



# Richland Baptist Association Newsletter

December 2022

## From Your Director of Missions (D.O.M.):

“Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isa. 9:6

As we set aside time to celebrate Christmas, may we never forget that Christ left His throne in Heaven to come dwell among us, His creation, that we may see God in His Glory. The greatest gift that mankind could ever receive, God’s only Son! The Lamb of God that took away the sins of the world.

This Christmas would you pause and make the most quoted verse of scripture, (John 3:16), personal? For God so loved (your name) that He gave His only Begotten Son that if (Your name) called upon His name, (Your name) received eternal life. In the fullness of time God sent forth His Son to redeem us, to save us and to give us eternal life. That is the Gift of Christmas. Please do not get caught up in the commercialism of Christmas that we forget what Christmas is really all about.

There are two events that I would like to highlight. Saturday the 17th of December from 6-8 PM, Eastside Baptist and several other churches are hosting “Carols at the Cross”. It will be held at the cross on Horn Road. Sunday the 18th of December at 6PM, First Baptist and several other churches will be hosting “Christmas Extravaganza”. It is based on the musical “Savior for All”. It is a combination of music and drama. Please bring your church families and friends to these two special events. **YOU WILL BE BLESSED!**

Merry Christmas my Dear Brothers and Sisters. I thank God for His gift of you to me. It is my honor and privilege to serve you.

Johnny

## Upcoming Events for the Month of December

- Dec 02: Pastors, Wives and Staff Christmas Party @ Eastside 6PM  
Please RSVP so we can make certain of Food Preparation.
- Dec 04: Start Community Christmas Festival 4-6PM
- Dec 04-11: Week of Prayer Lottie Moon Christmas Offering
- Dec 17: Carols at the Cross 6-8 PM. Cross by I-20 Rayville
- Dec 18: Christmas Extravaganza @ First Rayville @ 6PM
- Dec 25: Christmas Day Merry Christmas!

## Upcoming Events for the Month of January 2023

- Jan 01: New Year's Day
- Jan 10: Pastor's Conference 11 AM @ Big John's
- Jan 13-14: Youth Weekend @ Tall Timbers
- Jan 22: Sanctity of Human Life Sunday
- Jan 23: Evangelism Conference @ First West Monroe
- Jan 24: Evangelism Conference @ First West Monroe  
Senior Adult Luncheon @ First West Monroe

[READ MORE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

## Opportunities to Serve

- Pastor: Calvary Baptist Church  
First Baptist Archibald  
First Baptist Rayville  
Newton Baptist
- Youth Minister: Alto Baptist  
First Baptist Archibald  
First Baptist Delhi
- Pianist: Zebedee Baptist (Volunteer)

*\*If you have a need in your church, please let us know and we will post it in the Monthly Newsletter.*

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# Something to Think About...

In after church lunch time conversation with brothers and sisters in Christ, I was reminded of a fairly recent in my young life illumination of a familiar passage of scripture. I will quote it here for your reference:

*“Therefore, if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.”*

-Matthew 5:23-24 (NASB)

**Did you catch it?** Let me draw your attention to what hit me right between the eyes about this familiar passage of scripture:

*“Therefore, if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and **THERE YOU REMEMBER THAT YOUR BROTHER HAS SOMETHING AGAINST YOU**, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.”*

-Matthew 5:23-24 (NASB)

I had always glossed over that part and somehow twisted it in my mind as “YOU HAVE SOMETHING AGAINST YOUR BROTHER”. That seems a nice notion that when you are about to worship and realize you have a grudge to clear it up before you continue in worship. But that is not what Jesus was saying in this part of the Sermon on the Mount. He plainly says if as you are in process starting to worship and the Holy Spirit brings to your remembrance that a brother (or sister for that matter) in Christ has something against you, put on the brakes with your worship and go be reconciled to them first!

Now to further mine the truth of the context we need to know what the preceding passage is talking about because the one I quoted starts with a “Therefore” (When you see a “therefore”, you need to find out what it’s THERE FOR). The preceding verses are as follows:

*“You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not murder,’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be answerable to the court.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be answerable to the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-nothing,’ shall be answerable to the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.”*

-Matthew 5:21-22 (NASB)

The preceding passage is Jesus raising the bar on the standard of the Law of God. It is not enough that “Thou shalt not murder(kill)” but if you are harboring anger and hatred towards your brother in sister in Christ, it is the root seed of the same sin. But the onus to initiate reconciliation is not on the one harboring the anger or hatred. Verses 23-24 tell us it is on the one who through the Holy Spirit’s power is reminded that they are the object of someone’s harbored animosity.

It’s not the exact same thing, but isn’t that what God did for us at Christmas. He knew the whole of humanity was festering in wrath towards God as children of wrath steeped in sin. It is not the exact same thing though because rather than having to leave His gift and be reconciled, God **gave His [Gift] that whosoever believeth [might be reconciled]**. So with the Christmas season upon us, remember we have been given the ministry of reconciliation because God first ministered reconciliation to us.

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