

Return Service Requested

The STANDARD BEARER

Volume 48, No. 1

“A place where God can help Himself to young lives.”
Founder D. C. Branham

Jan./Feb. 2017

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14).

DECISION DAYS 2017 March 23-26

Theme: He wants it ALL Today

“ALL thy Heart..., ALL thy Soul..., ALL thy Mind..., ALL thy Strength” (Mark 12:30).

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By Daniel E. Taylor
President

A Dozen Sermons From Romans 12 “Be Not Overcome... But Overcome”

“Dearly beloved, *avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good*” (Romans 12:19-21).

What usually happens when we are hurt or offended? We want revenge! We may not be led away by our passion to actually take revenge, but we would be glad to see some calamity or loss befall the one who hurt us.

If we are noble enough to not wish our enemy any evil, there is not one person in one hundred who wishes them good. Our text tells us to not only restrain ourselves from retaliation but to control our bitter feelings and display a genuine concern for the well-being of those who trouble us and hurt us. Wow!

While studying this verse, my first reaction was what Elijah said to Elisha when Elisha asked for a double portion. “*You have asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so*” (2 Kings 2:10).

There is a parallel here to Romans 12:19-21. We are challenged with a hard thing! To not be overcome of evil, but overcome it with good. There is one thing we must do if we are to meet this challenge. **We must keep our eyes on the One who can give us what we need!** It is this simple; if we don’t keep our eyes on Jesus, then it

will not be possible to overcome evil with good.

As in the case with the entire New Testament, our text not only gives us the command, but also a plan on how to implement this into our life! Two things are essential when we are faced with something that needs to be fixed, a plan of action needs instructions and adequate tools. In our text, the Bible tells us “how,” and the Holy Ghost gives us the tools. The challenge is to make yourself do it! I have the tools and know how to change water filters under the kitchen sink, but I put it off because it is hard to do! We have what we need to do in Romans 12:19-21, but it is asking a hard thing.

Instead of taking matters into your own hands, put them in the Lord’s hands! In Romans 12:19 it says, “*Dearly beloved avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*” The first two words of verse 19 are terms of endearment, “*Dearly beloved.*” Paul started out chapter 12 with “*I beseech you therefore brethren*” not I command you, but I beg you. Paul is pleading rather than demanding. Do you know why? Because the Christian duties he is proclaiming in Romans 12 are such that they can only be governed from the individual’s heart. All the rules of fellowship or standards of conduct in the world could not guarantee compliance with these duties in Romans 12. As soon as a law is made it is human nature to try and avoid its restrictions.

The reason Paul makes such a heart-felt appeal is because obedience to the duties in Romans 12 are contingent on each individual Christian’s desire to be a good Christian!

This summary of duties in Romans 12 run cross grain to our human nature. They are like the filter under the sink. We know how, and we have the tool, but it is the discomfort and strain we don’t like. So we put it off.

So, the question is not, are we a Christian, but are we a good

Christian? Good Christians will overcome and make it to heaven. Not so good Christians may or may not. Instead of taking matters into your own hands, put them into the Lord’s hands. “*Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord*” (Romans 12:19).

Don’t let a desire for revenge overpower your Christ-like Spirit. We have the Spirit of Christ working in us, but we also have our human nature trying to work against the Spirit. I’ve known people who searched the Bible for a Scripture they could take out of context to justify their desire for revenge. I’ve heard people use milder terms such as “exhortation,” but from the context of the conversation it sounded more like revenge. God is the only One qualified to mete out retribution (vengeance) for any imagined wrongs done to us. Why? Because He is the only One with a clean record Himself.

Second Timothy 4:14-18 says, “*Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.*” I think Paul is feeling his own debt in these verses. “*At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.*” It seems Paul is realizing that he needs to eat his own cooking. Have any of you preachers, teachers, parents, found yourself faced with a struggle to obey what you told others they should do? **There is an**
(Continued on page 3)

Daniel E. Taylor, *Editor-in-Chief*
Wallace E. Joice, *Editor* Carol J. Joice, *Graphic Art*
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alternative to hitting them where it hurts. It is called, "Hurting them where it helps!"

"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirsts, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Romans 12:20). It is hard to accept the fact that painful lessons are often the most helpful. Doing something positive and kind to someone who has been negative and unkind to you is hard to do. I think the principle must be viewed in its context. This is a Christian principle which should be exercised in the church in general. It may not work too well among the vilest in the world. But in the body of Christ, whom Paul is addressing the principle will work. There was a church sign blooped which read, "Come meet caring individuals that love hurting people." That is not exactly what they mean! There is an alternative to "Hitting them where it hurts." It is called "Hurting them where it helps."

"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head" (Romans 12:20). But there is such a thing as **hurting people where it helps!** And that happens when they feel remorse for their un-christ like behavior and are sorry for the one they hurt. The Centurion in charge of the detail that crucified Jesus is a good example of "hurting someone where it helps."

"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Now when the centurion and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were

done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God" (Matthew 27:50-54). When Jesus died, things happened which unnerved the hardened Roman soldier. He had overseen the torture of Jesus without remorse, until he put it all together and realized, "This was a just man—the Son of God!" The last seven words of verse fifty-four are those of a man feeling the burning embarrassment of knowing "I've been a skunk." I've done a just man wrong.

The curses or the pleas of innocence by the two thieves made no noticeable impression on the centurion, but when Jesus prayed for His Father to forgive the soldier; when Jesus comforted the penitent thief with a promise of Paradise; when He provided for his widowed mother; when He atoned for our sins; when He was thirsty, yet refused the wine; when He commended His spirit to His Father; and when He said, "*It is finished.*" Verse fifty-four says when the centurion saw the earthquake and those things which were done, it shook him up! It put fear in him when he realized the horrible thing he had done to the Son of God! If it hurt the calloused conscience of a heathen soldier to know he had treated the Son of God so badly, shouldn't we who claim to be brothers and sisters burn with shame when we realize we have done a fellow Christian wrong?

None of us will escape having to deal with the principles presented in our text. Have any of you ever ridden the bumper cars at the fair? Life is like that bumper car. You get in it and you are going to get hit! There isn't any way to avoid getting hurt by someone in this world. It is a bumper-car world, even in the church. We do not wrestle against flesh and blood and the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. Carnal weapons won't do us any good. "*For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places*" (Ephesians 6:12). Feet which run to the attack belong to people who neither

love nor know God! "*Their feet are swift to shed blood:*" (Romans 3:15). Which means, stand firm on the gospel of peace. Which means that the church's message is one of peace, peace in our heart, peace on earth, and peace among ourselves.

I have an old pair of work boots I wear in the garden. I never tie them. You know why? So I can kick them off easily. Some folks do that with their spiritual shoes. They wear them loose so they can kick them off easily!

I've read ninety percent of the people who set out to hike the Appalachian Trail, which is a distance of over 500 miles, never finish it. It's not because they can't, but because after a while they lose the "want to." That is what can happen to us in our quest to not be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. We lose our want to! If we are looking for a key verse in Romans 12, verse 21 is it. **We are to be overcomers, not those that were overcome!**

The Bible describes the inhabitants of Heaven like this: "*And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death*" (Rev. 12:11). The challenge of living for Jesus in this fallen world is boiled down to its simplest form in verse 21. "Don't be a victim, be a victor; don't be a loser, be a winner; don't be just a starter, be a finisher; don't be a pawn of the devil, **be a tool in the hand of God.**"

What is the benefit of letting God handle the "Repayment Department?" You avoid bringing judgment on yourself! You open yourself up to receive special grace which enables you to endure the offence against you. But if you get bitter, vindictive, and "mean-spirited," because you insist on handling it yourself, the devil will get the ultimate benefit from the situation of your backslidden soul! (Cont. on pg. 6)



SHARING GOD'S BLESSINGS

By Mike Pennington
OBI Guatemala
Field Director

*“And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of God is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the leper, raise the dead, cast out devils: **freely ye have received, freely give.** Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass for your purses...”* (Matthew 10:7-9).

“And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip,” (Luke 22:35,36).

The things that we receive from God as Christians are available to all men and God commands and expects us to share them with others as He provides the opportunity in our lives. God's love is to be exuberated from our hearts to others (1 John 3: 14-18, 4:

7-11). The love of Christ constrains us to live an unselfish life that reaches out to a lost world. (2 Corinthians 5:14-21). God's gracious forgiveness must be reciprocated to others to be effective in our own experience. (Ephesians 4: 30-32). Otherwise we jeopardize our own forgiveness from the Heavenly Father. (Matthew 6:14,15; 18:15-35). Any material wealth that we accumulate by God's blessing is given to us so that we can use it for God's Kingdom on earth and lay up treasure in Heaven (Matthew 6:19-21, Luke 12:13-21). The cost of a gift is determined by personal sacrifice, not the amount of money involved. This is illustrated in the story of the widow's two mites (Mark 12:41-44). The cost of God's blessings in the salvation of mankind was exorbitant when we consider the personal sacrifice that the Son of God endured to secure our redemption. When we share the blessings of God with others, we are merely re-gifting the boon that God has bestowed upon us through our Saviour. This is the basis for all Christian missions operations-

giving away God's great gift.

Spring semester in Guatemala began January 9, 2017. Training for returning second year students and new enrollees will continue through April 21, when they will begin their first 30 day practicum with pastors throughout Central America. We are expecting around 35 students this semester. The national faculty and staff are prepared and excited about the opportunity to prepare workers for the harvest field of souls. Our new women's leader will be Sister Anna Belen González, who graduated last October.

Thanks to all who made a special contribution towards the purchase of a newer pick-up truck. The Lord willing we will make this transition this Spring, and buy a Toyota four wheel drive vehicle.

We desire your continued prayers as we head into this new year. May each of us take one day at a time and do our best for the Master till He comes or calls us home where we will share His blessings for eternity.

Maranatha! The Penningtons



Sister Anna Belen-new women's leader



Returning Students 2017



“Great Wall “ model pick-up being replaced

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Yes, I would like to Contribute to OBI Guatemala's mission work.

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- Radio \$ _____
- Monthly Gift One Time Gift

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\$275 each month.

General operations
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Thanks and God Bless each of you is our prayer!



By Rachel
Prihoda
2006 OBI
Graduate

The following article is an excerpt from a biography *With C. T. Studd in Congo Forests* by Norman P. Grubb.

Chapter One, 1913-1918
“Tell me, Mr. Studd.”

“A chosen vessel... an earthen vessel... a prepared vessel.” That is how God describes

His men of destiny. And when He has them, He has all He needs. For a work, a mission, an organization, means nothing to God; only men count, men in whom the Spirit dwells.

Chosen... earthen... prepared. There are long and thorough preliminaries in those words. The call... the breaking... the anointing. Then the moment of destiny: “Come now and I will send thee unto Pharaoh,” said God one day to Moses, but only after forty years in His training school.

The history of the Heart of Africa Mission, the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade (to give the mission its enlarged title), this “last Crusade to evangelize the remaining unevangelized parts of the world in the shortest possible time,” had its starting-point in such a man. Long years of preparation went into his training, mysterious and apparently frustrating at the time, and only perceived in their true perspective as we now look back upon them.

The young man, wealthy, cultured, popular, one of England’s cricketing idols, “hears the call, ‘Come follow,’ that is all.” A glimpse of the Saviour, a wave of shame at a first love which had been lost, a humble act of re-dedication, and Charlie Studd arises from his knees to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, never to look back. First it is the China mission field, and a momentary sensation among the cricket-loving public at this inexplicable renunciation—then oblivion. Wealthy friends turn their backs or soon forget; and when they hear a few years later that this crazy young man crowns his eccentricities by giving away his fortune, to surprise is added indignation. Ill-health follows, both his young wife’s and his own, bringing them back from China. Often there is poverty.

They cannot return to China. Years are spent with no clear sphere of labour, some in India, some in the United States of America, some in England. These two seem to be God’s castaways. There seems no adequate return for their whole-hearted dedication. What does it all mean?

Desperation point at last is reached. He is fifty-three and a martyr to asthma, she an invalid spending half her day on her bed. A home has been given them in which to spend their remaining days in retirement. Money gone, health gone, friends gone, it was a life that seems to have missed the mark, with only one priceless treasure remaining to them—the glowing heart, a fervent love for their Lord and an undimmed passion for the souls of men, which many waters cannot quench.

All a failure? All confusion? The exact opposite. At last God has them where He wants them. Chosen—long ago: earthen—yes, for their weaknesses have opened to them the secret of strength; in place of self-reliance it is now God-reliance. Money? Theirs is now the bank of heaven. Health? Christ is their life. Influence? God speaks and it is done.

And so in 1910 there came to C.T. Studd the call to the “ridiculous,” to the “impossible;” and he could take it! It was a call to the region which seemed to him the most needy in the world—the heart of Africa: a call which not a dozen people believed was anything but a hallucination: a call which he obeyed alone by setting out on a journey of investigation; and as the boat left port the “hallucination” surely turned to madness, for he declared in a letter that God now told him “this trip was not merely for the southern Sudan, but for the whole unevangelized world!” To this he added the significant words, “To human reason it sounds ridiculous, but faith laughs at impossibilities and cries it shall be done.” Three years later, in 1913, after his safe return from the southern Sudan bringing definite information of numerous tribes awaiting the Gospel in the north-east Belgian Congo, beyond the southern frontiers of the Sudan, a few more people did begin to see that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men; and that once again in a “weak thing” He had found His chosen vessel.

C.T. Studd prepared to return, this time to establish a work in the heart of Africa.

A conversation which he had with a representative of a well-known newspaper, a

fortnight before sailing, will give in his own words something of his plans.

I ventured to become personal, wrote the interviewer, and said, “Mr. Studd, you can scarcely class yourself among the young men. Why should you now be starting pioneer work amongst the pagan tribes of Africa?” My friend was aglow with enthusiasm. I felt I ought to ‘eat my words,’ for I was listening, surely, to a young man and not to a man of over fifty. “It is because of the need and out of simple loyalty to Christ” said he. “In Mark 15, I find ‘All the world,’ and that means ALL the world, and not only England and America. Someone must go. I belong to Christ. I must go. **If Jesus Christ be God and died for me, then no sacrifice can be too great for me to make for Him.** The heart of Africa is destitute of any Christian agency; then, too, it is a strategic point in the great conflict between Islam and Christ. We must at all costs resist that terrible avalanche of Mohammedanism. Once let these people become Mohammedan and the door of their hearts is locked and barred against us. What’s the use of singing ‘Onward Christian Soldiers,’ and then letting the enemy have it all his own way? What glorious humbugs we are!”

“But I suppose, Mr. Studd, there are those who criticize your scheme, or suggest that it is too rash?” “My word, yes, there are indeed! There are those who are in a frenzy to dissuade their friends from joining ‘that mad fellow Studd’ in his daredevil enterprise. They call it a harebrained scheme, and all the rest of it; but after all it is *Christian*, whatever else it is, and if I am a fool I am in good company. My rejoinder to such a criticize is: “Half a loaf is better than no bread.” No other Society even contemplates evangelizing these starving people; no other plan is on the market; any fool can criticize, but surely nothing can be worse than knowingly to sit down quietly and make the want of a perfect plan or flawless organization the cowardly excuse for our denial of the Gospel to these needy souls to whose country God has so wonderfully opened up the way. Who would not sooner be a rushing fool for Christ’s sake than an angel who fears to tread in His footsteps?” *To be concluded next issue*

“Dearly beloved avenge not fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, yourselves, but rather give place unto but overcome evil with good.” The key is don’t let the devil draw you into behavior which could threaten the salvation of your soul. But respond with a behavior that could threaten Satan’s purposes! We need the power of God’s Spirit to supernaturally enable us to be overcomers especially in the subject we are addressing. Jesus wants to help us and He knows what the question is, “Will we let Him?” Are we willing to let Him help us overcome?

STUDENT TESTIMONIES

JEREMY STOUGHTON (Senior)



This past summer, I had the opportunity to lead a kid’s crusade at Garnett Assembly of God and go with the young boys from my church to Camp Peniel as their counselor. The opportunities I have had at OBI greatly prepared me for this ministry. Whether it was the REACH Kid’s Team my freshman year, or my sophomore and junior year in Outreach, or all the knowledge I have gained from various classes. I thank God for all He has done for me and the opportunities He gave. I cannot wait to see what He has in store this school year and after I graduate.

JONATHAN NISWONGER (Junior)



The Lord gave me many opportunities to minister this past summer, including Children’s Church, jail ministry, and nursing home ministry. Each of these ministries are unique and different from each other and OBI has helped prepare me to minister in each by teaching me how to study and interpret the Bible and learn how to share it with others, from children to adults. My Junior year of OBI is helping me understand the Bible in a deeper way as well as allowing me to engage in active ministry with the outreach team. I’m also planning on returning to Germany this next summer.

DUSTIN SCHMIDT (Sophomore)



“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me” (Philippians 4:13). This past summer I was given several opportunities to preach at my home church. I was able to be a witness at work and defend the Gospel as well. Summer was difficult and dark, with many ups and downs, but God carried me through every step of the way. His faithfulness and the training I have received at OBI has helped me out tremendously. Words can’t express my praise toward God for His help! I have returned expecting God to unveil His will for my life and I believe He will.

SILAS ZERBEL (Sophomore)



All my life I grew up knowing I would go to OBI, but it wasn’t until I made it through my first year that I realized how much I needed to go. Traveling one year with the Overcomers Choir helped me to realize how God can take the choir and touch someone’s heart. I can definitely say OBI has changed my life. If I could say anything to someone questioning whether they should go to OBI or not, all I can say is, “Go at least one year! It’ll change your life!”

Editor’s Notes



By Editor
Wallace E. Joice

“THE GOLDEN YEARS”– THE SEASONS OF LIFE

In Ecclesiastes 12:1, we are admonished to “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.” As the years have seasons, so does life.

THERE IS THE SPRINGTIME OF LIFE

Springtime is the time of new life. The

world is waking up, and springtime of life is also a time of play. A time of learning through the activity of play-acting.

The springtime of life is a time of dependence. The child is absolutely dependent upon its parents. They never think of the hardships of provision. Some time ago, I was watching my great-granddaughter, Klara-Lynn, playing. I said to Cindy

Mattingly, one of my parishioners, "Look at Klara-Lynn, she doesn't know that there is a problem in the world." Cindy, who had many problems, exclaimed, "Don't tell her!" In effect, she was saying she will find out soon enough!

THEN, THERE IS THE SUMMERTIME OF LIFE

Summertime is the time of strength. It is the time when we finish our education. It is the time when we start our careers, or embark upon our life's work.

It is the time when we have our children. One of my former students was about to experience the birth of his first child. He reminded me how I told him, "Children really brighten your home. The lights are on all night long!"

I wasn't very old (just 31) when we adopted our only child, Rebecca Sue. I don't think we got a full night's sleep for the first year we had her! I learned then why God usually gives children when we are young.

YET AGAIN, THERE IS THE FALL OF LIFE (SOMETIMES

CALLED "THE GOLDEN YEARS")

Fall is the time of harvest. Usually, it is the time of retirement. Usually, a person has their home paid for.

Usually, a person is blessed with grandchildren, or even great-grandchildren. Usually, when your children were growing up, you were so busy beating the wolf away from your door, you did not have time to enjoy them. Now that you are retired, you have more time and leisure to enjoy them. And, as my fellow Oklahoman Havis Crawford has said, "If you get tired of them, you can send them home!"

FINALLY, THERE IS THE WINTERTIME OF LIFE

Wintertime is characterized by two things: dearth and death. Few things, if any, come to fruition in the winter. Usually, winter is a time of deprivation. Physical senses largely are greatly affected. Our sight, hearing, taste, etc., largely fades.

Dr. James Dobson once told a story of how a father and son were watching an old man feebly walking along on his cane. The father told the boy he should

have sympathy for the old man, for someday he would be like him. The boy then objected, "I don't want to grow old. I want to stay fresh and good." We all would like to "stay fresh and good," but wintertime has come on some of us.

Then there is death. The Bible says, "...because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets" (Ecclesiastes 12:5). Surely there is "A time to be born, and a time to die..." (Ecclesiastes 3:2). If we would only realize that we are mortal, what a difference it would make in the way we live.

So, after Solomon had tried everything life had to offer, He came to what I like to call his "grand finale." "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14).

Dean's List & Honor Roll Fall 2016

DEAN'S LIST FALL 2016	
*Listed in order of hours carried	
Dodson, Craig	4.00
Stansbury, Amanda	4.00
Holden, Philip	4.00
Faulkner, Micah	4.00
Heath, Jarissa	4.00
Hawthorne, McKenziey	4.00
McGarvey, Amber	4.00
Margeson, Tiffany	4.00
Miles, Jonathan	4.00
Rodriguez, Alyssa	4.00
Simon, Frank	4.00
Webb, Heather	4.00
Adams, Joshua	4.00
Sebastian, Timothy	4.00
Carlisle, Benjamin	4.00
Gardner, Heidi	4.00
Morris, Carissa	4.00
Portugal, Mayla	4.00

Presley, Delyn	4.00
Thomas, Madison	4.00
Embry, Jackson	4.00
Kimble, Kemberleigh	4.00
Kincaid, Cree	4.00
Moreino, Preston	4.00
Niswonger, Jonathan	4.00
Johnson, Mikayla	4.00
Belt, Adriene	4.00
Presley, Rachelle	4.00
Stoughton, Susanna	4.00
Pryor, Emily	4.00
Trawick, Lydia	4.00
Carr, Charity	4.00
HONOR ROLL 3.50 and above	
Singleton, Mary Ann	3.889
Henley, Byron	3.867
Shelton, Eric	3.860
Wedel, Erika	3.854
Henegar, Kendrick	3.846

Hutson, Jared	3.846
Morris, Bryan	3.846
Norris, Bryce	3.846
Christopher, Melissa	3.842
Irish, Johanna	3.833
Sprouse, Monica	3.829
Hosmon, Keilah	3.829
Jackson, Ryan	3.829
Thomas, Madison	3.829
Rawlins, Richard	3.813
Hiles, Benjamin	3.813
Stevens, Bradley	3.771
Harper, Jonathan	3.744
Meyer, Elizabeth	3.722
Campbell, Brittany	3.684
Ernest, Ashley	3.657
Cole, Faith	3.636
Whitaker, Cody	3.590
Westfall, Katie	3.561
Hamel, Adren	3.556

Alumni In Action



Robert Whitley
OBI Graduate
1981

AND HE GAVE "PASTORS"

We have just come through one of the busiest seasons of the year. In October we celebrated "Pastor Appreciation Month." In November we celebrated "Thanksgiving." In December we are celebrated "Christmas." With the spirit of "Christmas," the idea of giving always come to the forefront. Paul reminds us in Ephesians 4:11, "*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*" Not to take away from any of the offices given to the church, the thought is to simply focus on one specific gift, the office of the "Pastor."

Recently in a Sunday night service during the month of October, one of the ladies of our church stood to testify. In the process of appreciating the pastor, she mentioned the influence Brother & Sister Leonard Allgood had been in her life. When she first got saved, they took her un-

der their wings and nurtured her. After 40 plus years, she is still following the Lord and being a blessing in her local church. **Thank God for the gift of pastors, such as Brother D.C. Branham, Brother Leonard Allgood, Brother G. D. Tucker, and others which have influenced so many of us.** They gave their lives to be able to give to us.

We are also thankful for the pastors which are still in the ministry today. They fill their pulpits and minister to their congregations. They attend the births of our children, dedicate those same children, perform their weddings, and in many cases are there when we say goodbye to our loved ones. They make available opportunities for the prophets, apostles, missionaries and evangelists to fulfill their offices. We are so very blessed to have been given those men and women who surrender to the will of God and come to a church and spend their lives in the service of others. Just look around and notice those who pastor our churches and remember they are a gift from God.

Last of all, we are thankful for those young people which are hearing the call of God to go into the pastoral ministry. They are responding and be-

ginning preparation for that calling.

Recently, I heard of a young couple which had worked in a church as youth pastors. They had been faithful and willing to work in their local church and follow the leadership of their church. When the pastor felt God leading him in another direction, this young couple was placed in the office of pastor. They both left their jobs and applied themselves to the ministry full-time. They are to be commended for their dedication. Thank God for the gift of young people who are willing to become pastors.

Pastoral ministry may not always be the most exciting, may not bring a lot of travel opportunities, and may not always see the greatest amount of souls won to the Lord. But without pastors, the entire church would suffer a tremendous lack. Pastors are truly a gift from God, and "*every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning*" (James 1:17).

To those who are our "Pastors," we love you and are thankful for you. You are truly a "GIFT" from God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRAYER

Please continue to remember Brother and Sister Don Snow in prayer as his recovery continues. They were both able to be in church Sunday morning January 8th. It was a time of rejoicing and praise.

Weddings

Jamin Martin and **Allison Dixon** were joined in marriage November 11, 2016.

Ryan Prisock and **Susanna Bradley** were united in marriage November 26, 2016.

Births

James and Deanna (Carrier) Snow welcomed a new baby girl, Arella Ruby, born January 7, 2017.

CALENDAR OF OBI EVENTS

February 13-16	Midterm Exams
February 17-27	Midterm Break
February 28.....	Classes Reconvene
March 23-26	Decision Days
April 18-20	Final Week (Exams)
April 21	Commencement

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

2016-2017
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