



John Peebles,
IBFI Mission Director

With the passing of time, the importance of training leaders for the work of the ministry becomes increasingly evident. Thank God for faithful pastors, missionaries, deacons, their wives, church leaders, music ministers, workers, faithful men and women, soulwinners, teachers, the list goes on. And yet, our time here is limited. The need for new workers never ceases and often increases. Many of our most successful missionaries have devoted a large part of their ministry, not only to soul winning and church building, but also to the training of pastors, missionaries and church leaders. This month we have included the prayer letters of Missionary Danny Jones and the Bethesda Baptist Institute. Please pray that God will not only bless them but also multiply similar ministries around the world.

DANIEL AND MICHELLE JONES

MISSIONARIES TO THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY AND MEXICO

“For we are labourers together with God” I Corinthians 3:9

CHANGING OUR METHODS, NOT OUR MESSAGE

Dear Praying Friends,

I believe everyone has had to change some things in order to be able to get the message of the gospel out during these times. Our county finally allowed us to start a gradual re-opening in May, so we began with two Sunday morning services (one at 8 am and another at 10 am). Then in June, we began having mid-week services. We still have virtual Sunday school in the afternoons: Melissa Houston teaches the children, Eduardo Aparicio teaches the youth, and I teach the adults.

We were averaging 100 in Sunday school when the pandemic started; in the months of May and June, we averaged 80 on Sunday mornings!

Since our last letter, we have seen five souls saved (one at a funeral, two on visitation and two in services). All this in the midst of a pandemic and all the social distancing!

Emma Reyes, one of the ladies of our church, contacted the other women in the church; so that, from May 1-9 a different lady came by the house and left a gift on the porch or in the mailbox for Michelle. Then, for Mothers' day after church, they came by the house in a car caravan honking their horns. They also brought more gifts! All of this really encouraged her in her time of sickness! We thank God that her health is greatly improving. Please keep praying for her.

During this time, we had 13 people graduate from one of the discipleship courses. Because of the distancing measures, we had to give out the certificates by families. We praise the Lord that most of our church members have gone through at least two of the three discipleship courses we offer.



Because of social distancing, we have had to change the way we have services, the way we visit, and the way we do a lot of things; but the message remains the same: Jesus Saves! Jesus makes saints out of sinners! Jesus is our Lord and we are His servants!

In Him who died to save us,
Daniel and Michelle Jones

Prayer Requests: for a property for the work, for the Vacation Bible School in July, and for souls to be saved!

Also pray for our daughter Darla, she is due to have a baby in November!

BETHESDA BAPTIST INSTITUTES

(FIRST ONE FOUNDED IN 1980)

FOUNDERS: C.L. JONES AND DANIEL L. JONES, SR.

Dear Praying Friends,

We have some interesting news from Mexico and from our institute in McAllen!

Update on Student from Mexico: Chuy Herrera

Chuy was saved, baptized, and called to preach under our ministry in the Bethesda Fundamental Baptist Church in Monterrey, Mexico. He surrendered to the Lord in 2006 and began his Bible studies in September of 2007, graduated in August of 2011. His desire was be a missionary, but God had other plans for him. He later married Desideré, and they now have a son named Eli. For a while, they worked in a Baptist church in Escobedo, N.L.; then ran a bus route and started a mission. Now he is pastor of the Ebenezer Bible Baptist Church of Miguel Alemán, Tamaulipas, only about an hour from us! Please be in prayer for this young man and his family.

Update on our Institute in McAllen

In May & June I taught two institute courses: Doctrine of Salvation & Ecclesiastes. We had 12 students begin the classes and 11 finished. We had class by way of Messenger; and they took their tests after Sunday morning services. We did it this way because normally we have someone at the church to care for the children whose parents were in classes. However, we could not offer this service because of Covid-19. Our students won 6 souls and brought 8 visitors to church this semester!

Building Fund Update

We are pleased to let you know that we have more than \$140,000 saved up for the purchase of a place for the work in McAllen! We are so glad that the Lord prevented us from purchasing anything before the pandemic started! Pray that God in His time will lead us to the place He has for us. We hope to give a detailed update on this in our next letter.

INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

724 N. Jim Wright Freeway
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INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

The Searchlight

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2020 VOLUME 37 ISSUE 2

IBFI Semi-Annual Fall Meeting

Tuesday-Thursday • Oct. 13-15, 2020
Maranatha Baptist Church, Columbus, GA

TUESDAY - AM & PM

Dr. Barry Bedwell
Faith Baptist Church
Canton, Michigan

Bro. Kenneth Ralph
Pensacola Baptist Temple
Pensacola, Florida

Bro. Glen Anderson
Pensacola Baptist Temple
Pensacola, Florida

Dr. Charles Wetherbee
Victory Baptist Church
Weatherford, Texas

Retired Command Sergeant Major Archie L. Davis, Jr.

WEDNESDAY - AM & PM

Bro. Gene Stokes
Maranatha Baptist Church
Columbus, Georgia

The President's Hour
Dr. Willie Weaver
Worth Baptist Church
Ft. Worth, Texas

General Assembly
NBBS Update • Special Offering • Business Session

Missionary Robert Nordgren
Missionary to the Western US
Freedom Baptist Church
Murray, Utah

Dr. Raymond W. Barber
IBFI President Emeritus
NBBS Chancellor

THURSDAY - AM

Dr. Jerry Siler
Cornerstone Baptist Temple
Dayton, Ohio

Bro. Joshua Farmer
Gateway Baptist Church
Clarksville, Tennessee

Bro. David Grice
Lighthouse Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

OFFERING GOAL
\$40,000.00

IBFI Mission Agency
Helping independent Baptist churches get their missionaries to the field

With local church sent missionaries serving in

- Brazil
- Dominican Republic
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Malawi
- Mexico
- USA

Help us expand to reach around the world!
Visit us on the web: www.ibfi.us email: missionoffice@ibfi.us



“There is a place for you at NBBS! Spring semester starts January 12th.”

CHRIST IS THE ANSWER
JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TO DAY, AND FOR EVER

NBBS
A School of Specialization Since 1984

NORRIS BIBLE BAPTIST SEMINARY
Declaring Christ to the World by Training Preachers

The Searchlight

A publication and ministry of the Independent Baptist Fellowship International

724 N. Jim Wright Freeway | Ft. Worth, TX 76108 | Phone: 817.367.3422 | Fax: 817.246.4884 | Email: info@IBFI.us | Website: www.IBFI.us

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CHRIST IS THE ANSWER
"I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"

IBFI
INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL
Since 1984

JOHN 8:12

NBBS • MISSION AGENCY • SEARCHLIGHT
Training Preachers • Edifying Churches • Promoting Missions

THE “RADIO HATE FEST” THAT BECAME THE “RADIO LOVE FEST”

A Segment of the Controversy between
Dr. J. Frank Norris and the Denominational Machine



**Dr. Raymond W. Barber,
IBFI President Emeritus**

“I expect to look over the parapets of heaven and see Frank Norris frying in the bottomless pits of hell.”

This statement was a sample of the “hate Norris” atmosphere that set the stage for the **eight-night radio hate fest** that was designed to “hang Norris.” (The above quote was made by President J. L. Ward of Decatur College and was reported by G. B. Vick. It is also recorded, on page 164 in the book by Louis Entzminger entitled *“The J. Frank Norris I Have Known for Thirty-Four Years.”*)

Dr. W. B. Riley, pastor for forty years of the First Baptist Church of Minneapolis, wrote the following report and printed it in his magazine, *The Pilot*:

“The air in Texas has been blue during the month. Six or eight outstanding Baptist men connected directly with the Texas Baptist machine, undertook to give Norris a black eye over the radio. It would seem that they went in for a straight killing. Norris, in order to put past dispute what they said, arranged for a wax cylinder reception, and he gives the following samples of speech employed: ‘Malicious,’ ‘diabolical,’ ‘falsifier,’ ‘perjurer,’ ‘liar,’ ‘thief,’ ‘scoundrel,’ ‘reprobate,’ ‘despicable,’ ‘damnable,’ ‘devilish,’ ‘infamous,’ ‘murderer,’ ‘criminal,’ ‘dastardly,’ ‘heinous,’ ‘infamous liar,’ ‘malicious falsifier,’ ‘wicked,’ ‘corrupt,’ ‘hellish,’ ‘malicious liar.’

“At the close of these addresses delivered by Drs. Brooks, Scarborough and others, Frank was immediately upon the air for an answer. We heard him but once, but we were told by those who listened in nightly that this time was a sample of his regular procedure. He begged the air audience not to think hardly of his opponents, to remember that they were excited and heated up, and that their strong language did not represent their better spirit. He ignored very largely their hard names and malicious charge, and moved straight to the preaching of a first-class evangelistic sermon, concluding with a soul-winning appeal.

“We say without hesitation, that, while we have heard of men building platforms, adjusting nooses about their own necks, tying the upper end of the rope over a limb, and then kicking the platform from beneath themselves to dangle till death, we have seldom seen so many high class and apparently sensible men commit the same folly at one time as occurred in this procedure.”

It is a matter of record, that when the denominational leaders concluded their vicious attacks against Norris, he followed them immediately on the same radio station (KTAT). As they signed off, Norris signed on with a ladies’ quartet, in perfect harmony, singing:

*“For you I am praying,
For you I am praying,
For you I am praying,
I’m praying for you.”*

This was Step One in the “love fest.”

Step Two was when converted sinners, who had been saved under Dr. Norris’ ministry—drunkards, saloon keepers, and gamblers—stepped to the microphone to tell of their salvation.

Step Three was what Dr. Norris said concerning his hate mongers:

*“These men are good men, but are mad.
I feel sorry for them and I want to forgive them.
I have been mad myself and I know how bad it makes one feel.”*

Step Four of the love fest was when Dr. Norris spoke compassionately from the subject: *“The White Throne Judgment.”*

Step Five was when Norris concluded with a passionate appeal for sinners to come to Christ.

These five steps vividly tell the story of how the **Radio Hate Fest Became the Radio Love Fest**. Only the grace of God and love of Jesus Christ could turn such hatred into love.

LOVE IS SUPERNAL: WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS, LOVE PREVAILS!

BE ENCOURAGED



**Dr. Willie Weaver,
IBFI President**

I want to thank all of you who responded so well in helping us reach and go over our \$60,000 May offering goal. This was amazing, considering the fact that we could not have our National Fellowship

Meeting at the main campus in Fort Worth. We should all be encouraged! I believe it shows the strength of our Independent Baptist Fellowship International and the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary.

We are living in strange and unusual times. The Covid-19 Virus has changed many things in our personal lives, as well as in our churches and ministries. It is worldwide, and I know it has been difficult for our Missionaries around the world. We all have to adapt, adjust, and think through new approaches, but we must never quit moving forward in the awesome business of carrying out the Great Commission. God is in sovereign control, and when He chooses to make this Virus go away, He can and will.

We certainly are in a critical time as a Nation. If ever we needed to be registered to vote, and to vote for the right principles, it certainly is now. How sad it would be for our nation to espouse the socialistic philosophy. We must all be in prayer for the country we love. The price paid for our freedom has been high, and we do not want to lose it.

We are looking forward to having our fall IBFI meeting at the Maranatha Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia. The host Pastor is Bro. Mark Brown. He, his staff, and his church family are making plans now for the meeting. They have always done a wonderful job hosting meetings in the past, and we know this will be no exception.

The dates for the meeting are Tuesday-Thursday, October 13-15, 2020. I know traveling is different during these times, but hopefully some of the challenges will be cleared up by then. May I encourage you to make a special effort to be at our fall fellowship meeting.

Our offering goal for the fall fellowship has been set at \$40,000. It is important for us to reach our goal, to carry us through until our next offering at the spring fellowship meeting in May.

Thank you for your love, prayers, and support of the IBFI, the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary, our Missionaries, and the Searchlight.



MANY OF THE NBBS
FACULTY MEMBERS
AND THE 2020
GRADUATES

NBBS CHANCELLOR,
THE PRESIDENT, AND
LONGTIME FORMER
ADMINISTRATOR,
WITH THE GRADUATES

“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.”

II Timothy 2:2

WE ARE OFF TO ANOTHER GREAT START!



Jonathan J. Stewart, NBBS President

We are officially now into our 37th year, our 73rd semester at NBBS. Our theme for the year is “Christ is the Answer!”

To a world that is as collectively confused as it has ever been, Who and what Christ is, what He has done, and soon will be doing, is the singular hope of mankind. As Co-Creator God-Man, He is, in most every way, the only qualified Savior of mankind!

OPENING DAY RALLY!

Our traditional Opening Day Rally on Tuesday, August 11, which kicks off a new school year, went very well. In sensitivity to the COVID-19 situation, we met next door in the Raymond W. Barber Conference Center. Our Chancellor, Dr. Raymond Barber was our only preacher. The turnout of preachers and their wives was very good. The spirit was great and we had a host of new students joining in with the returning students.

In spite of the coronavirus situation, the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary began the semester with over 50 on-campus students. Additionally, we have a few students taking courses over the internet via ZOOM due to various ways the virus situation affects their presence on campus.

We are very grateful for the continued faithful support of our regular supporting churches and individuals, as well as to those who gave offerings for NBBS Sunday in March, the annual May offering, and the several special offerings that have come in since during the summer. We even had over \$1,000.00 given in the offering taken during the Opening Day Rally!

GRADUATION - FINALLY!

We were not able to have graduation in May, so we moved it to the evening of the same day of the Opening Day Rally. We filled the Conference Center floor with chairs - having spaced the chairs out in keeping with recommended guidelines. The turnout required we bring some more chairs and find “spacing” for them.

The music was headed up by alumnus Michael Wiggins, who is a faculty member and Associate Pastor of the Heritage Baptist Church, Haslet, Texas. Heritage provided the special music and their church pianist Abby Crawford was the pianist throughout the program. There was additional special music presentation by alumnus Stephanie Whiddon, wife of Hunter Whiddon, one of the graduates. Her sister, Elizabeth, also, an alumnus, accompanied her on the piano.

Our three graduates, James Chambers, Tony Roa, and Hunter Whiddon, had to wait three months for graduation, and so they were especially glad for the evening. They did fine in their brief sermons that included words of appreciation to all. Tony Roa received the Founder’s Award, and James Chambers the President’s Award. All three students were exemplary in so many ways. Bro. Roa graduated with perfect attendance even though, through the years as a student, he worked a split shift that included him coming to his 7:00 AM classes from work, and then returning to work after classes. He is also the youth director at his church. Both Bro. Chambers and Bro. Whiddon were heavily involved in their churches while in school. Bro. Whiddon served as an assistant pastor, and Bro. Chambers not only teaches a Sunday school class, but assists his pastor and church in several ways. As previously noted in the past Searchlight, Bro. Chambers and his wife also were also our dorm parents the last two years he was in school.



Bro. Frank Hefner, pastor of the Mountain Home Baptist Church, Jacksboro, Texas, and a 2005 NBBS graduate, received the Alumni of the Year Award. Through the years, he has continued to contribute to the seminary in various ways. He is a member of the faculty, and is very active in the community where he pastors.

GROWTH IN THE STUDENT BODY

Since returning to singularly being a seminary in the fall of 2014, and seeing the student body grow from a handful in the fall of 2014, to being in the fifties and even sixties, we look forward to May, 2021, as we have up to ten potential graduates. These will be added to the thirty who have been graduated since 2015, and the nearly two hundred from 1985-2014.

We continue to see the evidence that many must be praying for the seminary. God’s blessings upon NBBS continue to abound.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



**Kenneth Ralph,
Alumni President**

STARTING AFRESH THE ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP!

Since our school’s resurgence, which as you remember began in the fall of 2014, we have seen God do greater things than we could have imagined. God is obviously interested in our endeavor at NBBS.

• We have seen a record enrollment (61), and the student body not dropping below 50s for several semesters now. *Remember, we started with three committed students in the summer of 2014.*

• In addition to the May, and October offerings these last few years, none have been more amazing than this past May, in which we exceeded our \$60,000.00 goal, all the while not being able to meet at our annual spring meeting, because of COVID-19.

• Dozens of needed projects at NBBS have been completed and financed by over \$300,000.00 in designated funds, which have been given over the past five years.

Could we ever forget, in late December of 2014, the liquidation of the \$850,000.00 which remained on the loan for the additional land and the building of the Conference Center? A contribution was given from a longtime friend of the seminary. What a confirmation that God was at work in our midst!

All of this, and more that could be noted, has kept the cost of a student’s schooling at NBBS to a minimum. The cost is not a reflection of our education being inferior. Rather it is about God’s people and His churches keeping the cost down, so students can conduct their lives without being greatly encumbered by educational debt, while, and after they graduate. This allows them to more readily fulfill an even greater ministry to which God has called them.

In addition to these things, another ongoing help that was in place when I was attending NBBS, was the Ray Richey Attendance Scholarship. It continued for over three years at NBBS. Not only was I very glad that “salvation is free,” and even sung about (as Dr. Entzminger got the student body to sing about years ago at the old Bible Baptist Seminary, and then Dr. Barber, has now for over 36 years at NBBS), but I was also glad that “tuition was free,” through Bro. Richey’s generosity.

We are in the process of restarting some of the scholarships of the past, along with new ones already established. Bro. Stewart, who directs our seminary, has recently informed us accordingly. One of these is the Alumni Scholarship. We hope to take up an offering for it in May of 2021, so it can be fully offered yet again. This was the practice in days gone by at the alumni luncheon. In the meantime, I would like for us to offer a preliminary version of it for the spring semester of 2021. One that would “kick start” it for now, and in May, we can raise the funds for a full semester of tuition (\$1,350.00) next fall. What do you think?

Here is how we can do it. While at the semi-annual meeting, that is to take place at Maranatha Baptist Church in Columbus, Georgia, October 13-15, perhaps you would consider giving a personal offering toward the scholarship? If we took up among us, \$500 or more, that would be a great help to a student that fits the criteria for the scholarship. This offering would be separate from the \$40,000.00 offering goal for the fellowship to which our churches largely contribute.

If this seems like a worthy endeavor, please consider sending in an offering marked “Alumni Scholarship” even now to be used in the Spring of 2021, for that very purpose. Any amount would be greatly appreciated. Hope to see you in October.

SUCCESSFUL OPENING DAY RALLY



**Terry Riggsby,
NBBS Field Representative**

OPENING DAY RALLY

Despite the Covid-19 threat, the new semester at the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary got off to a great start on Tuesday, August 11! Opening Day Rally was very well attended with many pastors, alumni, and current student body. We heard some very inspiring words from Dr. Barber.

NBBS GRADUATION SERVICE

Congratulations to our newest graduates: James Chambers, Tony Roa, and Hunter Whiddon. After receiving their diplomas, they each gave a challenge to the student body in attendance. Please be in prayer for these men and their families as they begin their full time ministries.

A reminder, I am available for pulpit supply, or a presentation of the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary. I can be reached at 817-648-1859.

UPCOMING EVENTS

IBF METROPLEX MEETINGS

September 17 - Thursday - Open Door Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas – Host Pastor Heath Hogue

November 19 - Thursday – TBD

December 17 - Thursday – TBD

Make your plans NOW to attend IBFI FALL FELLOWSHIP MEETING

Tuesday - Thursday, October 13 - 15, 2020
Maranatha Baptist Church
Columbus, Georgia – Host Pastor Mark Brown

HOTEL INFORMATION

Home 2 Suites 1664 Whittlesey Road Columbus, GA 31904 (706) 257-6931	Best Western Plus 4027 Veterans Court Columbus, GA 31909 (850) 944-7653
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Columbus, GA 31909
(706)494-0050

Mention the “IBFI” at the Home 2 Suite and Residence Inn, a lower rate will be charged.

Full details will be at the IBFI website www.ibfi.us