

AFTER THE POWER OF AN ENDLESS LIFE

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the transformational and transitional moment in the history of God's dealing with mankind. The prophecies of the Old Testament, the teachings of Jesus Christ, the hope of eternal life - they are all promises. The resurrection is fulfillment!



If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

1 Corinthians 15: 17,20

The new birth and our salvation are by the resurrection of Jesus Christ! 1 Peter 1:3; 3:21

Jesus is a priest for ever after the power of an endless life. We follow Him by the same resurrection power! When we truly believe this truth, we will live by His power.

In Christ,
John Peeples
IBFI Mission Director, Psalm 16:11

DARRAIN AND MARI COKER Missionaries to Mexico

We had the joy of celebrating our 10th anniversary as a congregation here in San Miguel de Allende. We had a three-day conference with a special preacher, Dr. Willie Weaver - my former pastor from Worth Baptist Church Fort Worth, TX. The service had to be translated into Spanish, so by God's grace... I translated for my first time.

We went out soul-winning one day and had great opportunities to share the gospel and speak a word for Jesus. The congregation was encouraged by the fellowship and the preaching of God's Word. May God help us to keep moving forward in obedience to Him.

It was a blessing, and I have a grateful heart for my home church sending Dr. & Mrs. Weaver to be with us at this monument time.

This summer, I had the privilege to take a handful of teens to two different youth camps here in Mexico. The teens fellowshiped with other teens and heard the Word of God. There were a few teens that went that aren't saved, but we are praying for their salvation.

The Bible club in the small community outside of town called El Rancho Viejo (The Old Ranch) continues to move forward with a group of kids, mothers, and some grandmothers hearing the Word of God. After the lesson, we share a small refreshment to have some personal talking time with them.

We are so much closer to moving into the new church building. Thank you to Pastor Bill Howe and Friendly Baptist Church in Haltom City, TX - for sending an offering to install the electricity in the church building and the cables out by the street to the transformer.

Thank you to all of you for your prayers and financial support to invest in the new church building, to win souls, to disciple souls, and to establish this new church planting work in central Mexico. Thank you, dear churches, and to God be the glory!



WHAT IS NEEDED TODAY

In so many words, J. Frank Norris said many years ago—in relation to why the Bible Baptist Seminary was started in 1939—that what was needed was a school that teaches the whole English Bible, that is free from modernism, that will take a man from the engine cab, from between the plowshares, and teach him the Bible, and in so doing, equip him how to go out with a Bible under his arms, faith in his heart, and in the power of the Holy Spirit begin in a vacant lot and build a church to the glory of God.



Some 85 years later, drivers, engineers, and farmers, may still readily be taken from the road, rail, or field (from behind a truck, train or tractor), and prepared to preach the word, win souls, and to build churches, if it is the right kind of a school. Drivers, engineers, and farmers are ready-made potential students for ministerial training. The idea is that they leave a profession already begun in order to follow the Lord (like Peter, James, John, Andrew, and Matthew of old), having learned much from their vocation which can be refined for use in the ministry by a thoroughgoing Biblical course of study. One wherein all sixty-six books of the Word of God are taught consecutively, as found in the Bible.



Likewise, during the early post-war years of the late 1940s, men discharged from the military entered the BBS. They did so to fulfill a commitment to God that was cultivated by what they had seen and experienced while involved in the greatest conflict of modern times for the future of the civilization. Soldiers today can find the same kind of place in a school like the NBBS wherein not only men right out of high school who have sensed a call to the ministry, but also many in their late 20s, as well as their 30s, 40s, and 50s, or older, make up the student body.

Is a Bible, faith in it, and the power of the Spirit sufficient? Yes. Even in a world which is increasingly high-tech, nothing is as cutting-edge as the Bible. A book, that in the hands of the Spirit, pierces "to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit"—something no man can do! By its very nature, it will always be the most advanced, yet settled presentation of truth there will ever be.

What can be more modern than a book of timeless truths given by an eternal and all-knowing Creator? Because God is outside of time and sees the past, present, and future all at once, He can impart truth that is ageless. Therefore, nothing could be more state-of-the-art and up-to-date than His Word. It is proactive, prescient, and penetrating in its message in ways no other writing could ever be (Psalm 119; Galatians 3:8; II Timothy 3:16-17 - "thoroughly furnished"). The "old-time religion" is actually the "all-time religion" (even an ongoing relationship with God).



Accordingly, the better one is taught the Scriptures in Bible school, the more relevant will be the training—as in a school like NBBS, in which 44 of the 48 courses of study are in Bible, theology, church ministry, and living the Christian life. Of which, 24 of these courses are direct Bible exposition, wherein all the books of the Bible are taught as they are found. An institution in which the classes are not only still free from modernism, but also that which inevitably follows it — postmodernism, which now permeates our society (which in essence is the idea that truth is relative, that there is no one truth for everyone).

Nothing will prepare a preacher for 21st century ministry like a grounding in the Bible's contents, teachings, doctrines, and principles! *Who better to do so than a faculty made up of like-minded preachers as your pastor, as at NBBS, who are also active in church ministry?*



Where NBBS Initially Started 40 Years Ago and Is Residing Now While Our New Facility Is Being Built.

INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

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Fort Worth, Texas 76108

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INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

The Searchlight

MARCH/APRIL 2024 VOLUME 40 ISSUE 5

40th IBFI Annual May Fellowship Meeting Monday Evening-Thursday NOON • May 20-23, 2024

"...the things that thou hast heard of me..., THE SAME COMMIT THOU TO FAITHFUL MEN, who shall be able to teach others also." II Timothy 2:2

At the Worth Baptist Church,
4900 Campus Drive, Ft. Worth, TX 76119

Starts **Monday Night at 5:30** with **BBQ Banquet & Guest Preacher Dr. Johnny Pope**

TUESDAY 9 AM - NOON 7:00 PM NBBS Graduation	 Pastor David Webb Walker Springs Road Baptist Ch., Jackson, AL	 Pastor Michael Wiggins Grace Tabernacle Ind. Baptist Ch., Mobile, AL	 Dr. Johnny Pope Christchurch Baptist Fellowship, Houston, TX	 Evangelist Jonathan Stewart Victory Baptist Church, Weatherford, TX
	 Jack Doty IBFI Home Ch. Planting Missionary (ABCP) Central Baptist Church Gainesville, TX	 Pastor Eric Crawford IBFI President Heritage Baptist Church, Haslet, TX	General Assembly NBBS Update Special Offering Business Session Elections	 Mark Haynes Missionary Navajo Nation Dr. Raymond W. Barber IBFI Pres. Emeritus
WEDNESDAY 9 AM - NOON 7:00 PM (Evening Service is at Worth Baptist Church, Fort Worth, TX)	 Evangelist Bill Hardin Santa Fe Baptist Ch. Weatherford, TX	 Pastor Heath Van Zandt Antioch Baptist Church, Rhome, TX	 Pastor Tyler Gillit Worth Baptist Church, Ft. Worth, TX	\$75,000 OFFERING GOAL
THURSDAY 9 AM - NOON				\$75,000 OFFERING GOAL

40 YEARS AND STILL ON TRACK!



Don't Miss Our 40th Graduation!

IBFI Mission Agency

Helping Independent Baptist Churches
Get Their Missionaries to the Field

Individual Church Sent Missionaries Supported by Many Churches

N. America
C. America
S. America
Europe
Africa



For Specific Nations: www.ibfi.us • EMAIL: missionoffice@ibfi.us

NBBS - Now in Our 40th Year & STILL ON TRACK!

SINCE 1984

Still Fervent About Soul Winning Discipling Church Building	Still Focusing on Training Preachers Pastors Evangelists Missionaries Titus 1:3	Still Teaching the Whole English Bible (KJV) All 66 Books in Order Acts 20:27	Still Imparting the Great Historic Baptist Beliefs II Timothy 2:2, 15, 3:14
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The Searchlight

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PO Box 151259 | Ft. Worth, TX 76108 | Phone: 817.367.3422 | Email: ibfi@ibfi.us | Website: IBFI.us

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"The Bible is worth all other books which have ever been printed." Patrick Henry

THE FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH

(Article Four in a Series)

*Dr. Raymond Barber
President Emeritus*

The Indestructibility of the Word of God

(continued from Article Three dated: January/February 2024)

In Mark 13:31, Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away." The Psalmist wrote in Psalm 119:89: "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven."

The Psalmist also wrote in Psalm 12:6,7: "The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace Of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them From this generation for ever."

Let it be known that the Word of God cannot be duplicated, replicated, eradicated, exterminated, or invalidated. No book in the history of the world has been attacked so viciously as the Word of God has been attacked. However, it has outlived all of its critics, and has remained the best seller of all times and is ahead of the next so-called best seller off the press.

In the country of France, there is a monument to the Huguenots, who died as martyrs, that has this inscription:

*"Hammer away, ye unregenerate hands;
Your hammer breaks; God's anvil stands."*

A well-known hymn by Haldor Lillenas:

*"The Bible stands like a rock undaunted
Mid the raging storms of time;
Its pages burn with the truth eternal
And they glow with a light sublime.
The Bible stands every test we give it
For its author is divine:
By grace alone I expect to live it,
And prove it, and make it mine.
The Bible stands though the hills may tumble,
It will firmly stand when the earth shall crumble.
I'll plant my feet on its firm foundation,
For the Bible stands."*

Down through the years, men have burned it, botched it, belittled it, banished it, blasphemed it, butchered it, banned it, and buried it, but never destroyed it. Voltaire, the eighteenth century agnostic, tried and failed to destroy the Bible. Mary, Queen of Scots, tried and failed to destroy the Bible.

In 1939, a time capsule was buried containing a Bible, among other items. When asked, "Why a Bible?" The vice-president of the Westinghouse Corporation answered, "The Bible is the most likely book to survive the ages. When it is dug up 100 years from now, they will discover that the Bible links the present with the future."

The Bible: God's Book has survived all attempts to destroy it, and when the sun has turned into darkness and the moon into blood, the Bible will still be the Living Word of the Living God!

(continued in next issue)

STAYING THE COURSE



*Eric Crawford,
IBFI President*

It is hard to believe that 40 years have passed since the first students graduated from the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary. Of course, back then it was called the Norris Bible Baptist Institute. I came to Norris in 1992, when it was just a three-year institute. During those three years, I received more Bible than most people did at many of the four-year Bible colleges at the time. I am so thankful for the Biblical foundation I received at NBBI. That same Biblical foundation is still being given to our students today. Now with a fourth year added, our students have a greater opportunity to gain Bible instruction to enable them to be effective in ministry, teaching and preaching the Bible, and staying on track theologically.

I am looking forward to the May meeting and our 40th graduating class. Please do not forget the Norris offering to be taken on Wednesday, May 22nd. Our goal this year is \$75,000. This offering is important, as it will facilitate the school being able to provide a building and staff to continue for another 40 years.

"STILL ON TRACK" AFTER 40 YEARS!



*Jonathan J. Stewart,
NBBS President*

We are on the verge of our 40th graduation. The year of 1984, when NBBS started, does not seem that far away to me. I came to Ft. Worth to go to school in 1978, to further prepare for the ministry. That certainly does not seem like 46 years ago! Our graduates of course, have the near-at-hand in view. This is normal. Our theme verse for the seminary is II Timothy 2:2 - "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also," has both a long look back to the first century of Church Age Christianity and into the future unto the rapture of Church Age saints. We, in conjunction with their churches, sought to train the graduates, that they would also someday finish their course as Paul so well depicted to his son in the ministry Timothy (II Timothy 4:7-8) - "I have kept the faith." Accordingly, this is yet another graduating class with great potential to impact eternity for God!

These graduates have been educated at NBBS during providential times. They not only have been a part of the largest enrollment numbers of the school, but pushed through during the twist and turns of the COVID distraction (spring of 2020 through spring of 2022), attending classes by ZOOM from their homes, wearing of masks, taking daily temperature, and assisting in regularly sanitizing the school facility. Then in helping move to our temporary relocation of the seminary to Worth Baptist Church this past fall semester, while our new facility is being built and our new campus developed.

Daniel R. Barker and his wife Leah moved from Ohio to DFW with their four children, to attend NBBS with the encouragement of their pastor Jerry Siler. As members of the Cornerstone Baptist Church of Dayton, Ohio, the Barkers were able to get church staff experience before heading to the Lone Star State. He was further influenced through the efforts of Dr. Barber, Dr. Terry Riggsby, and myself - all in a short amount of time as we were each preaching at Cornerstone within a few months of each other. Daniel brought with him a varied skill set of starting, building and running service based businesses. The company he started also provided job opportunities for fellow students. As has been the case with other older students, Daniel's experience and job related resources enabled him, on several occasions, to assist in different ways the repair and maintenance needs of the school facility. Daniel is receiving a Bachelor's Degree with a Major in Bible and a Minor in Pastoral Ministry.



Leah K. Barker, in the same spirit as her husband's, demonstrated a resiliency and perseverance as a student while also being committed to maintaining a balance as a wife and mother. During some of this time, she taught in the Christian school at her church. Her and Daniel will both readily tell you that the course schedule strategy at NBBS (same-day, single-subject, double lecture class structure whereby both lectures of every course are given the same day, rather than two or three different days of the week) went a long ways in making it much more feasible for them to pursue their education. The Barkers are members of the Heritage Baptist Church of Haslet, Texas. Leah is graduating with an Associate's Degree in Bible.

Elizabeth M. Blair is the wife of alumnus Jared Blair. They are our newest IBFI missionaries and have recently started deputation to raise their support to serve the Lord in Norway as church planters. Just a few weeks ago they returned from a two week survey trip of the field, plus tour of it, with an even more focused and energized burden for the field. Elizabeth is the daughter-in-law of Roy Blair, who is the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Meadowview, Mesquite, Texas. Elizabeth attended NBBS while engaged to Jared, and then returned to finish up her degree a short time after their marriage. She has delighted the student body with her singing and contributed to the warm atmosphere of the school with her ministering heart toward her fellow female students. Her heart for missions has always been apparent, and it has become increasingly in the forefront as she has shown a desire to embrace the language and culture of their field beyond just the need to "know it." Elizabeth is graduating with an Associate's Degree in Church Ministry.



Derek Bray was called to preach while under the pastorate of Bro. Bill Hardin, now the retired pastor of McPherson Road Baptist Church of Ft. Worth, Texas. After Bro. Hardin's retirement, Derek remained in the church for a while under the ministry of Jonathan Mann, who after being the associate pastor at the church under Bro. Hardin, became the pastor. More recently, he has become a member of the Worth Baptist Church of Ft. Worth, Texas, where Tyler Gillit is pastor. Derek has diligently served for three summers at the Camp Liberty Youth Camp in Oakwood, Texas (a ministry out of the Worth Baptist Church), and plans to do so again this summer. Derek has, as the others, continued to grow in grace and spiritual direction and has been an encourager of his classmates. He has a giving nature, a servant attitude, even a "readily willing spirit" to help about him, all of which is coupled with a strong work ethic. He is on a trajectory that will not taper off for some time as he stays on track. Derek is receiving a Bachelor's Degree with a Major in Bible and a Minor in Pastoral Ministry.



Brian C. Cox has been a long time member of the Victory Baptist Church, and became the full-time youth director seven years ago, and the associate pastor two years ago. Bro. Rob Catuto is his pastor, and Dr. Charles Wetherbee is his Pastor Emeritus. Beforehand, he taught science and history classes for seventeen years in public high school and middle school settings in both Weatherford, and Springtown, Texas. He also was a coach for several sports in those schools during his teaching days. He and his wife, Christina, have four children. Having secured a bachelor's degree in secondary education from Stephen F. Austin State University many years ago, he came to the NBBS to pursue a One-Year Bible Diploma. Because of his busy schedule, Brian would typically take one course a semester. While so doing, he has been a positive presence at the seminary for a few years, and is very well thought of at Victory Baptist Church.

Isaac A. Day came with his sail set from day one. In light of our theme this year, he was already on track when he enrolled his freshman year. He has pressed on with a steadiness and an increasing head of steam as time went on. Isaac was a member of the Heritage Baptist Church of Haslet, Texas, where alumnus Eric Crawford is the pastor. Now, he is in a youth director's role at Santa Fe Baptist Church, Weatherford, Texas, where Tony Thomas is pastor. Overall, Isaac's attendance has been excellent. His grades have been very good. He has shown steadfastness in his walk with the Lord, and diligence in getting his assignments finished and turned in on time. He has participated in most every aspect of the school's program as it relates to extracurricular events such as Norris Nights, field trips (e.g. excavations of dinosaur footprints, and related aspects, at Glen Rose, Texas, with the Creation Evidence Museum), being part of a team which, conducted summer VBS programs for churches (including fellow graduates, Derek, Caleb, Joshua, and other students). Isaac will be receiving a Bachelors Degree with a Major in Bible and Minor in Pastoral Ministry.



Caleb M. Duckworth came to get a year of Bible school as a very worthy foundation to whatever direction or field he felt God would lead him toward, after high school. After the first year, he was hooked on the Bible, God, and the ministry, and soon sensed a call to preach. He is a member of the Lighthouse Baptist Church of Grand Prairie, Texas, where alumnus David Grice is the founder and pastor. Caleb's parents and grandparents have played a major role in the success of the Lighthouse Baptist Church. He has brought an accentuation to the school's spirit and educational setting by his wittiness, his making of historical reference points at times, his insightful words, and his all around good nature. Caleb will be receiving a Bachelors Degree with a Major in Bible and Minor in Pastoral Ministry.

Joshua Herrera was called to preach while active in the church plant in Corpus Christi, Texas, which was headed up by alumnus James Stone, under the auspices of the Heritage Baptist Church of Haslet, Texas, where alumnus Eric Crawford is the founder and pastor. Dr. Willie Weaver further informed Joshua about the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary while preaching for Bro. Stone at what became the Coastline Baptist Church, in Corpus Christi. Under the inspirational shadow of his grandfather, who pastored for many years, and parents who have been involved in church ministry, Joshua hit the ground running with an eagerness to learn, and make use of what he learned. It was not long before a door opened unto him to serve under the mentoring ministry of Shannon Eaton, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church of Ft. Worth, Texas. He clearly evidenced the third aspect of what we emphasize at NBBS: "You get one-third of your training here at the seminary, one-third at your church, and one-third on your own." In so doing, greatly enhanced his education experience at NBBS. He recently became a member of Heritage Baptist Church in Haslet, Texas, in order to further prepare to be a church planter. Joshua will be receiving with a Bachelors Degree with a Major in Bible and Minor in Pastoral Ministry.



ALUMNI NEWS



*Heath Hogue,
Alumni President*

Paul in encouraging and charging Timothy said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"

Graduation at the Norris Bible Seminary is such a great evening. The service is always so sweet, the music is uplifting, the message is inspiring, and the granting of diplomas is certainly encouraging.

You may be in the middle of the fight now, or approaching the end, the important thing is to make sure to fight the good fight. It is encouraging to have Bro. Daniel & Mrs. Leah

Barker, Bro. Derek Bray, Mrs. Elizabeth Blair, Bro. Brian Cox, Bro. Isaac Day, Bro. Caleb Duckworth, and Bro. Joshua Hererra alongside in the fight. Paul gave this charge to Timothy in his second letter, chapter 4, verse 7. In his first letter, Paul told Timothy "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare, holding faith, and a good conscience..."

We are in this fight together so let us not waver, not wander, and not wash out. Encourage these eight graduates in the ministry as their graduation is an encouragement to all of us, reminding us that God is still calling laborers.

Congratulations to all the graduates, and looking forward to what the Lord will do through your ministry.

METROPLEX AREA IBFI MEETINGS

APRIL 18, 2024
Antioch Baptist Church
Rhome, TX
Pastor Heath Van Zandt
Lite Breakfast at 8:30 AM
Services begin at 9:30 AM with lunch to follow

JUNE 20, 2024
Homeless No More Baptist Church
2808 Loving Ave.
Fort Worth, TX 76106
Lite Breakfast at 8:30 AM
Services begin at 9:30 AM with lunch to follow

JULY 18, 2024
Bible Baptist Church
1717 Old Brandon Rd
Hillsboro, TX 76645
Lite Breakfast at 8:30 AM
Services begin at 9:30 AM with lunch to follow

IBFI FALL FELLOWSHIP MEETING

Tuesday - Thursday
October 15-17, 2024
Walker Springs Road Baptist Church
Jackson, Alabama

UPCOMING EVENTS

IBFI ANNUAL SPRING FELLOWSHIP
Monday-Thursday
May 20-23, 2024
Worth Baptist Church
Fort Worth, TX

MAY FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES
Monday evening we will have the J. Frank Norris Fellowship Memorial Dinner at 5:30 PM. There will be a service to follow at 7:00 PM.

Tuesday afternoon there will be a board meeting held at 2:00 PM A lite lunch will be served for the board members and their wives.

Graduation services will be Tuesday evening at 7:00 PM. Afterwards, we will have a small reception to honor the graduates and their families.

Wednesday at noon we will have our Annual Alumni Luncheon. Everyone is invited, we hope that you make plans to attend.

The Wednesday evening services will be held at Worth Baptist Church, in Fort Worth, TX at 7:00 PM.

Thursday morning will be the final charge for "Still on Track!"

Nursery will be provided for all services.

MISSIONS STORE 2024

Help Our Missionaries
Out by Donating a Gift.

Please consider giving to our IBFI missionaries this year. Each year, we gather gift cards, as well as new, unused items for our missionaries. This is a special blessing to them each year, and we hope that you and your church can take part. Please call Shirley Peeples at 817-367-3422 (ext. 101) if you need more information.



HOTEL INFORMATION

FORT WORTH

Hampton Inn & Suites
6555 Park Brook
Forest Hill, TX 76140
(817) 551-7775

Holiday Inn Express & Suites
3550 SE Loop 820
Forest Hill, TX 76140
(817) 775-0357

Best Western Inn & Suites
3230 Forest Hill Cir
Fort Worth, TX 76140
(817) 293-1667

BURLESON

Home2 Suites by Hilton
13233 Jake Ct
Burleson, TX 76028
(682) 255-6888

Holiday Inn Express & Suites
13250 Jake Ct
Burleson, TX 76028
(817) 426-0396

Hampton Inn & Suites
13251 Jake Ct
Burleson, TX 76028
(817) 295-2727

ELECTION INFORMATION

The Following Officers Have Served Three Years:

ERIC CRAWFORD President
DAVID GRICE Vice President
TYLER GILLIT Secretary

The Board Members Below Have Served Three Years and Their Terms Have Expired:

CHAD FITTS
KENNETH RALPH
DAVID PUGH

We will be voting at the General Assembly Meeting on Wednesday Morning at 11:00 AM.

Please come prepared to vote and to serve because each office is important.