



THANK YOU!!!! so very much for the anniversary cards and gifts we received for our 23rd wedding anniversary! You made us feel so special! It was a true joy to open each one and to read your best wishes. What a wonderful loving Region you are! May the good Lord bless you all back an hundred fold! Again, THANK YOU!!!! for making our anniversary even more special! We love you!

Bro. & Sis. Kramer

THANKS!!!! so very much for all the Happy Birthday cards and gifts you sent to me for my 4th Birthday! It was lots of fun hearing Mommy and Daddy say, "You've got mail!" I had lots of fun opening each one and looking at them over and over again. May God bless each of you! You truly blessed me and I love you!

Sis. Jodi Kramer

Greetings WMB Georgia and Florida! Praise the Lord for His goodness and mercy. Praise Him for the blood that was shed on Calvary for our sins. Remember without His blood there would be no remission for our sins. Thank God, Thank God the way has been prepared! It cost our savior and always remember He paid the price! What can we do in return? Give Him our lives, obey His will, and serve Him all the days of our lives! We're traveling the Heavenly Highway and we want to make Heaven our home. Where God, Jesus, and the Holy Ghost is; that's Heaven! Don't you want to go? YES! YES! YES! Hope to see you soon.

Loving and Praying for you all,

Sis. Vera Vaughn

WMB Coordinator



Message from the Assistant Editor

I would like to add more information to our Regional web site. Please pass along any information that you would like to add. You can view and print **The Shepherd's Voice** and check out the past issues from the web site also. Check it out at <http://www.tcgflga.org>. God bless all of you and please keep me in your prayers!

Tony Conner—Assistant Editor

To submit articles or subscribe to **The Shepherd's Voice**, send them to Tony Conner at:

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"PREPARING FOR THE TASK"

Melvin Kramer—Regional Overseer

As we look around today there is a great task that lies before us. This task includes witnessing, preaching, teaching, comforting and just plain out giving the world Jesus. But to prepare for the task we must remember three very important steps: praying, planning, and preparing.

The story of Nehemiah calls attention to the broken walls in our churches, our families, and our society. The book of Nehemiah is the story of how God raised up one person to lead His people in the midst of a broken situation, to rebuild the wall around Jerusalem. In chapter 2, we uncover factors that are critical in the preparing for the task of rebuilding.

I. Pray

A. Realize the importance of prayer.

The most important feature of the first two chapters of Nehemiah is prayer. In them we are impressed with the earnest fervor with which Nehemiah prayed. The burden produced tears and a commitment to fast as he cried out to God. The sad plight of the people in Jerusalem and also the ruins of the city grieved him much. The persistence of his prayer is reflected in his continuing to pray for four months. Do we turn our hearts to prayer when faced with broken situations?

B. Realize the effectiveness of prayer.

The day came when the heart of the king was turned. It wasn't too soon or too late. The timing was part of God's perfect plan. It was the pagan Persian king who posed the question as to what was the burden on Nehemiah's heart. What an encouragement, the Lord can use anyone to accomplish the work He's burdened us to do.

II. Plan

A. Plan in the midst of sorrow.

It was an ordinary day with Nehemiah going about his tasks as he usually did and doing them with excellence. The only thing different was his sad countenance, yet he was prepared to respond should the king inquire. When the day of inquiry came, Nehemiah responds with a clear and precise three-part answer. 1) He wants to go to Jerusalem; 2) He needs a guarantee of a safe passage; 3) He will need supplies and materials for the task at hand.

B. Plan in the midst of prayer.

It is clear that Nehemiah had been planning while he was praying. While on his knees before God,

a plan began to form in his mind. This should be comfort to us that we must believe when we pray and plan to move forward when God opens the door.

III. Prepare to encounter resistance.

A. For the first time in the story we find those that would highly oppose the work God had for Nehemiah to lead. They knew Nehemiah's purpose was to come alongside his oppressed people and to organize and to equip them to restore the glory of God by the rebuilding of the wall. He had no desire for personal gain or glory. But because he was committed to God's purposes, he drew fire from the opposition. There were lots of God's people in the area that had lived there a long time, but there was no indication that there had been any opposition from the enemy. It's only when one with a burden and a made up mind and a message that says "come let us build" that opposition begins. There is never a fight or a hindering force when one comes with just good intentions. But just good intentions will not build the walls.

So let us begin to prepare for the task that lies before us with much praying, planning, and preparing. If we do our very best, God will do the rest.

God Bless You.

Bro. Melvin Kramer

Greetings, All, in the Name and Love of Jesus. We look forward to the Lord's blessings in the Florida/Georgia Region at the Ministers' Convention in Perry, Florida. In the South Georgia District, we anticipate the October 5th Fellowship at The Church of God of Blackshear, Georgia which is pastored by Brother Steve Wilson. South Georgia District Overseer, Bro. James Morgan, has scheduled District Fellowships for almost every month of the church year with each one hosted by a different local church. Some goals of these meetings are to:

1. remain in touch with each other spiritually as well as physically.
2. report praises and specific needs within the district.
3. get more excited and involved in truly sharing the Truth of God's Word.
4. share contact information of any relatives, acquaintances within the district who need to be reached with the saving message of Jesus Christ and of The Church of God.
5. mapping all potential contacts for concerted outreach efforts through prayer, visitation, and special church services in these mapped areas.

Pastors of the South Georgia District have been asked to collect contact information (see item 4) from their members/friends of the Church and submit them to Bro./Sis. Lisenby by mail, e-mail, phone, letter, or at District Fellowships. We hereby extend this request throughout our Region. The first area designated for intensive outreach, revival, and ultimately, church growth is Douglas, Georgia where Brother Steve Wilson has already begun a work. The next area will be determined upon mapping the collected leads and seeing what central location can potentially reach the most people. Much commitment, determination and involvement are required for these efforts to be effective. We can each put forth the necessary energy for accomplishment of these goals by reaching more to God through faith, prayer, fasting, and leaning on Jesus. Pray for the increased faith of each of us (put me first on your list) and the knowledge of where, specifically, God wants each of us to direct more effort in His Work.

We must all work together "...while it is still day..." in order for God's Commission to be accomplished in time. The song, *"I want To Be Ready"* comes to mind as I meditate on OUR LORD'S SOON RETURN. Let's each be ready by doing all we can to give our sisters and brothers the opportunity to also be ready.

On a personal note we would like to share with you our joy at recently being able to worship in morning service with our folks in Hudson, Florida at The Church of God of Spring Hill; and in Tampa, Florida at the evening service at The Church of God, Tampa Mission.

May God Bless and Keep you is our prayer, Raymond and Betty Lisenby



Do you think you can add up? Mat 5:15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. God has placed a calling on his Church! We are to bring them in! However, it seems we have forgotten somewhat what we are doing. We go on in our daily lives to work and school not really thinking that every person you pass could be going to an eternal hell. That one. That one. That one. This does NOT have to be the way we live our lives. We should have our roots grounded in Jesus, not our friends, family, or some material item. If you could take a measuring stick and for each person you witnessed to you would get one inch. How tall would you really be? Would you be a Giant for God? No? Then we have work to do.

Your lifestyle is the start of your witness (besides your salvation of course!). Sure you might do right, but are you living the life? Even sinners know how to treat others good.

Mat 7:11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? But we should give more.

1Co 13:3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity (meaning love, Gods love), it profiteth me nothing.

Are your actions those of a fired-up-God-fearing-Love-abounding witness? Or do you try to live to yourself? The bible says to hide the truth in your heart - so it can't be stolen. Not so it can't be shared! My friend you have something that will do your friends and family more good then winning McDonald's monopoly game ever could! YOU HAVE THE TRUTH! YOU HAVE GOD'S LOVE! SALVATION! SANCTIFICATION! AND THE HOLY GHOST!! We must let it shine out! It doesn't matter how bright a flashlight is if you set it face down on a table it gives NO LIGHT. Get up! Get out! Go share it!

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

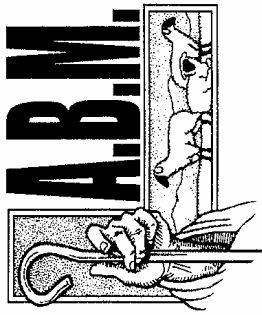
CLASSES! To all VLB leaders, young ministers, or eligible youth in the region: I will be hosting three classes over the next few months (one for each main area of the region). I feel a need to teach just what VLB is. To be fired up for Gods work, and be successful in the appointment we should know as much as we can about it. We will be covering four main topics: Physical, spiritual, administrative, and financial. I will be contacting the local churches soon for more details on location and time. I am going to try to cover the region as best as I can.

YOUTH CONVENTION.... YES ALREADY!! The youth convention will be April 11-12 at the local church in Cedar Crossing, GA. I am trying to cut cost as much as I can so we will not need to pay for any outside facilities. The Local church will also be supplying lunch to help cut on cost. Please be in prayer for God to bless. I have much more in the works including a very special speaker! I know God will move. Let's go expecting!

VLB THEME This years Theme is **"The finish line....Racing to Glory"**. Each local church will be receiving fliers along with some other material at the ministers convention in November. Look for a boost on this years theme in the next SV article!

Michael Steptoe,
GA/FL VLB COORDINATOR

“Guarding the Feed”



2Kings 4:40 So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof.

Now the above reference comes from the last part of Chapter 4 when Elisha had given orders that pottage (soup) be made for the sons of the prophets so they could be on their way with the nourishment their bodies needed. The result of that command was that one of the servants went about the fields collecting herbs and came upon a wild vine. He decided to take it and use it. Now, the scripture tells us that he didn't know what it was that he gathered so much of. The poisoning may not have been intentional, but it was deadly nevertheless.

Sometimes in the effort to fill the pulpit, the auxiliary service, the offering boost or the devotional, we grab whoever is willing and often they grab the first thought with no thought of it's validity or scriptural soundness. They may know not what wild gourd they are feeding. It may not always be to the detriment of your sheep, but there is the chance it can be most fatal to the souls of your congregation. We must be careful shepherds and guard the feed. It is our commission to feed the sheep and lambs of God. Do we wish them to be fed harmful or tainted grain? Of course not.

When praying and studying for your messages, be certain you've understood the context and spirit of the Word and that your words are seasoned with the anointing of God. There have been many ministers preach things over the years that have fallen on fertile ears. Some of those crops flourished and today there are souls hanging in the balance because of something preached or taught in haste. We must be sure we guard the feed.

Every word spoken and every song sang must be done with a honest effort to get the full benefit and nourishment for the sheep that are eating it. ABM leaders, don't let your little flocks be sick for lack of nourishment in your band services. Those small group meetings are a wonderful time to feed the sheep with healthy meals from the Word of God.

Be sure you spend the quality time you should in prayer and study. John 14:26 “But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” This is a scripture that many have used to excuse the need for study and prayer. The Holy Ghost, however, will not bring back what you have not first attained.

We also note that in the passage of scripture, that the people were eventually fed properly. Elisha added meal to the pot and fed the people. We aren't told that he made a new pot, but added to the pot that was already prepared. You and I must be like unto Elisha if we wish to see this type of miracle feeding. The Elijah's and Elisha's of old were warriors on their knees and they feasted on the Words that came from the Lord daily.

We may never get the opportunity that Elisha had to fix the grave errors in the feed. Let's be in guard to start with that our feed is properly prepared. Let us, as the ministry, prepare a recipe that all our lay people can witness from. Let us forever be mindful of who fills our pulpits, instruments, platforms and Sunday school classrooms. Let us keep guard over the feed!

Allene Cox
Regional ABM Coordinator

I want to hear from the field about what you are doing to bless your pastor. If you would, please contact me. We have great people all over the region that want to be creative in finding a way to help boost their pastor and to help their local ABM bands. If you have any ideas, please contact me or write the Shepherds Voice.

If I can be of help to the pastors and ministry in Florida and Georgia, please let me know. I am here to serve the Lord by serving you.

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Who's Who?



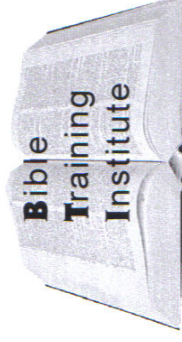
Each publication of the Shepherd's Voice will feature questions about someone. You have the opportunity to win a prize if you can figure out who it is and write into the Shepherd's Voice and/or call or send Allene Cox your guess with your personal testimony as well. If you don't feel you can write or mail it in, just contact Allene Cox and tell it to her and she will see that it gets published. Only one person can win per publication so, whoever contacts me first is the winner. What will you win? You will receive by mail a gift card and the satisfaction of knowing you are getting to know your spiritual siblings better. Don't assume someone has called or contacted me before you. It would amaze us to know how little we really know about one another. If the person being featured is not revealed, the hints for that person will be continued until someone guesses correctly. Don't hesitate! Get involved! You may be the next featured person or the next winner!

**Who among us ...
Loves to hunt,**

**Eats ketchup on eggs,
Says if they were a plant they'd be a cactus,
Has a favorite vacation spot---at home?**

Ask around and you'll soon discover you know this person like no other! The Winner from our last series of question was Rita Phillips from Perry, Florida. She won a \$10 gift card with her correct answer of Jodi Lynn Kramer! We love Sister Rita and her participation. We also love Sis. Jodi. She was out little birthday girl! God bless you both for all you've done to help us get to know one another better! Now, you can be the next winner! Just make a guess as soon as you get your Shepherd's Voice.

THAT I MAY KNOW HIM



The theme for the new BTI year is taken from Philippians 3:10; “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;”

As BTI representative I want to do more than encourage you to go to BTI this year. I am eager to see The Church if God in our region set a standard in learning more about the church and the Word of God. I can't afford to be certain every person gets to the Cleveland school. I don't have the wisdom to teach a course in every church myself. So, in seeking God on behalf of this very important arm of the church, I have felt led to launch a campaign to try to put a BTI correspondence course in the hands of every local church. This is not to see who can pass a test. It is instead to help us be unified in our efforts to know more about the Lord.

BTI is more than learning about the procedures of business and policy in the church. It encompasses more than just the right way to conduct the sacraments. This theme is to help us realize that we need to learn more about the body by getting acquainted and fellowshiping with the Head. How better to get to know the workings of the human body than to concentrate learning on the brain. The brain is the organ in the head that dictates the functions of the body. If we are ever going to experience perfection in the body, we must get to know Jesus. It is more than a salvation experience. It goes beyond putting your face in a book.

I would like each local church to be preparing itself to take the Christology course. I will be talking more about this at the minister's convention. I want to know more about my Lord, don't you? Anything our headquarters has put into a form that we can learn from will aid us in this endeavor. I think if we can get to know him better that he will point to his bride all the more. Oh to know him more!

Pray for the BTI work in our region. Pray for me that I will help us all want to learn more about the Head of the Church and the body he died for. Please call me if I can be of service to your local church.

God bless you! James R. Cox—BTI Representative FL/GA

Little People, Big Anointing!

Children's Ministries

My family and I occasionally watch a program called Little People, Big World. This program is about the Roloff family from Oregon. The family consists of a husband and his wife that are both dwarfs and their set of twins (one is dwarf and the other is average height), and their other two children (also average height). The show depicts all the struggles this family faces as they live in a world for average people and the obstacles they must overcome to achieve their goals. They face a lot of inconveniences and prejudices and yet the family operates a profitable farm and other successful business endeavors.

It is hard for me to believe the accomplishments the whole family has made through hardships and circumstances. However, when I read the account of David and his anointing in I Samuel chapter 16. I see the beginnings of a short, little "ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to." He was so insignificant that when the word that Samuel was coming (a very important visit indeed), David wasn't even called in from the fields where he kept a few of his father's sheep.

Samuel was sure one of the older brothers who had warrior type looks and stood head and shoulders above others in the community would surely be God's choice for the king. After all, from looks alone, they seem to portray all the right qualities. However, after each one, God said to Samuel, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart." Then, Samuel in desperation asked Jesse if there were any others. Jesse told him about David. Samuel knew this was the last choice, but he was so eager follow the will of God in the anointing that he told Jesse, "Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither." Can you imagine not even sitting down until this little ruddy, baby-face boy came in from the field? But, he was the one.

"And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he.

Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward." As you know, all this was before David was a giant killer. At this point, no one was aware of his power and strength and his leadership abilities. No one knew he would be called the "man after God's own heart". He was a just a cute little boy likely with knobby knees, dirty hands, filthy face and possibly bucked or missing front teeth, but God saw a mighty man of war, a man of love, and a King.

There are these same qualities in the children in our region. Some are from your church. Some are your grand-children and children. Some are being overlooked because we don't see their potential. Some are being chosen because of their name or their looks. Let us be very careful in our efforts to win and raise the children to see them through the eyes of God. Little ones? Yes, but the commission wasn't just for The Church of God adults. It must be carried out and God will use those he sees are willing and that He can mold and make after his image.

I can remember being a little one and thinking I had no place in the body and that because of my height, my lack of knowledge or my age I could do very little to make a difference. There were people who would even tell me that and also give that air of superiority that would shut down all my ideas of helping. Then there were those people who helped grow my creativity and taught me that God doesn't see age, size and gender as a barrier. These people helped me grow in the Lord and I still rely on them today to help nurture and teach me. It's the wisdom and love of those people that I want to portray to the children in Florida and Georgia. With this in mind, I have asked one of our children in the region to bless us with a written testimony about how she sees her role in the work of the Lord. I hope you are as blessed as I was in the following testimony written by Allison Munoz, Rossville Church:

Even When You're Seven Yrs. Old, You Can Do Stuff About Jesus. You can pray to Jesus, you can go to Church, and you can read your Bible. I love Jesus. Jesus Heals Us, You can pray for others. You don't need a room, you don't need toys, all you need is Jesus. I've read about Goliath in Sunday School. David practiced and practiced his shooting thing. Jesus sends angels to watch over us. Jesus sometimes don't let us die when we are in a car wreck. We had a float wreck on the river last week, and Jesus protected us. Sometimes Jesus keeps us from getting struck by lightning. You can do what Jesus tells you to even at seven, by honoring your mother and father.

Wasn't that beautiful? I may be asking some of your young people to send a testimony. We are also wanting to help you reach out to the young people at your church who may not get to attend conventions, camps and assemblies. If you have a child or children between 2-11 and you'd like me to correspond with them by mail, please feel free to send me their name and address. Be sure their parents are aware or permissive to that suggestion first. I would love to help you grow your church through the young people.

God bless you Sister Allison. And God bless all of you who are working for the little ones.

Sister Allene Cox

IDEAS:

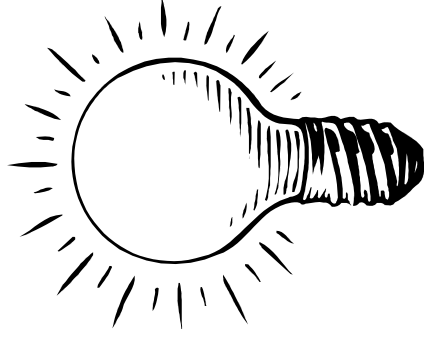
Labor of Love Tour

Ever hear "I'm bored"? I do. Every time I hear those words, I cringe! I decided that I would find a way to help my boys with their boredom. That's when a new chore gets added to our agenda or maybe some community service. Here's where the idea comes in.

How about you let the children of your church partner up with an older person who needs a friend to get their mail/ paper every day. Maybe the person needs their porch swept or their garage cleaned out. Work never hurt any one. Even the littlest children enjoy tasks like these. This will help foster a relationship with your older congregation and the children. I know little ones can often not do things as well as an older child, but they love to try and they love friendships. If you don't have a lot of willing persons to let them do tasks in their homes, maybe you could get them to arrive early for church and vacuum, pick up song books or sweep. You should accompany the child if they are going to anyone else's home.

I have tried this on a Saturday when the various people had one simple task for the children and all the children would load up in my car and we would make a church tour of helping. If the people offered, we would have refreshments there and move on. If not, we treated them to a cheap cone or drink at McDonalds after all the work tour was completed. Nursing homes and hospitals would be thrilled to have children come and tour the facility with homemade cards. The children could even take someone to the dining hall for meals or brush the hair of someone who can't do it anymore.

In conjunction with this campaign, you could have lessons on the Good Samaritan who didn't expect someone for his kindness, but gave all he had. A lesson on Matthew chapter 9 verses 37-38. These children will learn that they are needed for physical labor in the church and spiritual labor as well. There are so many places in the scripture that would help you reinforce this work campaign. Wasn't it Bro. Tomlinson who said, "A work for every member and a member for every work?"



God bless you! Sis. Allene Cox