



BBC UPDATE

Children's Christmas Program

Dr. Thomas Strouse



Dr. Thomas Strouse

On Christmas Sunday, Dec. 23, 2012, the BBC youth performed in the Christmas Program headed up by Mr. and Mrs. John Hagglund. The children played the piano, the harp, sang several songs, and recited many relevant Scripture verses. We are thankful for our youth who are putting their efforts and lives into the things of the Lord. Pastor Thomas Strouse expounded why Bethlehem was the chosen city for the birth of Christ, since it was the location for the raising of Jerusalem Temple lambs (Mic. 4:8 with 5:2). The shepherds found in the manger/stall a firstborn child in the place of special newborn lambs, signifying to them this "sign" (Lk. 2:12) that the child was "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29).



The BBC Youth presented the Christmas Program: "When the Fulness of Time was Come"



BBC Milestones

The Lord has blessed BBC with several special people who have celebrated significant milestones in their lives. Mr. and Mrs. Bill Vassar celebrated their 72nd wedding anniversary in December. We are thankful for this wonderful testimony to the sanctity of the marriage institution that the Lord ordained (Gen. 2:24). Also in the month of December, Mrs. Edith Davidson became a nonagenarian.



Mr. & Mrs. Bill Vassar celebrated their 72nd Wedding Anniversary on December 28th, 2012!



Mrs. Edith Davidson celebrated her 90th birthday December 26th!

Passing of Nate Villafuerte



On Dec. 13, 2012, Pastor Nate Villafuerte, pastor of Faith Baptist Bible Church in Guimaras, Philippines, went into the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ after a short illness. Brother Villafuerte testified that he had received Christ as Saviour when he was 16, and later surrendered to the Lord's will about the pastorate. He leaves behind his wife Hena Villanueva and four children Gaius, Jireh, Diadem, and Psalm Niel, as well as the flock of his assembly. Pastor Villafuerte graduated from BBTS in May, 2010, being in the first Filipino group to finish the MBS program. Pray for his family and church.



Pastor Villafuerte's assembly at Faith Baptist Bible Church in Guimaras, Philippines.

The Lord's Prayers

The Lord Jesus Christ prayed often during His earthly ministry ("Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared" [Heb. 5:7]); here are the occasions:

- I. Prayer at His Baptism: *"Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened"* (Lk. 3:21).
- II. Prayer after a Crowded Day: *"And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed"* (Mk. 1:35).
- III. Prayer after Fame: *"And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed"* (Lk. 5:15).
- IV. Prayer with His Disciples: *"And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?"* (Lk. 9:18).
- V. Prayer on the Mount: *"And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistering"* (Lk. 9:29).
- VI. Prayer after Spiritual Victory: *"In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight"* (Lk. 10:21).
- VII. Prayer as His Habit: *"And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples"* (Lk. 11:1).
- VIII. Prayer at a Gravesite: *"Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me"* (Jn. 11:41-42).
- IX. Prayer in the Mountain: *"And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray"* (Mk. 6:46).
- X. Prayer in a Time of Trouble: *"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour"* (Jn. 12:27).
- XI. Prayer for Peter: *"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren"* (Lk. 22:31-32).
- XII. The Lord's Prayer: *"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee"* (Jn. 17:1).
- XIII. Prayer in Gethsemane: *"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground"* Lk. 22:44).
- XIV. Prayer on the Cross: *"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots"* (Lk. 23:34), *"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"* (Mt. 27:46), and *"And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost"* (Lk. 23:46).

Christ's Response to National Tragedy

Dr. Thomas Strouse, Pastor

ARTICLE

Quite often, when local or national tragedies and catastrophes occur, people ask the common "where is God at a time like this" question. This often leads to questioning the existence or the omnipotence of God. However, this question or these words should not be on the biblical Christian's lips, since the author and finisher of the Christian faith (cf. Heb. 12:2) gave His reply. The Lord Jesus Christ alluded to two national tragedies in which a mass murdering occurred and a natural calamity occurred. First, the politician Pilate killed multitudes of Galileans, and second, the tower of Siloam fell and killed eighteen bystanders (Lk. 13:1-5). Rather than questioning the existence, power, or even justice of God, the Saviour gave His shocking perspective. He asked two questions and repeated His dire warning. The Lord's questions were "Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?" (v. 2) and "think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?" (v. 4). The questions implied the answer that these victims were not anymore sinful than any other men, including those in His audience. Tragedies don't happen only to exceptionally sinful people, but potentially to all men, who are sinners. The warning was that when tragedy strikes unrepentant sinners will perish, just like the unrepentant murdered sinners and the eighteen sinners who died in the respective tragedies. Since no one knows when fatal calamities or tragedies will occur, it behooves everyone to have repented of sins and to have been saved in advance! Do people ever think along the lines of the Saviour? Do Christians ever give the warning about repentance from sins? Do the Christian churches in Cromwell, CT ever teach the necessity of repentance from sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life?

The Christian Saviour's ongoing message was one of repentance. He preached the same message as His forerunner John preached, saying, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mt. 4:17; 3:2). He warned that repentance is required to keep mankind out of hell (cf. Lk. 16:30). The apostles Peter and Paul preached repentance to both religious observants and the heathen (cf. Acts 3:19 and 26:20). The resurrected Lord Jesus Christ demanded repentance from sins within the early assemblies (cf. Rev. 2:5, 16; 3:3).



Since repentance from sin is the Christian message to lost sinners, one must have an understanding of the nature and fruit of repentance. The act of repentance is literally changing one's mind about sin. This change or turning is the volitional turn from wickedness prompted by the conviction of sin through the agency of the Scriptures with the working of the Spirit of God (cf. Lk. 18:13-14; I Thes. 1:9-10). The wicked Ninevites understood their responsibility before a holy God and expressed biblical repentance, saying, "But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?" (Jon. 3:8-9). The fruit of repentance is the understanding that nothing within man or by man can adequately deal with the offense against the eternal and holy God of creation. John the Baptist declared to the Pharisees who were trusting in their religious heritage, saying, "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (Mt. 3:7-9).

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour from sin to all who repent of sin and receive Him by faith (cf. Jn. 1:12-13). He it is who asserted through the Apostle Peter, saying, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Pet. 3:9). Are we as professed Christians giving forth Christ's urgent message of repentance? Are you prepared for the inescapable death that is coming down your path? When the tragedy of death hits you or your loved ones in an "untimely" or "horrific" manner, are you and yours ready because of repentance from sin and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Christmas Service

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BBTS Spring Schedules



BBC was blessed with a beautiful piano, harp, ladies' ensemble musical special during the Sunday morning service. The BBC Youth Christmas Program included several musical specials. The children played all the musical accompaniments for the specials during the program.



BBTS Module Classes

January 7-11, 2013
BBTS Europe Module
"Ecclesiology"
"Job"

Albufeira, Portugal

January 21-25, 2013
BBTS Module -
"Ecclesiology"

Cromwell, CT

February 18-22, 2013
BBTS Philippines Module
"Book of Job"
"I and II Thessalonians"

Quezon City
Philippines

March 11-15, 2013
HBTS Module
"1 Corinthians"

Endicott, NY

BBTS Spring Classes

Mondays

Greek Proficiency Review	10:00am - 12:00pm
Aramaic I	6:00pm - 7:00pm
Hebrew IV	7:00pm - 9:00pm

Wednesdays

1 Corinthians	8:00am - 9:30am
Greek IV	5:00pm - 7:00pm

Thursdays

1 Corinthians	8:00am - 9:30am
Angelology	6:00pm - 9:00pm

Fridays

Greek II	8:00am - 10:00am
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True Hope

Pastor Cas Reeves



Pastor Cas Reeves

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope" (1 Timothy 1:1).

We have a hope, beloved, and that hope is living and alive, and it is Jesus Christ our Savior and our God. The word "hope" from the Greek word *elpos* means to anticipate, usually with pleasure. The idea is that of expectation or confidence. Think of the added dimension it brings to our understanding of Jesus Christ, who is not only our Savior, but is our hope and our anticipation, our pleasure, our expectation and our confidence.

For the most part, the word, "hope" is used in the Bible for the thought of anticipation or expectation of something good. *"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began"* (Titus 1:2). Hope plays a very important part in everyone's life. For those who are lost and do not know Christ as their personal Savior, it is hope, hope of a different nature, that is the force which helps many to survive catastrophic events in their life. This hope is not a true hope, but a mental hope in something that they have fixated on. At best, it can be said, it is a guessing hope or a hope of chance. It is unlike real hope which is by its nature a confident hope. Only the genuine Christian has a true hope and that hope is Christ Jesus. John records that Jesus said, *"I am ... the truth"* (John 14:6). We, who are saved, and who have received Jesus Christ into our hearts have this hope, the True Hope, *"which is Christ in you, the hope of glory"* (Colossians 1:27).



The Tarrats family ministered in music, beautifully singing "Silent Night," a cappella, during the Sunday morning service.

DEVOTIONAL CORNER

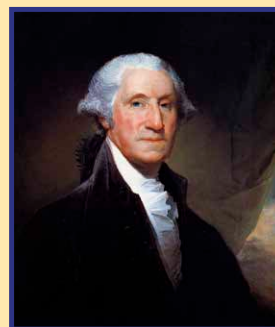
For the Christian, the book of Romans gives us interesting insights into "hope." First, it tells us that we are saved by hope: *"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"* (Romans 8:24). Here the word "hope" is used to reveal a 'confident faith' in what can not be seen. Then, *"if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it"* (Romans 8:25). We are told it is by this 'confident, anticipating hope', that we wait patiently for *"the redemption of our body."* (Romans 8:23). And finally, we learn, that the God of hope would have us to abound in hope through His blessings and His Spirit. *"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost"* (Romans 15:13). To "abound" means to be over flowing, to have an excess of, in this case an "abounding hope." Beloved, in order to do this, we must personally know God and the power of his dear Son; in both our salvation and in our walk, if we are to experience in this life the meaning of an abounding true hope. It is this real and true hope that gets us through our moments of difficulties and discouragement's, and enables us to keep on keeping on for the Lord Jesus Christ with the right attitude. -CAR

Quotes From the Past:

George Washington

1732-1799

First U.S. President



George Washington

*"Be courteous to all,
but intimate with few,
and let those few be well tried
before you give them your
confidence."*

ARTICLE

Poem

6

Photos



Paul Ige shared with the BBC Family a Christmas Poem, "Word of Life."



Word of Life

by Paul Ige

In a world so dark as night,
To reprove and clear their mind,
Jesus came to heal the blind,
To give them corrective light;
He is the Word of Light.

In a world where men rove,
Regardless of how often they fall,
Jesus came to care for all,
To give His unconditional love;
He is the Word of Love.

In a world where tranquility cease,
Born in a pungent manger,
Jesus came as a peacemaker,
To give us unfathomable peace;
He is the Word of Peace.

In a world of sin and strife,
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Jesus came as a baby,
To give us eternal life;
He is the Word of Life.



The members of Bible Baptist Church presented pastor with a Christmas love gift after the Children's Program. We praise the Lord for providing us such a godly pastor!

BBTS Modules to be Held in Portugal

BBTS MODULES

On January 4, 2013, Brother Jeff Skorupski and myself will be traveling to Portugal for the European module classes of Job and Ecclesiology. The host pastor is Mark Periera in Albufeira, Portugal. There are more than 15 seminarians enrolled in the modules with hopes of several more missionaries and national pastors joining the courses. These seminary courses will lead to the Master of Biblical Studies degree from BBTS. Plans are being made to expand the European modules eastward to include Prague in September, 2013. Pray for BBTS.



Jeff Skorupski and Dr. Strouse, pictured on the occasion of Jeff's BBTS graduation in 2011.



Dr. Strouse will be teaching two BBTS Modules in Albufeira, Portugal during the week of January 6.



Operation Cromwell

The church membership of BBC is involved in reaching Cromwell, CT with the gospel by claiming various streets in the town and then visiting the houses on these streets. Each street is voluntarily selected by the church member family, prayed over, and visited with invitations to Christ and to BBC. Cromwell has many streets with houses with sinners. Pray that we will reach our Jerusalem.



THE BOOK CORNER

BBTS Spring Lecture Series

Save the Date !!
April 18, 2013

"Evangelism and Church Planting"

"Church Planting in Acts"

Dr. Thomas Strouse

"Biblical Evangelism"

Dr. Noel Meadowcroft

"The Principles and Challenge of Church Planting"

Pastor Greg Breedon

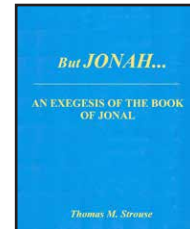


Tyler sporting a very festive Christmas tie!

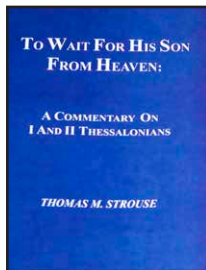
The Book Corner

These Books may be purchased through *Bible Baptist Church*:

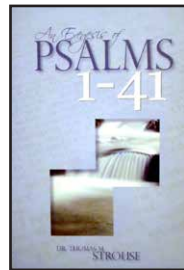
40 Country Squire Rd.
Cromwell, CT 06416
860-229-5387



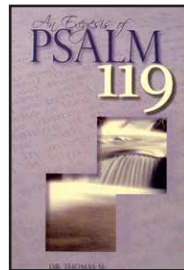
Jonah
\$10.00



I & II Thessalonians
\$10.00



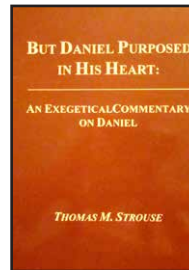
Psalms 1 - 41
\$20.00



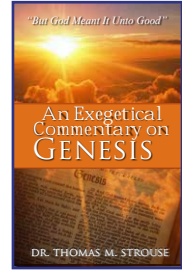
Psalms 119
\$20.00



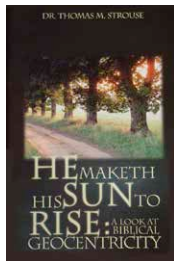
Spiritual Gifts
\$8.00



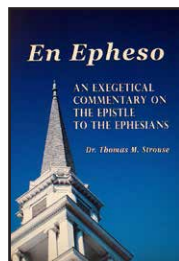
Daniel
\$20.00



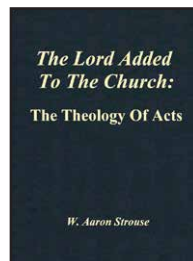
Genesis
\$20



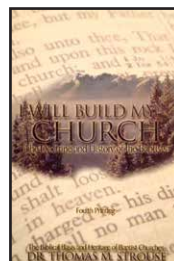
Geocentricity
\$10.00



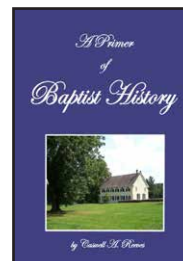
En Epheso
\$20.00



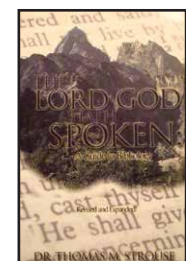
The Theology of Acts
\$20.00



I Will Build My Church
\$15.00



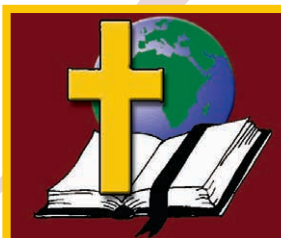
A Primer of Baptist History
\$20.00



The Lord God Hath Spoken
\$15.00

If you have any news for the next issue of the BBC Update, please send to the Editor, Cas Reeves, at either

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