

# BATTLEFIELD NEWS

## ONE ARMY

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The Official Publication of The Whole Body of Christ Alliance

#### PRAYING SISTERS

By: Richard Dean

Lois Camp and Ethel Lean Cooper, born Lois and Ethel Lean Johnson, have been at Bush Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church longer than anyone. Even though there are members of the congregation in their nineties, these two prayer warrior sisters have been attending the 148-year-old church longer than anyone. These two godly women, two of eight children, refused to have their pictures taken for this article, "because," they said, "the kingdom of God is not about us, but about Jesus. Put his picture or a picture of the church in the paper." Sister Lois and Sister Ethel Lean are at the church Wednesdays for the intercessory prayer meeting at 12 noon along with other members of Bush Chapel. These people pray with all they have got for their brothers and sisters, (cont pg 2)

## MISSION: ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE

BY: R.D. Hempton

The Worship is lively because the people are lively. Some of them shout, others loudly praise the Lord. They are lively because they are alive. They are excited because they realize that they are alive because they are aware that they were once just as dead as all those who have not reached up to embrace Yeshua the messiah.

"If you were on your death bed and someone came in and healed you, you would be very excited. You would not say, 'oh, thanks,' roll over and go to sleep." "If you are saved, you shout." Says Matthew Calvert, a visitor at the Love of God Mission, at 64 East Athens Street in Winder.

People began filing into the mission long before the service began, went to the altar in front and began praying. This reporter (cont pg 2)

#### You Cut Off My Arm

By: R.D. Hempton

Scott Bagwell had a dream that someone's arm had been cut off and no one who witnessed it was surprised, outraged or even cared. Scott, a deacon at Brazelton Tabernacle of Praise (BTOP), used this dream as the basis for his sermon. He demonstrated his point with the help of eight-year-old Danielle Fuller by telling her to place an offering plate on a table along with some other objects. Then he told her to place a ' milk crate filled with other objects onto the table. She could barely lift it with both arms. Then Scott instructed Danielle to lie on the table while he cut off her right arm with a machete (not really- she placed her right arm behind her back) to illustrate his point. Scott then told Danielle to place the filled milk crate on the table with her one good arm. (cont pg 3)

### Birthing of a Church

By: Richard Dean

Nothing is born without conceptionnot puppies, not babies, not ideas, not
answers to prayers- nothing is born
without conception. Nothing is
conceived without union. Conception
does not just happen. A church or an
answer to prayer is no exception.
There must be a union with God. God
operates on the basis of principles
found in scripture, our spirit is put in
union with his spirit and conception
takes place. Only after conception
takes place is the answer to prayer
able to be born.

Pastor Russell Page, and David and Roberta Owensby allowed this reporter to sit in on a meeting of Church birth planning at a restaurant in Brazelton, Georgia on 9 January 2011.

"The need is there," explained Pastor Russell, "seeing the manifestation of God's presence like at no other, where people are drawn (cont pg 3)

#### **Barefoot Preacher**

By: Richard Dean

About 15 years ago Pastor Doris L. Lewis, known by her congregation as Mother Lewis, did something incredible, the kind of thing one does not hear about but few times in a lifetime. Mother Lewis walked barefooted through the snow in the winter months in states such as Minnesota, New Jersey, and North Carolina. She did this all winter for a reason. Her son, Bishop Jerry Arnold called it a bare feet dedication. She walked around and prayed for people, healed cancer victims and other sick and needy people.

Mother Lewis is the pastor of **Move of God Church** at 24 West Williams Street in Winder, Where the praise and worship is energetic and the music will happen even if there are no musicians right then and the singing is a cappella. (cont pg 4)

#### Sanctuary of Pentecost Moved

By R.D. Hempton

Last month The Battlefield News (BFN) published an article on the Sanctuary of Pentecost, wherein it was reported that they were seeking a new location. That location has been established and the congregation has been meeting there since the beginning of the year.

Pastor Vander Etheridge and his crew have been remodeling even as church is being held. This reporter has seen the new location and it looks great and is looking better on a daily basis. The new location is 3388 Hwy 53 Ste C, Hoschton, Ga. 30548 in Merchants Park by the Kawasaki dealer. The phone is still (770)519-5398. The new service times are Sunday prayer 1030, worship/word 1100, Tuesday prayer 1900(7pm), worship/word 1930, Thursday prayer 1900. See also the same SanctuaryofPentecost.com.

#### Praying Sisters (from pg 1)

for or nation, and for our world, for the church (Bush Chapel), for **The** church, the entire body of Christ. This reporter has been there with them, praying on our knees. This kind of prayer makes things happen.

Sixty-eight-year-old Sister Lois relates that she and her sister remember when the church had an outside bathroom and pot-bellied heaters. She also tells the story of how she was expected to die when she was a little girl. When she was 12 years old, her whole family thought she was on her death bed. She said that she remembered an old man tell her mother. "When the last breath leaves, send one of the kids out to tell us." The man was sure that Sister Lois would die any hour. "I knew I was not going to die right then. I remembered seeing something in the Bible that told me." It turned out later to be Psalm 118:17. "I had a dream. I wanted to be a nurse. I knew God had a plan for me. In 1976 I realized my dream to become a nurse. All kids have invisible friends. When I was a girl my invisible friend was the Holy Spirit. Those things that are in our hearts, those things we like, those things we have an interest in, things we love, kinds of people and ministry we have a heart for- we think we decided those things but God is the one who put them in our hearts."

Sister Lois is the church historian and is quite knowledgeable. The written history of the church at the Winder Museum, where Sister Lois directs people who want to know more detail, backs her up. She also seemed to know things that history books do not normally record.

"Dr. Wiley Bush gave the land to the blacks. At first, there was no church building. Worship was held under a brush arbor." A brush arbor is a tall, thick grove of brush. "Dr. Bush donated the land but it was hardworking, uneducated black men who built the church. We need to never forget where we came from. The first church was wood and, later there was a wood school." It is no secret that there were people, especially right after the civil war, that did not want black people educated. "The wooden buildings," continued Sister Lois, "were burned down. The church was established in 1862 but the stone

building was not completed until 1922."

It is a well-known saying in Christian circles that being in church does not make one a Christian any more than hanging out in a hen house makes one a chicken. Sisters Lois confirms this in her own life.

"In 1974 I was saved. I invited the Lord into my life. It has not all been a bed of roses. It has been quite a journey."

"Two days after my sister was saved," piped Sister Ethel Lean, "she witnessed to me, my momma, and about 30 children. We had been in church all our lives but we never got our faith in God until then. We must be careful. We cannot put God in our own little box. Isaiah chapter 41 talks about that."

Sister Ethel Lean was born in a historic log cabin in 1941. The Cabin was moved from "Section B," at Fort Yargo to "Flat Rock," where it is now. Ms. Bebe Wells at the Winder Museum was very helpful with the history of Bush Chapel.

The church was organized in 1862 and services were held under a brush arbor. Charter members included Brother Jacob Wells, John Chandler, Clabon Riden, Jackson Hill, and Mitchell Camp, Sisters Amy Riden, Caroline Adams and Vinie Camp. The Reverend John L. Simpkins was the first pastor of Bush chapel.

The next move was to build a log cabin church where slabs from the saw mill were used as pews. After some time the church burnt down (the museum does not mention the school which also burned at the same time, nothing about how, why, or by whom it was burnt down, or even that it was most likely not an accident since both buildings burned at once), and another wood church was built that stood until the present church was built. Brothers Jacob Wells and Martin Barnes were the greatest workers and leaders in that day. It was Martin Barnes who labored and influenced the members to erect a stone church, but he died before it was completed.

The late Reverend L. W. Taylor took an active part in the building of the present church. The Reverend T. M. Dumas was assigned pastor and he built up the foundation laid by the Reverend Taylor but the building was

still not completed. Nor was it completed under the Reverend B. N. Henningham. In April of 1922 the Reverend W. H. McGee became pastor and by September of 1922 the church was completed.

Dr. Wiley H. Bush and his wife, Laura Lattimer Bush (1842 – 1911), inventor of *Bush's Specific*, a burn treatment, donated the land for Bush Chapel.

At the writing of this article, the Reverend Lynn Hill is pastor of Bush Chapel. He may be contacted at (706)224-0192. The physical address is 181 Horton Street, Winder, Ga, 30680.

#### Mission (from pg1)

Arrived half an hour early and was able to join those in prayer before the service began.

Pastor Linda Smith is the C.O. of this powerful combat unit and has shared the vision of unity of the Whole Body of Christ Alliance in that, working with other combat units is something she has been involved in for some time. In fact, it was Pastor Michael Smith at Victory Deliverance Center that inspired the visit to Love of God Mission by sharing that very fact.

"There are about 30 regular attendees," one of the church leaders, Terry Skidmore told BFN, "but this is a mission, not a church. So, there are often over a hundred in here at a time." Indeed, at the service this reporter attended there were about sixty present.

When asked what the difference was between a mission and a church, the Reverend Donnie Webb told Battlefield News (BFN), "We are missionaries. Here we help the homeless, feed people, and take in street folks that many churches will not allow to come in."

"Are there seeking or needy people that some churches will not allow to come inside?" We asked, "And, if so, why not?"

"Yes," answered Donnie, "They may be dressed in old worn clothes, or they may not smell very nice, they may have been drinking."

The mission had a New Years Eve service that was, by all accounts, quite memorable.

A nameless young lady was present at the service who said she had epilepsy. During the service she had a seizure and left the sanctuary. Donnie found her in the midst of the seizure and asked her if she was willing to give her life to God. She answered that she was and, according to Donnie, the demon left her. Later, she testified in the microphone to those present.

The service times are:

Sunday 1000, 1100 and 1830 (6:30pm)

Thursday 1930 (7:30pm)

They can be reached at (770)867-8897.

Church leaders include The Reverend Johnny Puckett (770)867-2373, the Reverend Donnie Webb (770)725-6703, and Terry Skidmore (687)368-0327.

#### Cut Arm (from pg 1)

She could not. "We allow this to happen to members of the body of Christ." Scott explained. "We allow them to be cut off and no one cares. They are hurt and allowed to fall away and no one is surprised or seems to mind. They leave the church because of their injuries and no one seeks to help them heal or to even call and check on them. We let our arms be cut off and then we can lift nothing. Soon we can accomplish nothing for God." Scott's sermon illustrates the mission of the Whole Body of Christ Alliance. How can the body of Christ perform its mission(s) when we are separated and divided, when our arm is cut off? "Our church is good. We don't need anybody else." We all need each other. Never forget I John 1:7 - "If we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His son cleanses us from all sin." Is John writing about fellowship only with those in our own church group? We see that it is not what John meant.

Scott went on to talk about how we so often try to deal with these things from a fleshly perspective, to fight spiritual battles in the physical. He reminds us of II Cor 10:3-4, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."

"If we love our neighbor as we love ourselves, we will not cut his arm off." Scott reminds us. In discussing Brazelton Tabernacle (BTOP) after his sermon, "This is a church of restoration, deliverance and family." Scott explained. "We do not make hasty judgments. None of us is that close to perfection. The sons of two different ladies in this church were wrongfully charged with crimes. The entire church declared an Isaiah-58-type fast."

Everyone who is reading this article should stop reading now, go get your Bible and turn to Isaiah Chapter 58. Read it again, regardless of how many times you have already read it. Pay particular attention to verse 7. The article will be here when you come back.

#### Read Isaiah Chapter 58

<<<<<<<<<

For those readers who were able and willing, we say thank you for reading Isaiah Chapter 58.

One of the most amazing things about the people at Btop was the number of those who are obviously growing in Christ, who are maturing Christ followers, who are ready and willing to let go of the milk bottle and become ready for solid food.

The church is in action. The tabernacle has a ministry called E.C.H.O. (Elite Christians Helping Others), also a food ministry that serves about eleven families per week. Those in the ministry use spiritual discernment when there is a family in need. They are not necessarily just families from BTOP.

Anyone who is led to volunteer for ECHO or any other ministry at BTOP, or to donate money, construction materials or scrap metal (used for the food ministry), should contact Scott Bagwell at (678)898-7066 and someone from the church will come pick up your donations.

Braselton Tabernacle of Praise (BTOP) has quite a number of church leaders. Jon Jackson is pastor and spiritual mentor to many. Jon's wife, Trency Jackson is worship leader with excellent help from others, including guitarist Steven Minton. The Reverend Trency Jackson is also a gifted preacher. Angela and Jesse Ogden are

the youth pastors and Jane Ashley is head of the food ministry.

Other leaders include the Deaconess Helen Jackson, the Deacon Scott Bagwell (quoted above), Chris Griffin, Dontez Manuel Armstead, Jamie Fuller and Phil and Sharon Bryan.

This company-sized crack unit of prayer warriors number about 75 when all are present and/or accounted for. Their regular service times are as follows: Sunday school 1000, worship 1100, Wednesday at 1900 (7pm) and Prayer Night Saturday at 1900. Also on Tuesdays at 1900 is Romans Road to Recovery, a Christ-centered twelvestep meeting. In addition, every third Wednesday at 1900 (e.g. 19 Jan 2011) is a youth service.

The physical address for BTOP is 2260 Davenport Road, Brazelton, Ga, 30517 and the unit may be contacted at (678)898-7066, or e-mailed at spclean4u @ Yahoo.com You may also want to look on Facebook under "BTOP."

#### Birthing (from pg 1)

To come to this one sanctioned body from up and down I85, from all over Georgia, from New York, from Colorado, all over. It will be a place where people do not want to leave."

The church has not yet been named. "We are in prayer for the name of the church." Sister Roberta Owensby told BFN. "We want that, when people look at us, they see the Lord, not us. I want for people to see the Lord, not me."

David Owensby is a man of few words, a man of action. He was described by those with him as a First Psalm Man: "His delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, that yields its fruit in season, whose leaf does not wither. Everything he does prospers."

David is the finance man of the innominate church and told BFN, "I want it to be a church that is real, where **anyone** is welcome, a church that helps people."

The exact physical address is not yet known but the new innominate church will be in building 70 behind the Kawasaki dealer on Hwy 53 in Hoschton, Ga. The temporary contact number is (678)858-6111. The first

service is set for Sunday 23 Jan at 1000.

Members of the Whole Body of Christ Alliance as well as Battlefield News will be present to support the new church and its installation and members.

#### Barefoot preacher (from pg 1)

"This is a full gospel ministry," explained Bishop Arnold, "including the laying on of hands." Indeed, people were praying in tongues when this reporter worshipped with them.

Evangelist Ruby Jones preached on forgiveness. "We all get hurt by people, hurt even by people in the church. So what? We are supposed to be grown-ups in Christ at some point. We are supposed to share in the suffering of Christ. Sometimes, instead of asking the Lord to take all our suffering away, we just need to thank him that we are counted worthy to share in his suffering." Some time ago, Sister Jones was scheduled to lose her leg, Mother Lewis layed her hands on the leg and it was healed.

"Forgiveness," says Mother Lewis, who has been a pastor for 34 years, "means many things, but until we can live what we teach, we are not doing what God wants. God wants us to live what we teach. We are **not** God. We cannot do as well as he does, no matter how much dancing and tonguetalking we do."

A three-night revival is in the works for February. The times and dates are still to be announced. There will also be a celebration of Pastor Lewis' birthday in March.

Move of God Church is 31 years old and presently, the unit that meets there on a regular basis is about 45 strong. Miraculous healings and blessings as well as prophecy are regular events at Move of God.

Church leaders other than Pastor Lewis include Evangelist Ruby Jones, Bishop Jerry Arnold, Bishop Jerry Echols and Bishop Nathan Hoard. All church leaders are preachers, which is as one might expect but others preach on occasion. Sister Jones and Bishop Arnold also lead praise and worship and this reporter has worshipped with them on more than one occasion and heard the excellent preaching of Sister Jones and Bishop Arnold.

Sunday School is at 1000, Sunday Midday worship at 1200, and Friday Teaching/Study is at 1945 (745pm). This unit may be reached at (770)277-9128 or (404)496-3080. They may also be reached via e-mail at move.ofgod @ Hotmail.com or at Bishopdale @ att.net.

Note: The opinions of those who share them in this publication do not necessarily represent the opinions of the editors or of The Whole Body of Christ Alliance. Comments or opposing views may be mailed to:

Battlefield News 115A Center Street Winder, Ga. 30680

Or e-mailed to: drrdhempton @ Hotmail.com or jstevens 1055 @ live.com

The Battlefield News may be reached by calling (404)414-0656 and the Whole Body of Christ Alliance at (404)496-3080.

The Whole Body of Christ Alliance is a body of believers from many churches. ministries and denominations that work toward the unification of the body of Christ; not as one congregation under one pastor but individual organs and organ systems within the body. As one body, as the Bible instructs us, we are to work together and not against each other, nor are we to be completely independent of one another. No organ operating on its own will survive for very long.

This organization seeks talented individuals to help in this mission. We are in need of resources, especially the most valuable resource- people. You do not need a degree. What is required is a true desire to serve Jesus Christ without dogmatic constraints and that you either are now or are ready to become absolutely sold out to Jesus (not to this alliance or to your denomination).

If you have a desire to glorify the name of Jesus and your talents are not

being used, contact us using the information previously provided.

If you wish to have an article published in BATTLEFIELD NEWS or have a comment on anything you read in the publication, contact us. Your article may be published. Be sure to keep a copy of it since your article will not be returned to you. Nor will you receive any financial compensation for it.

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If the Whole Body of Christ (WBC) Alliance has not contacted your church or pastor and your body of believers would be included, we will get to your church eventually, but do not wait until next year. The Lord may come for us before that. Contact us.

#### One Way to Heaven

By Bishop Jerry Arnold

Did you know that, according to polls, a surprising number of people believe there is more than one way to Heaven? What is even more surprising is that some of our modern day Christian churches are not confronting this issue.

The only reliable information concerning the "way to Heaven" can be found in God's written word, not in the opinions of men. We must rely only upon His way. "The Way" was a designation for early Christians. It was "The way to Heaven" then, and is the way to Heaven now.

Christianity itself rests upon a "plan of salvation," so easy that even a child can understand. This perfect plan must be maintained, else those who follow the wrong teachings will spend eternity in Hell.

God's written word says that the way to heaven is through what Jesus did on the cross. Jesus died on the cross so that we might have eternal life.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16).

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6).

Based on the above scripture, the way to heaven can only be found in God's plan of salvation.

Jesus said, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." (Mat 7:13)

There is only one way to Heaven. According to scripture, mankind is born spiritually separated from God, but God has provided a way to end this separation. It is by faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and what He did on the cross.

The way to Heaven is through faith in Jesus, the small gate, and narrow road. Peter said to allow God's word to be "...a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." (II Peter 1:19).

Learn to search the scriptures, then believe what you find. Rely on God's word. It will show you the way to Heaven.

God Bless you, Bishop Jerry Arnold Move of God Church

#### Updates and Booboos

Booboos

Jesus Christ School of Ministry: Battlefield News humbly apologizes to the Reverend Lawrence Jeffers, who is a prophet, not a "profit," as

stated in the December issue.

Cross of Christ Ministries:
Another apology. This one to Pastor Jeff Carr. The website is
Marriagemenders.NET, not .com, as reported in December. There is no excuse but sometimes deadlines produce mistakes in printing.
(770)979-2300 is the telephone to this counseling ministry.

Updates

Victory Deliverance Center Pastor Michael Smith Sunday svc: 1145 Tuesday Bible study: 1930(730pm) (678)963-5799

A Call to Worship

Pastor Alicia Brown Sunday svc: 1000

Wed Bible stdy: 1900 (7pm) 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat 10:00 women minst

4<sup>th</sup> Sat 10:00 men (706)983-9096

## Kingdom Community Worship

Pastor Kenneth Cooper Sun wrshp svc: 0900 Wed Bible stdy:1800(6pm)

Living Hope Christian Fellowship

Pastor Allen Stevens Sun school: 1000 Sun Wrshp svs: 1100

(678)963-5799

Sun eve Bible stdy: 1800(6pm)

Wed svc: 1900(7pm) Sat Prayer: 1000-1200 (706)654-2931

**Genesis Paper** 

By: Zell Zellinger and Summer Star Recently I read a paper on the book of Genesis by a young lady, Summer Star, who wrote it for school. She sent it to me and I read it. I know I'm just a big softie but it actually made me weep. I had to print it, at least the part I found so moving.

The book of Genesis is also a history of the Jewish people, and all mankind. Genesis is the building block upon which the Jewish people build their heritage and culture. God creates his covenant with Abraham, who begets the twelve tribes of Israel. God repeats his plans for these people and begins testing and preparing them for what he has promised. This book is one of the historical books of the Old Testament, upon which the Jewish people define who they are.

While reading this book, I learned the agony and pain our sin causes God, yet despite this he will never abandon us. However, he allows us the ability to turn away from him. This ability to walk away just reiterates that, while God made us for his good pleasure, and for us to worship and love him; He also wants that to be authentic. He wants us to make that choice to walk with Him. I was able to see a glimpse of the depths of God and the depths of His love for us. In a way, it has

strengthened my desire to strive to please God. While I know my works won't grant me a better place in Heaven, just maybe one of them might bring a smile to my God. It made me think of my service to God almost in the same way I think of the popsicle jewelry box I made my mother in the second grade. That box was hardly a work of art, and I'm sure it fell apart multiple times, however, every time she saw it she knew that I had thought of her.

Summer, I know exactly what you mean. As I write this my nose is running and so are my eyes. If I can just make my God smile for a time, what ever I had to go through was worth it.

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### Battlefield News Acknowledgements

By: R. D. Hempton
Last Month the very first issue of BFN was published. Battlefield News would like to sincerely thank those who helped make this publication a

Living Hope Christian Fellowship, Move of God Church, Kingdom Realm Church, Pastor Allen Stevens and his wife Wanda Stevens, Bishop
Jerry Arnold, Pastor Russell Page and
Neyda Marylia Hempton.
Battlefield News thanks you for
humbly serving Jesus and the body of
Christ with your time, your resources,
your ideas and finances. May God
bless you all richly.

#### Monologue: My Dad

By: Zell Zellinger

People who send us poems, songs and other works to appear in BFN will usually be published if the subject matter is appropriate and not too lengthy.

My dad could beat up your dad, But he wouldn't. My dad loves your dad. My dad can run faster 'n' jump higher 'n' punch harder, But he doesn't have to.

I can see the sky because of my dad. I can see the green leaves in summer And watch them become red and brown

As I wrap my cold hands Around a hot cup of cocoa in the fall.

I can feel the cool breeze
And put my hand on the ground
And feel the rich soil.
When those perfect white snow flakes:
Those crisp, frozen gliders drift from
Heaven,

I can feel them on my face and on my tongue.

I can watch them fall and think how much

They look like stars might look at warp seven,

All because of my dad.

On account of my dad I can hear birds sing in spring And see and hear and smell and Feel the fury of a volcano.

I can feel the rain and see the lightning And hear the thunder roll across the sky.

I can experience life in all its facets All because of my dad.

I don't mean to brag but, Did you know that my dad Is actually a king? That makes me a princess. He owns the cattle on ten thousand hillsides.
No! Really!
Listen, Listen!
My dad is the creator of
Every last thing that was created.

He is the ruler of everything that You can see, hear, taste, smell, or feel And an infinite number of things That you cannot.
But the most important thing about my

But the most important thing about my dad is

That he loves me.

## Love your neighbor as vourself

By Mozelle Davis-weeks
I apologize if this article might seem not to quite get to the point but that is because it is a little too long for the space I have been provided and will be continued in the February issue if God allows.

I will begin, for contrast, with the opposite of what I want to talk about. Hebrews 12:14-15. "Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one comes short of the graceof God; that no root of bitterness, springing up, causes trouble and, by it, many be defiled." We all heard a lot of preachers preach on sin: Do not commit adultery, stay away from pornography, don't get drunk, leave the dope alone. The truth is, though, so many of us need to hear about that "root of bitterness" that the book of Hebrews talks about. We cannot grow with a root of bitterness that has sprung up. We cannot effectively minister, witness or even be very loving at all if the root springs up. The root of bitterness is far more than a desire for vengeance or having unforgiveness. A root of bitter ness is also grumbling and complaining, fault-finding, malicious gossiping and the speaking of negative things out of our mouths.

We must be careful what we speak. We set the table of our lives with our mouths. If you speak it, you will have to eat it.

Proverbs 18:20-21 tells us, "With the fruit of a man's mouth his stomach will be satisfied: He will be satisfied

with the product of his lips. Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit." With a root of bitterness in our hearts, forgiveness is impossible. What I want to begin discussing here is probably the most unpopular of Christian morals. We see it in Leviticus 19:18 as well as in the gospels- for instance Matthew 19:19. "Thou shalt love they neighbor as thyself." The most unpopular aspect of this commandment is the fact that loving our neighbor includes loving our enemy (Mat 5:44) and that is when we run smack into the horrible problem of forgiving our enemies. People believe that forgiveness is a wonderful thing until they have something to forgive like we had after 9/11. And when we even bring it up in situations like that to some folks, we are greeted with screaming and anger. Its not that people consider it too high a virtue to achieve, its that they find it hateful and contemptible all together. "That kind of talk makes me sick to my stomach. It makes me just want to punch you." You get responses like, "I just wonder how you would feel about forgiving those Muslims if your husband or your child had been in one of those buildings they destroyed." The truth is that I wonder the same exact thing. I wonder very much-just like I wonder what I would do if I were threatened with death by torture rather than deny my Lord. But what I do is not the point. The point is: What does the Bible say? I didn't write it. I'm just saying.

And right slap in the middle of the whole discussion, I see, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Forgive us how? In what way? As we forgive those who trespass against us. There is not even the slightest suggestion that we are forgiven on any other terms. It doesn't get much clearer than that. If we forgive, we are forgiven. "Now," as my older brother used to say, "run tell that."
So, what do we do?
I'll tell ya next month.

God bless you all, Mozelle