

TIDINGS

SEPTEMBER, 2022

VOLUME LXXVI NUMBER 9

From the Heart of the Superintendent



*Glenn & Betty Beaver
Superintendent*

Cleave to the Word of God

Second Samuel 23:9-10 states, "And after him was Eleazar the son of Dodai the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away: He arose, and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand **clave** unto the sword: and the LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil." Eleazar was one of David's mighty men who stood alone on the battlefield and defied the Philistine army. The scripture says that he fought so hard and so long that his hand **clave** to his sword. Eleazar was of the tribe of Benjamin who were known for being one of the most warlike tribes in Israel. The location of this battle (according to 1 Samuel 17:1-2) was the valley of Elah, the same valley where David slew Goliath.

The word **cleave** means to adhere firmly and closely or loyally and unwaveringly. A synonym of the word cleave is **stick**. In this battle Eleazar withstood the Philistine attack and fought so hard that his hand froze to the handle of his sword. One commentary states, "There were times when after fighting, a warrior could not release his hand from his sword until hot wet towels were applied to his hand to relax the muscles." We must **cleave to the Word of God** in like fashion! The word **sword** carries the understanding of the Apostle Paul in his writing to the Ephesian believ-

ers when he describes the sword of the Spirit as being **the Word of God**.

These three mighty men, Adino, Eleazar and Shammah, were most likely some of the individuals of which the writer of Hebrews 11:33-34 had in mind when he penned the words, "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

Let me encourage you to get into the Word and let the Word get in you. Jesus said, and John recorded it in chapter 15 verse 7, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." The only way to get the Word into your Spirit is by reading or hearing the Word. Paul wrote in Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." Paul said that hearing the Word will build your faith. Spend time in the Word and it will prove to be one of the most powerful tools you can use against the attacks of the devil.

The scripture is full of individuals who knew what it meant to **cleave** to the Word of God. When Jeremiah tried not to speak any more for the Lord, he had this comment in Jeremiah 20:10, "Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay." The Word was a fire shut up in his bones. When we get into the Word and the Word gets in us, the Word will become our burning passion. Job put it this way in 32:18-19, "For I am full of matter (words), the Spirit (of God) within me constraineth (compels) me. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent; it is ready to burst like new bottles." The Psalmist said it this way 39:3, "My heart was hot within me, while I was musing (meditating) the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue." Paul had this burning in his spirit to testify to the Jews the fact that "The Christ" which they were looking for was indeed Jesus. Acts 18:5 states, "When Silas and Timothy arrived from

Glenn R. Beaver

Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the Word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus."

The three Hebrew children knew what it meant to **cleave** to the Word of God. For them the Word of God was the one walking with them in the fiery furnace. For them the fourth man was the pre-incarnate Jesus. It is interesting to note that the only thing which was burned off Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were the ropes which bound them. Whatever has you bound will be burned away as you apply the fire of God's Word to your life. Cleave to the Word of God and let it burn in your spirit, like it did for Jeremiah! Let it burn away the thing that has you bound like it did for the three Hebrew children.

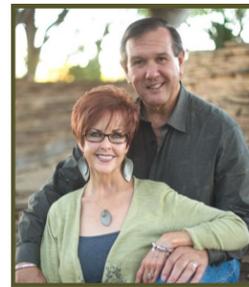
Peter is another example of an individual who **clave** to the Word of God. As he preached the Word of God on the Day of Pentecost, he took his text from the book of Joel and preached concerning the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit. Through the preaching of the Word, the Holy Spirit brought conviction. Notice the response of those who heard the Word, as they were pricked in their hearts and asked what they should do. Peter's reply to them was to repent, be baptized and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The formula still works today. Repentance, water baptism and being baptized in the Holy Spirit is just as real as it was when Peter preached that first message after the out-pouring on the Day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2:39. Paul wrote to the Corinthian believers in his first letter and said, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all" (1 Corinthians 14:18). Paul wrote to the believers in Rome these words 8:26, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." For some time now the Lord has reminded me of this truth, "One of the most under-utilized benefits of the Spirit filled believer is the God given ability to pray in the Spirit."

Eleazar fought in the battle until he was weary and his hand **clave** to the sword. We walk in victory when we **cleave** to the Word of God!



District Secretary/Treasurer

Offended: Part 2 Matthew 11:1-6



*Billy & Betty
Nickell*

The subject of offenders, offenses, and offending is seen throughout Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. Matthew 18:7 says, "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" Jesus says that offenses are inevitable and they come as **sins of commission** - what people do, as well as **sins of omission** - what people do not do. John the Baptist was a spiritual General in the army of God, yet Jesus indicates in Matthew 11:6 that John was offended. Commentators believe John had been incarcerated for no less than six months when he sent two of his disci-

ples to ask Jesus, "are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?" In last month's Tidings the first of three important truths concerning offenders, offenses, and offending was mentioned; **The Doorway for Offense**. While offenses come in various forms and fashions, three of the doorways facilitating entrance and lodging into the heart of a believer are, **Misunderstood Difficulties, Unfulfilled Expectations, and Unexplained Delays**. Jesus understood the proclivity of human nature to be offended and the necessity to sometimes take extra-mile measures to close the doorway that invites offense. While in Capernaum with His disciples, the collectors of the temple tax questioned Peter concerning Jesus paying the required half shekel. Peter assured his interrogators that Jesus did indeed pay, only to discover he spoke misinformed. After being reminded that earthly rulers do not collect duties or tribute from their own sons or family because they are exempt, Jesus said, "However, in order not to give offense and cause them to stumble [that is, to cause them to judge unfavorably and unjustly] go down to the sea and throw in a hook. Take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find there a shekel. Take it and give it to them to pay the temple tax for Me and for yourself" (Matthew 17:27 Amplified). In Paul's directive to Titus concerning slaves and their relationship to their masters, he behooves Titus to, "Guide slaves into being loyal workers, a bonus to their masters—no back talk, no petty thievery. Then their good character will shine through their actions, adding luster to the teaching of our Savior God." To, "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things" (KJV), we must close the doorway for offense as Jesus did.

The Danger of Offense: In part one of this article the meaning of the word offense from the Greek was given, "to hit against and stumble over and be displeased, displeased, and indignant." Another definition from the Greek for offended is, "one who stumbles or whose foot gets entangled." This is where feelings fester and thoughts surface that lead to greater problems. Here are a few of the dangerous traits that often show up when people are entangled in an offense. **Suspicion** is a trademark of a heart that's become infected with offense. Things once believed and trusted are now questioned. If anyone should have been convinced Jesus was the Messiah it was John. Now in isolation, he wonders if what he believed and preached is really true. "Art Thou He that should come or do we look for another?" Marriages and ministries are not stagnated or terminated overnight. Often an offense creates suspicion, followed by nagging questions. Rather than casting down imaginations and bringing every thought unto the captivity of Christ, people and things become suspect who once were tried and true, including our own calling. Thousands of pastors have left the ministry prematurely over the past several years, yet long before vacating the parsonage they became entangled in an offense causing them to suspect people who were loyal friends and allies. **Separation** normally follows **suspicion** when offense is allowed to take up residence in the heart. Withdrawal, isolation, and even termination become the norm unless proactive measures are taken. Jesus forewarned His disciples this would happen the night of His arrest. "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad" (Matthew 26:31b KJV). Where the King James says offended, the NIV says, "you will all fall away on account of me" Offense brings entanglement, which in turn produces suspicion and separation. A third danger is **Strife**. Like

links in a chain, suspicion, separation and strife are common denominators when offenses are allowed to germinate and grow. This is where lines are drawn in the sand and barriers established that are sometimes never forged. Here is where friendships dissolve, churches split, and the work of God languishes all because of an offense left unaddressed. Proverbs warns, "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city: and their contentions are like the bars of a castle" (Proverbs 18:19 KJV). The Living Bible says, "It is harder to win back the friendship of an offended brother than to capture a fortified city. His anger shuts you out like iron bars." The word contentions used in the King James actually means brawling. Much of the church growth in American congregations today comes from transfer growth, people leaving one church and going to another, often over an offense.

The Directive For Offense: As believers we are equipped to successfully conquer every foe and win every battle through the strength of the Lord and the power of His might. Jesus did not condemn John for being offended, rather He tells His disciples to return and report to John what they saw and heard. "The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matthew 11:5 KJV). Jesus then says, "And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me" (Matthew 11:6 KJV). That says, "Well off, happy and fortunate are those who refuse to be offended." We can live above offense! "These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended" (John 16:1 KJV). The psalmist writes, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Psalm 119:165 KJV).

In the mid-1800's a great storm arose in the Baptist denomination in England against evangelical Christianity. The attack came from two primary sources. The first was the writings of Darwin in 1859, **The Origin of the Species**, which made the Genesis account a myth. The second source of opposition was the deluge of German higher criticism and rationalism that made significant inroads into the evangelical churches of the country, explaining away the miracles of the Bible and reducing God's Word to a book written merely by man. That attack was met with strong rebuke by one of the great preachers of that day, Rev. Charles Haddon Spurgeon. He urged the Baptist Union of England to rise up and speak out against the heresy that was quickly infiltrating the churches of England, however they refused. In response, Spurgeon published what he entitled, **The Downgrade in the Churches**, warning that the Baptist churches of England were facing a formidable foe that would lead to the destruction of the evangelical church unless they quickly and strongly faced the heresy. Dr. John Clifford, a pastor in London, and president of the Baptist Union, and later the first president of the Baptist World Alliance, declared in 1888, "It pains me unspeakably to see this eminent preacher Spurgeon rousing the energies of thousands of Christians to engage in personal wrangling and strife, instead of inspiring them to an inherent effort to carry the gospel to our fellow countrymen." John Clifford had bought into humanistic theology and he believed that higher criticism and Christianity could not only peacefully co-exist, but could actually work together, hand in glove. Dr. Clifford presided over the council of the Baptist Union that met in session January 18, 1888. They voted to recommend to the plenary session of the union a vote to censure Spurgeon. On April 23, 1888 the Baptist Union met in the City Temple of London, the church Joseph Parker pastored, who was also a critic of Spurgeon. The recommendation of the council for censure was placed before the full body and when the vote was counted 2000 voted to censure Spurgeon, and only seven voted against. When the vote was announced the place broke forth into cheering over the victory to censure Spurgeon. Spurgeon's wife, Suzanna, said the controversy cost her husband his life. He died at the age of 57. Spurgeon himself said to a friend in May 1891, "Goodbye, you will never see me again. This tragic fight is killing me." No matter who you are offenses will come, but we do not have to be offended! God's plan is for us to live well off, blessed, happy and envied by not being offend-

Director of Church Ministries



Standing Out Above the Crowd

Reading the first nine chapters of 1 Chronicles is like thumbing through a Hebrew telephone directory with more than 500 names mentioned, most of which we have never heard of. Yet, tucked in-between these obscure names, we come across a man by the name of Jabez. The biography of his life consists of two short verses and can be summed up in three brief statements: 1) Things started badly for this man; 2) He prayed a one sentence prayer; and 3) Things ended extraordinarily well.

There are at least three things that we can discover about this great servant of God. **First, we see a Person that was Honored.** "Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers, and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, 'Because I bore him in pain'" (1 Chronicles 4:9). The name Jabez means, "he will cause pain, or son of sorrow." Perhaps Jabez was named to be a constant reminder that his birth was particularly hard on his mother. Or perhaps it was to remind him of his personal roots and lineage. Whatever the case may be, we see in Jabez a man who had obtained divine favor, and honor by God. The way we appear to men, may not be the way we appear to God, and vice-versa. On May 2, 1888, G. Campbell Morgan tried out for a large British Methodist Church. After hearing him preach, he was informed by the church that they were no longer considering him to be their pastor. He felt totally humiliated and rejected. He sent his father a one-word telegram, "Rejected." His father replied, "Rejected on Earth, Accepted in Heaven." Brother Campbell went on to be mightily used of God and became one of the best-known Bible expositors of his day. This teaches us that God knows you by name and has a specific plan for your life. **Secondly, we find a Petition that was Humble.** "And Jabez called on the God of Israel saying, 'Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I might not cause pain!'" (1 Chronicles 4:10a) This is one of the greatest prayers in all the Word of God, yet it consists of only 33 words. Prayers do not have to be long in order to be effective. Elijah's prayer consisted of 63 words, but he called down fire from heaven (1 Kings 18). The thief on the cross prayed a nine-word prayer and his life was changed for eternity (Luke 24:42). Peter prayed, what might be the shortest prayer in the Bible. As Peter is walking on the water, he begins to sink and he cries out, "Lord save me!" (Matthew 14:30) There is a story about three preachers who were discussing the best positions to pray. One preacher said that the best position to pray was to kneel. Another preacher stated that the best position to pray was with hands raised upward. The third preacher argued that the best position to pray was lying prostrate on the floor. Overhearing their conversation was a telephone repairman and he just couldn't take it anymore. He chimed in, "Men, the best praying that I ever did was hanging upside down from a telephone pole." Jabez prayed for Provision, Plenty, Power, and Protection. **Thirdly, we discover a Prayer that was Heard.** "So God granted him what he requested" (1 Chronicles 4:10b). God not only heard his prayer, but God answered His prayer. It has been said that the only prayers that God doesn't answer are those not offered. Charles Spurgeon said, "Prayer is the slender nerve that moves the muscles of omnipotence." John Newton once said, "Thou art coming to a King, large petitions with thee bring, for His grace and power are such, none can ever ask too much." Dare to pray like Jabez and see what God will do!



Tracy & Cara Lynn McWilliams

Churches Ministers West Texas AG District Officiary

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 - *Pampa, New Life Assembly of God
Contact: Kevin Anderson, Presbyter
P.O. Box 511, Stratford, TX 79084
Phone: 806.922.2840
 - **Odessa, Cornerstone Worship Center
Contact: Todd Starnes, Parent Church Pastor
1101 N. Lee, Odessa, 79761
Phone: 806.786.4750
 - *Plains, First Assembly of God
Contact: Danny Williams, Presbyter
1801 CR 151, Snyder, TX 79549
Phone: 325.575.2861
 - *Whiteface, Living Water Fellowship
Contact: Nick Hester
2717 58th Street, Lubbock, TX 79413
Phone: 832.275.1611
 - *District Affiliated Church
 - **Parent Affiliated Church (PAC)

- Available for Ministry:**
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Ordained: Pastoral Ministry

October 15, 2022
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Licensed: Theology of Missions
Registration Deadline: September 23.

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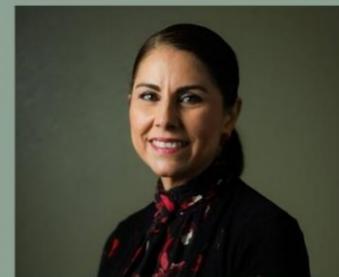
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and hear their incredible stories. The people of East Africa are beautiful and welcoming! We are continuing to fight for our East Africa family in prayer and hope that more of our West Texas family get to experience a trip there."



WEST OF FIFTIES

OCT. 10-13, 2022

More details
coming soon!



Camp 2022 was one for the books! We are so excited to share more about this summer in next month's tidings. We praise God for the miracles and breakthroughs we saw in our youth and kids at Roaring Springs!!



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Around West Texas



Congratulations to **Baylea Hines & Zackary Mann** for their union in marriage on July 27, 2022. Baylea is the daughter of **Lance & Mindy Hines** and the granddaughter of **Tom & Leslie Lakey**. She is also sister of **Tyler (Nicole) & Austin Hines**. Praying God's blessing upon their years together.

Bachelors Degree

Amy Smith, wife of **Payton Smith**, earned a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration from Purdue Global University.

Payton & Amy serve as Youth Pastors at Calvary AG, Midland.

Congratulations on your accomplishment!



Notice: Due to the ever increasing cost of publishing the monthly Tidings, the West Texas Presbytery Board has determined to longer offer the publication in printed format. Starting with the October issue, the Tidings will be emailed in digital format to all ministers and those who would like to receive it. If you do not receive the Tidings digitally and would like to do so, please send an email to

Tracy McWilliams at:

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The **LORD God** is a sun and shield:
the **LORD** will give
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... no good thing
will He withhold
from them that walk **uprightly.**

Psalm 84:11