



BBC UPDATE



Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL OF CHURCH MEMBERS

(Adopted and Adapted)¹

The experienced independent Baptist pastor attempts to keep a close watch over the flock of God. In the process, he notices certain behaviors that betray potential problems. Having to deal with disgruntled members, the pastor observes certain patterns that develop, sometimes rapidly. No pastor or church enjoys church discipline. Neither pastor nor members want to turn an unrepentant church member over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh (I Cor. 5:5). The following is a list of steps that often surface in the downward spiral of church members. When church members spiral too deep church discipline must occur. Churches which don't practice church discipline either have weak preaching/teaching or don't hold members accountable. Rather than allowing the church member to descend beyond hope for restoration, the pastor and church members should have biblical discernment and intervene at the initial downward step.

- 1. Distraction:** Church not a priority > employment or more work hours; relationships (wife, children, parents, dating); tragedy, politics; technology; personal projects; hobbies; pets; personal Bible study and translation issues; addictions such as alcohol, sports, immorality; etc.
- 2. Descent:** Attitude of contempt towards Christianity, church, church members, or pastor.
- 3. Disagreements:** Starts with little things in church such as physical settings; services; programs or lack of programs; dress codes or lack of dress codes; songs and music; pastor's personal and public behavior.
- 4. Distancing:** Avoiding members in conversation and fellowship in church services; not participating in church ministries or programs.
- 5. Disappearance:** Coming late and leaving early to church services or starting to miss services and activities regularly. Excusing self for physical problems, not feeling good, oversleeping, conflicting meetings, lack of transportation, etc.
- 6. De-Valuing:** Taking the "high moral ground" and finding fault with church members or the leaders, or the pastor (the limburger syndrome = everything stinks!).
- 7. Departure:** Begins with missing services and then eventually forsaking assembling.
- 8. Defamation:** Hypercritical of everyone but especially the pastor (he must be a terrible person and certainly an apostate). Spreading criticism to everyone in and out of the church!
- 9. Disaster:** At some point, church discipline occurs but he/she *does not care*; in the mean time, he/she church hops or stops going to any church. If true Christian, his/her life descends into a mess and will have great loss at Judgment Seat of Christ!

***This is a checklist. Do you see yourself in any of the "D's"?**

¹The acrostic was adopted from "An Uncanny Prediction Tool: The Nine D's of a Christian's Self-destruction" by former Connecticut Baptist pastor and good friend in the Lord, Brother Tom Balzamo. I have adapted parts of it to express my experiences.

LADIES' TEA PARTY

On Saturday, August 26, 2023, Bible Baptist Church hosted the Ladies' Tea Party at the Strouse House for 20 ladies from five different area churches. Mrs. Jenny Nelson organized the schedule and Mrs. Christy Strouse gave a devotional after Mrs. Kirsten Gagnon led the ladies in a hymn. The ladies dressed up with beautiful dresses, hats, and gloves and enjoyed finger sandwiches with tea in their delicate cups. All enjoyed the wonderful day that the Lord gave.

TEA PARTY

"A Summer Tea Party"

*We had a summer tea party,
For the ladies and friends of BBC
Held on August 26, 2023.*

*Jan's house was the place of the festivity,
In the morning at 11:30.*

*In addition to the Christian friends we did see
It was nice for each lovely attendee
To wear a hat and look so pretty!
Jenny's décor showed impeccability,
And Christy's devotion had applicability.
The Lord gave us a day full of beauty!*



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PHOTOS

BBTS FALL SEMESTER

Beginning August 28, 2023
Monday (6-9 PM)

Studies in the Fear of the LORD

TH 703

Dr. M. Ryan Strouse



Beginning August 31, 2023
Thursday (6-9 PM)

Greek Studies

BL 602; 604

Dr. Thomas M. Strouse

CLASSES HAVE STARTED...
BUT IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO ENROLL.

Labor Day Cookout

BBC members and friends are invited to the annual Labor Day Cookout at the
Strouse House

164 Hickory Hill Drive, New Britain, CT
Monday, September 4, 2023 from 2-7 PM

Feel free to bring a side dish or a dessert and we will provide the meat and water.

We need a headcount ASAP of those of your family and/or church attending.

Don't forget your lawn chair.

BBC/BBTS 2023-2024 SCHEDULE

August 28
BBTS Semester begins

September 4
Labor Day Cookout
Strouse House
2-7PM

September 10-12
Community Baptist Church
Coopersburg, PA
Conference on the Blessed Hope

September 25-29
Bible Baptist Church
Nashua, NH
Book of Hebrews

October 22-25
Willow Grove Baptist Church
Waynesburg, PA
Timeless Truths Bible Conference

October 28-29
Calvary Baptist Church
Mannington, WV
TBA

November 10
BBTS Fall Lecture Series
Galilean Baptist Church
Stafford Springs, CT
TBA

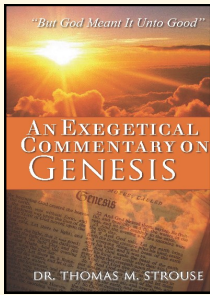
December 10
Commencement Service
Seoul, Korea

2024
January 1-5, 2024
Ireland Module
TBA

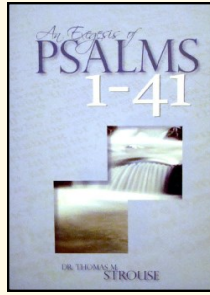
January 15-19, 2024
Fairhaven Baptist College
Chesterton, IN
Module TBA

Feb 26-March 1, 2024
Philippines Module
Quezon City
Module TBA

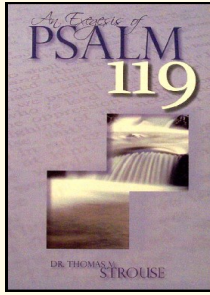
The Publication Page



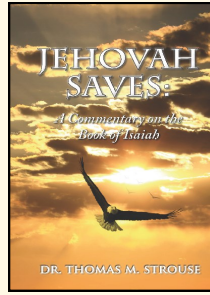
Genesis
\$20.00



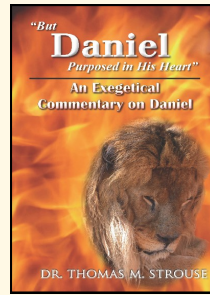
Psalms 1-41
\$20.00



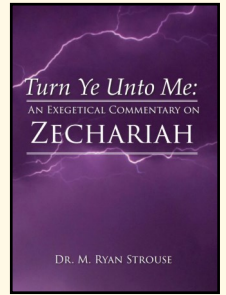
Psalm 119
\$20.00



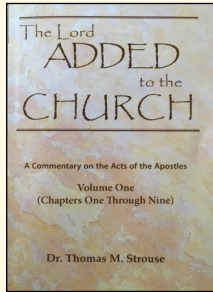
Isaiah
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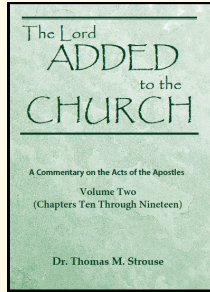
Daniel
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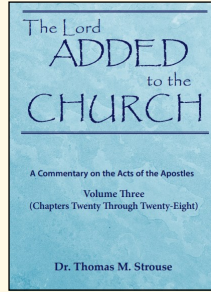
Zechariah
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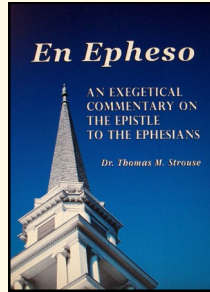
Acts 1-9
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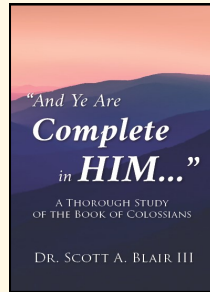
Acts 10-19
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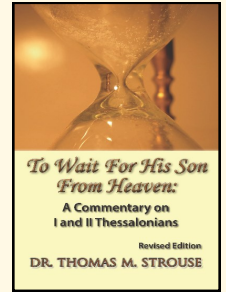
Acts 20-28
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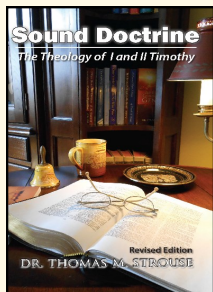
Ephesians
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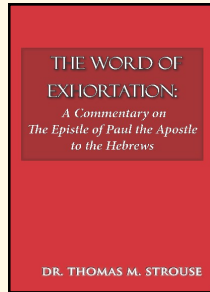
Colossians
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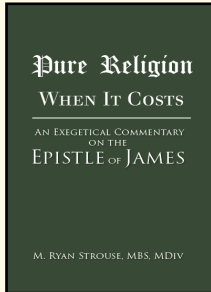
1 & 2 Thessalonians
\$20.00



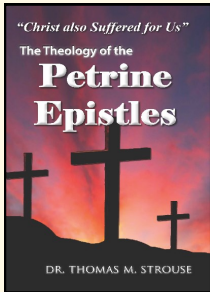
1 & 2 Timothy
\$20.00



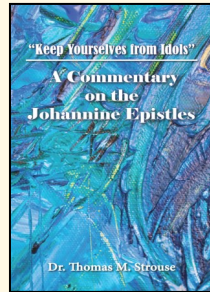
Hebrews
\$30.00



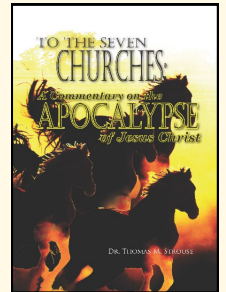
James
\$30.00



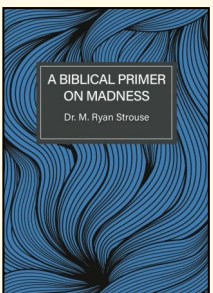
1 & 2 Peter
\$20.00



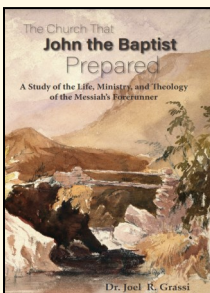
Johannine Epistles
\$30.00



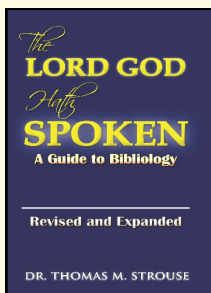
Revelation
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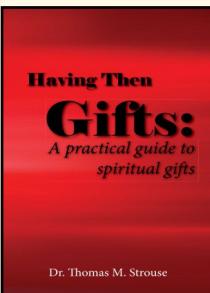
Biblical Madness
\$20.00



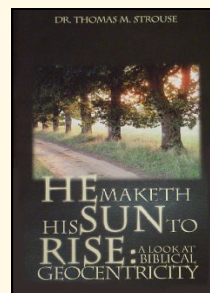
John the Baptist
\$35.00



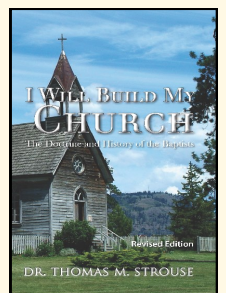
Bibliology
\$15.00



Spiritual Gifts
\$8.00



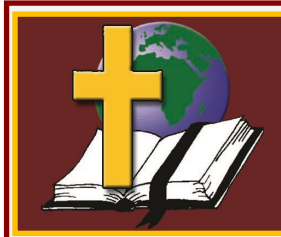
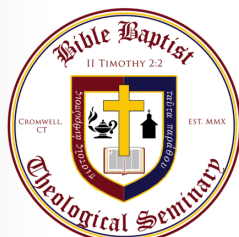
Geocentricity
\$10.00



Baptist Doctrine & History
\$15.00

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