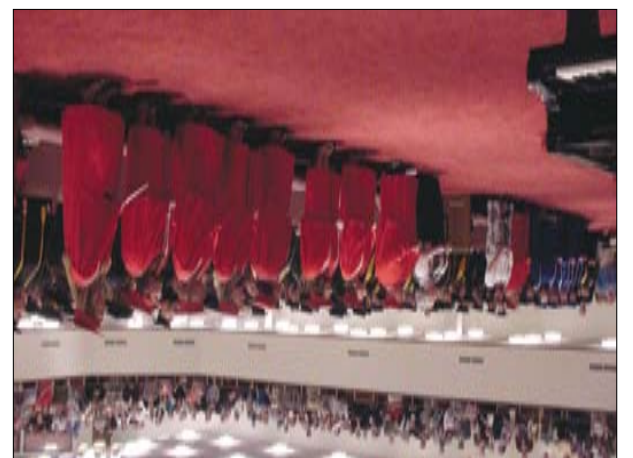
Finally a nice-sized closet is something to consider when checking out your guest's motel room so that suits, shirts, dresses and skirts may hang after having been ironed. A hair dryer is not a necessity, but it is very nice to have one available.

While these suggestions are not requirements, they will be greatly appreciated by any ministry traveler.



**Attention pastor's wives:** Any articles that you could send our way for this column would be greatly appreciated. Please e-mail them to Editor@BaptistTimes.org or by mail on disk to P.O. Box 570, Woodinville, WA. 98072. A photo of yourself would also be nice. Thanks for your participation!

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