



# BBC UPDATE

## THE ELEVENTH BIBLE BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

The Lord blessed the commencement weekend (May 16-17, 2020) starting with the Doctoral Dissertation Defense of Pastor Scott Blair who wrote and defended his DMin degree work on his commentary on the Epistle to the Colossians. After defending the contents of his dissertation, including arguments for his interpretation, Pastor Blair satisfied the dissertation committee made up of Dr. Thomas M. Strouse and Prof. Jeff Skorupski. Later on Saturday evening Bible Baptist Church honored the candidates with a dinner and heard the testimonies of the candidates and their salvation and calling experiences. The Lord allowed a great time of encouraging fellowship around the word of God. Sunday began with adult Sunday School class as Dr. Thomas Strouse continued to teach on the Book of Joel. Pastor Scott Blair preached on I Corinthians after his family ministered with music. In the afternoon service, Dr. Strouse preached on the nature and practice of *ekklesia*, and challenged the candidates and congregation to be faithful to that which the Lord loves, the local New Testament church. The following men received seminary degrees which acknowledge their hard work in the study of Scripture, biblical languages, and theology: Mr. Robert Hovey (Certificate of Theology [*in absentia*]), Mr. Ryan Scott (Master of Biblical Studies), Pastor Jon Stockton (Master of Biblical Studies), Professor Clint Schreiber (Master of Theology), and Pastor Scott Blair (Doctor of Ministry). We thank the Lord Jesus Christ Who allowed Bible Baptist Church to carry out the responsibility and privilege of training men for the Lord's work. "*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 Tim. 2:2).



BBTS Class of 2020



Mr. Ryan Scott



Pastor Jon Stockton



Professor Clint Schreiber



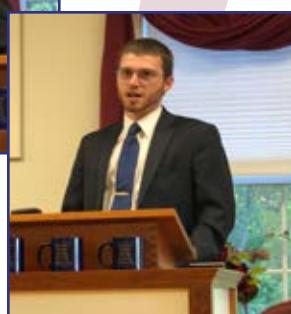
Pastor Scott Blair

## GRADUATION WEEKEND

Graduation Weekend

2

Photos



*The candidates gave their testimonies during the banquet on Saturday night*



*Pastor Cas Reeves*

## WHEN A GODLY MAN REIGNS

King Solomon reigned over all Israel

*"So king Solomon was king over all Israel."*  
(I Kings 4:1)

The Scripture records God's summary of the character of King Solomon's reign over Israel. In this brief, God-given record we learn what a godly man's reign can bring to a society with God's help.

**1. It brings merriment** - Eating and drinking and making merry

I Kings 4:20: Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry.

**2. It brings stability** - Dominion over all the region

I Kings 4:24: For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphsah even to Azzah, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him.

**3. It brings safety and tranquility** - Dwelt in safety

I Kings 4:25: And Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of Solomon.

**4. It brings prosperity** - Lacked nothing

I Kings 4:27: And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they lacked nothing.

**5. It brings God's blessing** - God gave wisdom, understanding and largeness of heart

I Kings 4:29: And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.

**6. It brings opportunity for an Increase of Literature and Music**

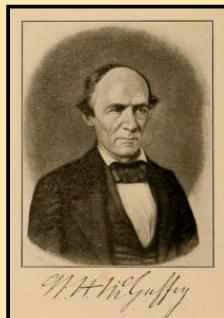
I Kings 4:32-33: And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. 33: And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.

-CAR



*Every precaution was taken to protect our graduates.*

### Quotes From the Past:



**William Holmes McGuffey**  
1800-1873

Early American Educator

*"The design of the Bible is evidently to give us correct information concerning the creation of all things, by the omnipotent Word of God."*

“The essence of a church is that it assembles. It isn’t an assembly without assembling.” Simple, profound, true! I committed myself theologically and personally to this truth years ago in a Protestant seminary when the Greek and New Testament Professor averred, “Men, in the secular Greek world of the first century *ekklesia* meant exclusively ‘visible assembly.’ However, the Holy Spirit gave *ekklesia* another second meaning—‘universal invisible assembly’ in Mt. 16:18.” I can understand why Roman Catholics, Protestants, and Fundamental Baptists want to perpetuate the Ignatian mantra “wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic [universal] church.” However, the Scripture warns about mixing philosophy including Platonism with truth, saying, *“Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do”* (I Tim. 1:4; cf. also Col. 2:8-11). Plato held that “true reality” was in the universal invisible realm of everything local and visible. The neo-platonists “church fathers” forced this Gnostic premise on the word *ekklesia* as evinced by Ignatius. Hence, Christianity accepted the two definitions for “church” without Scripture and has perpetuated this heresy for centuries.

Today, the majority of Christendom holds to two meanings for “church”: a visible local church and an invisible universal church. For those pastors who have chosen not to assemble they may now soothe their consciences by positing the “second notion” for church—the unassembled assembly. However, those not assembling but live-streaming or using other media are not “having church” since biblically the synonymous words “church,” *ekklesia*, “assembly” can mean only an assembled assembly. The assembled assembly (obvious repetition) is the only place where the Head of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ meets with His baptized church members (Mt. 18:20) and authorizes the practice of the two ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Table through the bishop or overseer of the visible assembled assembly (I Tim. 3:1-15). Furthermore, if there are two definitions for “church” why go back to the assembled assembly definition and practice? Think of the ingenious ways to inaugurate the virtual practices for the ordinances of Baptism and of the Lord’s Supper. Churches could save money on mortgages or rent and Baptists church members could save on travel expenses!

This is not the time to change doctrine to fit soft Christianity, especially in Baptist circles. The unassembled church members of an *ekklesia* are no more the “church” than scattered sheep are the flock. One scattered sheep does not constitute the flock anymore than church members at home constitute the “church.” The shepherd must search, find, and bring the scattered sheep back to the safety of the flock. When the assembly is not assembled there is no spiritual, and by extension, no physical safety for the members (I

Cor. 11:30). Furthermore, as all pastors should know, church members DO NOT grow spiritually when they don't meet regularly with the Lord in His designated place on His designated day. Peter enjoined the scattered Jews who started churches in Asia Minor to “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (II Pet. 3:18). Some are saying “pray and trust God” during this time, while not assembling. This is just as empty as if the ten spies who discouraged Israel about obeying Jehovah were to say, “Let's not go into the Promised Land because of dangerous obstacles but we can still pray and trust God”! Where is the faith of Job, who said, “*though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*”?

**IT IS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PASTOR TO  
PROTECT HIS FLOCK FROM DEATH,  
BUT TO PREPARE HIS FLOCK FOR DEATH!**

The Apostle Peter did indeed deal with submission to authority, instructing the *diaspora* churches to practice obedience to human authorities including government, masters, and unsaved husbands (I Pet. 2:13-3:6 [*contra* Acts 5:29]). However, there are exceptions to submission in these cases if government violates the opportunity for believers to worship Jehovah, or if masters or unsaved husbands demand unethical, dishonest, illegal, or immoral behaviour. Is there ever a time to disobey government, masters, or unsaved husbands? Yes! Is there ever a time to disobey the Lord Jesus Christ? No, never!

The secular world has caught onto the dictatorial government overreach in the name of COVID-19 and has begun to claim civil liberties and to call out churches for not standing for the First Amendment. The Lord made no exception clause for COVID-19 when He declared directly and simply, “*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's*” (Mk. 12:17). Soon shame and embarrassment will overtake some pastors and church members who have been deceived by the narrative “stay home, stay safe [for the good of mankind]” as the shutdown goes on and on and on. Now is the time for Baptist shepherds to seek out the wandering sheep (albeit given limited liberty) and bring them back into the fold in a kind and gracious way. David looked to his Shepherd and said, “*I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments*” (Ps. 119:176).

# THE GRADUATION CEREMONY



**Ryan Scott**  
Master of Biblical  
Studies



**Jonathan Stockton**  
Master of Biblical  
Studies



**Clint Schreiber**  
Master of Theology



**Scott Blair**  
Doctor of Ministry



The Blair daughters played a beautiful piano & flute duet.



Above: The Convocation ceremony  
Left: Dads with their sons  
Right: Graduates with their wives



# GRADUATION PHOTOS



*Above left: the graduates prepare for the commencement service*

*Center: Dr. & Mrs. Strouse with Dr. & Mrs. Blair*

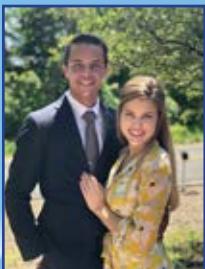
*Left: Landon enjoying the banquet*

*Below: Good food and fellowship at the banquet*



## GAGNON - REEVES WEDDING

We are looking forward to the wedding of Amanda Gagnon (daughter of BBC members Bill & Kirsten Gagnon) to Mark Reeves (son of Paul and Michelle Reeves, members of Heritage Baptist Church, Endicott, NY) on May 30, 2020. The wedding will be held at Long Hill Baptist Church in Trumbull, CT with immediate family present.



Please pray for this young couple as they seek the Lord's will for their lives together.



*Clean and ready for the next graduation*

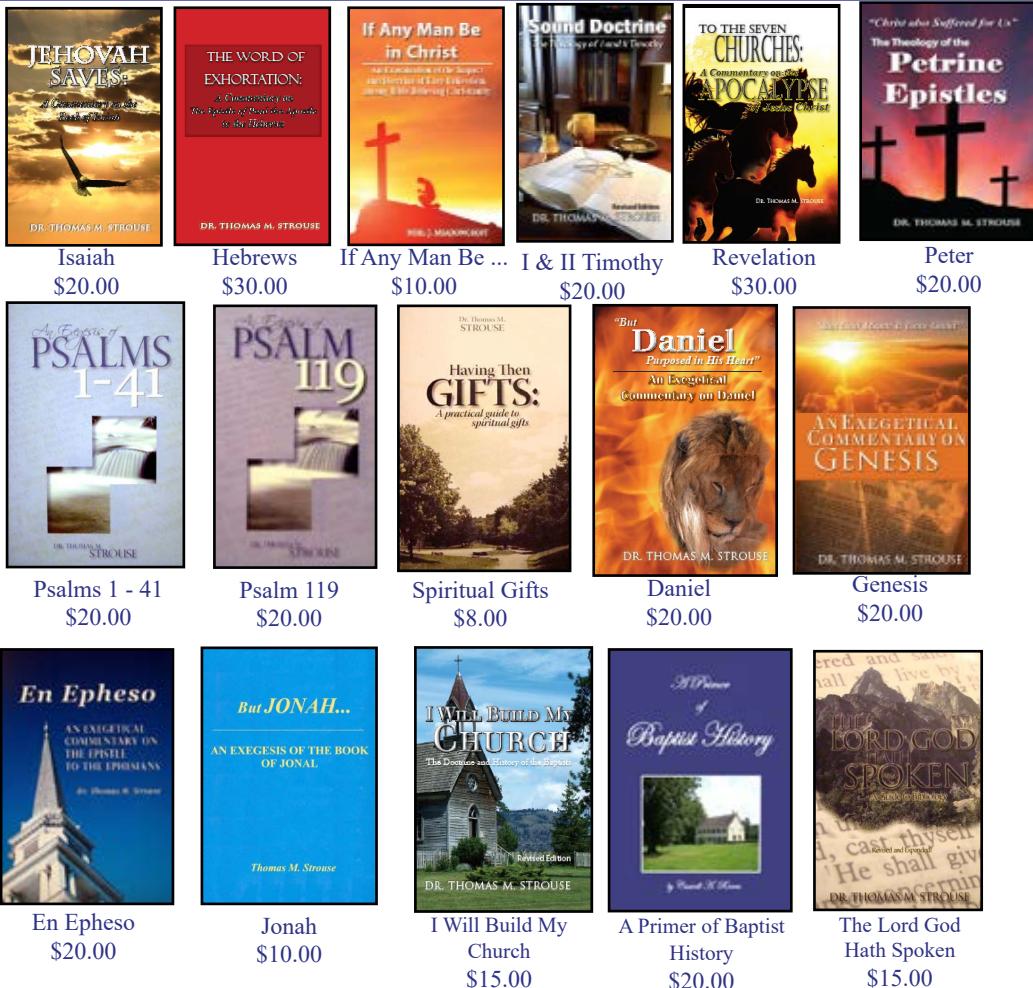


*Ryan wants to be a Gagnon*

# THE BOOK CORNER

These Books may be purchased through  
Bible Baptist Church:  
40 Country Squire Rd.  
Cromwell, CT 06416  
860-229-5387

[drtms\\_bbts@juno.com](mailto:drtms_bbts@juno.com)



## BBC 2020 SCHEDULE

**May 30**

Gagnon-Reeves  
Wedding

**June 8-12**

Cooperstown, PA  
“Eschatology”

**July 20-24**

Plymouth, NH  
“The History of the  
English Bible”

**August 24-28**

Fairhaven Baptist  
Church

“Minor Prophets”

**September 7**

Labor Day Cookout  
Strouse House

**September 14-18**

BBC of Nashua, NH  
“Bibliology”

**October 6-17**

Israel Tour

**October 25-28**

Willow Grove Baptist  
Church

“Timeless Truths  
Bible Conference”

**November 13**

BBTS Fall Lecture  
Series

## COMING THIS SUMMER VACATION BIBLE TIME

Look in the next BBC Update  
for more information



If you have any news for the next issue of the BBC Update, please send email to:

[drtms\\_bbts@juno.com](mailto:drtms_bbts@juno.com)



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