

Ye Shall Receive Power and Be Witnesses

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
Acts 1:8



John Peeples
IBFI Mission Director,
Psalm 16:11

If the name of the Great Commission was taken from Acts 1, it would probably bear the designation Commandment. We are commanded to be witnesses for Jesus Christ. In this passage God emphasized four people groups and an order in the commands.

The first two groups represent "our people" - our home town and our home country. It only seems natural to reach our home town and to extend that outreach to those beyond our home town until we reach our entire nation. The third group gets much more complicated. While Samaria is near in proximity, it could not be further away in our affection. Samaria not only represents those people we know of and have had contact with, but those we do not like, in the strongest sense of the feeling. These are the people that we least desire to have contact with. Some quickly come to mind, this is your Samaria. We are to be witnesses unto the uttermost part of the earth. In the uttermost part, we will find people similar to us as Americans along with a host of differing cultures. While we may begin in our Jerusalem, a mature Christian and a mature Church will be endeavoring to witness to all of these at once. A large portion of our witness will be through prayer, support, and involvement in Missions and Missionary Ministries.

In John 14:15, Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." In Acts 1:4, He commanded his disciples that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father. The commandment to go has the prerequisite of having the power of the Holy Ghost. There is a time to wait and a time to go, a time to receive and a time to give what you have received, a time to prepare and a time to do what you are prepared to do.

While we may be tempted to witness only to our Jerusalem in our own power, the truth is, we cannot be effective witnesses anywhere in the world without the power of the Holy Spirit. In our own power, the simplest task for God is beyond our ability. When God is with us, even the impossible task will become possible. Waiting on God will give us His direction, His timing, and His power. It is worth the wait!



Remembering Tom Huntress

May 6, 1936 - April 9, 2024
Tom Huntress, 87, of Wellington, TX, passed away Tuesday, April 9, 2024.

He was born on May 6, 1936, in Lima, OH. His parents were George J. and Katherine Rechin Huntress.

Tom married Vera Ward on June 13, 1957, in Wellington, TX.



Trentman Avenue Baptist Church, where Tom was youth director.

Tom was on staff at Trentman Avenue Baptist Church, W. L. Bryant, pastor, while he was a student at Bible Baptist Seminary. He was youth director and had many other duties, especially going door to door.

He graduated from the Bible Baptist Seminary in Arlington, TX, in 1959. Rev. Huntress pastored 5 churches from 1959 to 2005 including First Baptist Church in Fort Myers, FL, Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church in Mt. Pleasant, TX, Pensacola Baptist Temple



and Joy Baptist Tabernacle both in Pensacola, FL, and the Calvary Baptist Church in Palestine, TX. He retired and returned to Wellington, TX, in 2005. From 2011 to 2015 he pastored his 6th church, the Calvary Baptist Church in Wellington, TX, where he was a member. He designed and oversaw the building of the Pensacola Baptist Temple and Calvary Baptist Church facilities. Tom was also a valued staff member of Adams Funeral Home where he helped with funerals when needed.

Tom was preceded in death by his parents, 2 brothers, 2 sisters, and a great grandson. His survivors include his wife, Vera; 2 sons Mark Huntress and wife Debbie of Wellington, TX, and Andy Huntress and wife Tita of Amarillo, TX; his daughter Tanya Ard and husband Lamar of Missouri City, TX; a brother Jim Elliott of Franklin, TN; 14 grandchildren; 29 great grandchildren and a host of nieces and nephews. The family requests memorials be made to Beam's Bibles through the Calvary Baptist Church.

A word from Bro. Stewart: Tom was a leading man in the founding and sustaining of the IBFI and NBBS. He and his gracious wife Vera attended many IBFI meetings, and hosted several. He was a great presence in our midst, a solid preacher of the Word, and a dear friend to me and many other preachers.



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INDEPENDENT BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL

The Searchlight

JUNE/JULY 2024 VOLUME 41 ISSUE 1

40th Annual May Fellowship Meeting!

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake. Psalm 115:1

\$75,000 Offering Goal Greatly Surpassed! - \$96,000+



Bro. Eric Crawford, IBFI President



Pastor Tyler Gillit, Worth Baptist Church, Fort Worth, TX



Pastor Johnny Pope, Christchurch Baptist Fellowship, Houston, TX




40th Graduation Commencement
Heads Up! NBBS Opening Day Rally will be Tuesday, August 13, 2024 - First Day of the New School Year

All for Him

Psalm 115:1

IBFI - Now in Our 40th Year

STILL ON TRACK!



NBBS

Mission Agency Searchlight

Training Preachers
Edifying Churches
Promoting Missions

All about Him

Gal. 6:14

The Searchlight
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PO Box 151259 | Ft. Worth, TX 76108 | Phone: 817.367.3422 | Email: ibfi@ibfi.us | Website: IBFI.us
IBFI Board of Directors: Pastor Eric Crawford, Dr. Raymond Barber, Mission Director John Peeples, Evangelist Jonathan Stewart, Pastor Raymond Castro, Pastor Matthew Gage, Pastor Tyler Gillit, Pastor David Grice, Pastor Heath Hogue, Pastor Paul Shearin, Pastor Caleb Shipman, Pastor Claude Sutton, Pastor Heath Van Zandt, Pastor David Webb, and Pastor Michael Wiggins.

ALUMNI NEWS



Heath Hogue,
Alumni President

40 Years and Still on Track!

What a great fellowship meeting and graduation we just had. With soul stirring preaching, God honoring music, and friendly fellowship, it seems each meeting gets a little better each time. I am already excited and making plans to be with Pastor David Webb (1997 alumnus) and Walker Springs Road Baptist Church October 14-16, 2024, for the semi-annual IBFI Fall Fellowship Meeting. I hope I will see you there.

It was a blessing to see so many of our alumni at the May meeting, from those around the DFW area and around the state, as well as those we do not get to see as often from out of state and those out of country!

It is encouraging to know that the IBFI and the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary are still on track 40 years later, which was evident in the preaching and singing. It felt a little different with Dr. and Mrs. Barber unable to attend this year. Please keep the Barber family in your prayers. Even with their absence, everything was still on track. I am reminded of II Timothy 1:13-14 "Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That the good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us."

A huge thank you to pastor Tyler Gillit, the staff, and congregation of Worth Baptist Church for housing the NBBS this past school year and hosting the May fellowship. A lot of hard work and many hours were put in to make the school year and fellowship a great success. Thank you.

Finally, be in prayer for several of our alumni who are starting or settling into new works or new ministry opportunities. Bro. Tyler Yates (2021) just left for Mexico and the Yucatan Peninsula and is currently on the field. Pastor, if you have thought about supporting Bro. Yates, now is a great time. Bro. Jared (2017) and Elizabeth Blair (2024) are currently on deputation and raising support to go to Norway. Bro. Michael (2021) and Mrs. Donya Wiggins are now serving the Lord in Alabama. It was sure good to have him at the meeting and to hear him preach and sing. Bro. Tony (2020) and Melissa Roa (2021) are settling in at Rockwall Baptist Church. Pray for them as they travel back and forth. Bro. Zack (2021) and Charish Doty are working with Worth Baptist Church to start a church in Benbrook, TX. Pray for a building to be opened for them. Bro. Lee (2021) and Laura Davis are planting New Life Baptist Church in Highland Village, TX.

If you are an alumnus and have some exciting news, please email me at norrisalumni@gmail.com.

ALUMNUS AWARD

David Webb, pastor of Walker Springs Road Baptist Church of Jackson, Alabama, received the Alumnus of the Year Award this May, for his longstanding dedication to the cause of Christ. He graduated from NBBI in 1997, and has been pastoring 21 years.



UPCOMING EVENTS

METROPLEX AREA IBFI MEETINGS

July 18, 2024
Bible Baptist Church
Hillsboro, Texas
Host Pastor - Paul Shearin

August 13, 2024
Combined with Opening Day Rally
at Worth Baptist Church
A lite breakfast will be served from
8:30am - 9:15am.

The Opening Day Rally will start
at 9:30am and will include a message by
NBBS Chancellor, Dr. Raymond Barber.
Lunch will be provided.

September 19, 2024
Springtown Baptist Temple
Springtown, Texas
Host Pastor - Luther White

**MAKE YOUR PLANS NOW
TO ATTEND IBFI FALL
FELLOWSHIP MEETING**

Monday-Wednesday, October 14-16, 2024
Walker Springs Road Baptist Church
Jackson, Alabama
Host Pastor - David Webb

Full details will be in the August/
September issue of the Searchlight
and at the IBFI website: www.ibfi.us

OPENING DAY RALLY FOR NORRIS BIBLE BAPTIST SEMINARY

August 13, 2024
Student Orientation begins at 8:00am.
The Opening Day Rally will begin
at 9:30am. A lunch will be
provided afterwards.

**THE FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST
CONFESSION OF FAITH**

(Excerpt from What the Bible Teaches)



**Dr. Raymond W. Barber,
IBFI President Emeritus**

Abraham Lincoln once said, "Take all the Bible that you can by reason and the rest by faith, and you will live and die a better man."

There is in the world an appalling ignorance of the Word of God, even among so-called fundamental Christians. A teacher once asked a group of children, "What's in the Bible?" After a moment or two of silence, a little girl raised her hand and said, "I know what's in the Bible. Now let me see. There are a lot of dates, marriages, deaths, clippings from the paper, two valentines, a birthday card, a Christmas card, and that's about all." She knew what was kept in her Bible at home.

The reason people are ignorant of the Word of God is that they do not read it. It would be interesting to take a survey of the average congregation and find out how much time is spent in the Word of God from week to week.

A preacher was with a family on one occasion while delivering some special messages in the community. On the first evening he was there, before they retired, he said, "I would like to read from your Bible a few verses of Scripture and have a prayer before we retire." When the preacher opened it, out popped a pair of glasses. The mother and wife of the home said before she thought, "Why, I do declare! There are my specs! They've been lost for four years, and I haven't been able to find them anywhere."

That is why we are appallingly ignorant of the Word of God. We are not reading. We are not studying. We are not giving ourselves to meditation in the Word of God. Around the world, men and women are hungering for the truth and for righteousness. We have it in between the lids of this Book, but the greatest tragedy I know anything about is, we are keeping to ourselves this priceless treasure God has given us.

The Bible is such a wonderful treasure. It presents the only key we have that opens the door to the revelation of God. It portrays the only Saviour who opens the way to Heaven. It provides the answer to the perplexing problems and questions of life. Every area of human knowledge is touched in this Book. Not one single field of learning has been left out. The Bible is as up-to-date as tomorrow morning's newspaper headlines. Old as time and as new as tomorrow is the Book of God.

*"Holy Bible book divine,
precious treasure thou art mine;
Mine to tell me whence I came;
mine to teach me what I am."
-John Bunyan*

Thank you for all your prayers for Mrs. Barber as she recovers from a severe brain bleed. She is home now and continuing here healing with physical, occupational, and speech therapy.

Please continue to pray for a complete recovery. It has been an

incredible work of God to see her improvement. The hospital did not give much hope at all for her condition, but your prayers have made all the difference in her healing.

Our thoughts and prayers are with the Huntress family in the recent homegoing of Bro. Tom Huntress. He was a dear brother to us all. Peggy Riggsby and her family also remain in our hearts. She was a devoted servant of the Lord, beloved by all.

OVER AND ABOVE BLESSINGS!



**Eric Crawford,
IBFI President**

What a great graduation week we had for the Norris Bible Baptist Seminary! The preaching during the May Fellowship Meeting was wonderful. Dr. Johnny Pope did an amazing job starting the meetings off, and the messages to follow were right on target. There was such a sweet spirit throughout the week.

I want to thank the Worth Baptist Church and Pastor Tyler Gillit for hosting the meeting. It was fitting that the 40th graduation service took place where it all began forty years ago. We did miss Dr. and Mrs. Barber not being able to attend because of Mrs. Barber's recent health issues. Although she is improving, please keep her and Dr. Barber in your prayers as she continues her road to recovery.

On Wednesday, we had our annual offering for NBBS and the fellowship. Our goal of \$75,000.00 was surpassed, and on Thursday another church reached out to help get us to over \$96,000.00! What a blessing! It has been amazing to see the Lord continue to provide not only students for the seminary but to meet its financial needs as well.

The IBFI Mission Agency, a clearinghouse, is in need of additional monthly support. We do not charge our missionaries for using our clearinghouse, although some give voluntarily. We have asked often throughout the years for additional support, and some have given towards this, which is a great blessing. Recently, some more expenses have arisen, and I cannot encourage you enough to please, if at all possible, give directly towards the mission office to help offset these costs. Bro. and Mrs. Peeples do a great job of stewarding the agency, and it is a worthy, eternal investment, as it aids our missionaries in their service to the Lord.

The building project continues to move forward. We should have a complete set of building plans to begin the building process very soon. We did receive great news about getting water to the building. It looks like it is going to cost half the price that we were originally told. The wheels are turning slowly, but they are still turning, and soon we will move dirt and begin to see real progress. Praise the Lord!



**Jonathan J. Stewart,
NBBS President**

The 40th anniversary May fellowship meeting was everything we hoped it would be. A great spirit, inspiring preaching, warm fellowship, and a commencement service with much to rejoice over. Our newest graduates, with their great potential for service to the Lord and their fellow man, join the many likeminded who came before them. They truly embody what NBBS is about!

Worth Baptist Church at-large, and their staff, were yet again especially helpful in every which way. As can be seen in the pictures, their beautiful facilities served us well from start to finish. The Lord capped everything off by enabling us to exceed our \$75,000.00 offering goal the Wednesday morning it was taken up. As always, more continues to come in, and over \$96,000.00 has been reached!

Being "Still On Track" in what we set out to do 40 years ago is reflected in the lives of our graduates yet again. While in school they were heavily involved in church ministry, and upon graduation they will continue to do so. They are an example of the words of Paul to the church in Philippi: "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." Philippians 4:9. The "me" from this passage, in a collective sense, would be in respect to the teaching and training they received from the preachers and churches in which they served, and the instruction and training they received at NBBS.

We are in this together! - preachers training preachers as Mark 16:20c states, "the Lord working with them".



HE DID IT AGAIN!

Psalm 118:23

We pondered much at Dr. Terry Riggsby's home going not too long ago, and about the investment he made in the cause of Christ through NBBS as well in the churches in which he served. He also invested in the lives of this year's graduates. We pause yet again and think the same of his dear wife Peggy, who a few weeks ago joined the heavenly hosts on high. What a rejoicing she and Terry must be having in the presence of the Lord, as they now see together, the difference they made in ways not possible to be seen here below. As you read the words below about Peggy, I know your heart will be blessed.



**Fondly Remembering
Peggy Riggsby**

Psalm 116:15

Peggy Riggsby was born in Greeneville, Tennessee, to Lawrence and Eva Carter on December 21, 1944. She moved to Ohio at a young age and graduated from Vandalia Butler High School where she met her future husband, Terry Riggsby. After graduation she worked as an administration assistant at Wright Patterson Air Force Base. Peggy was saved at the age of 21 while watching a Billy Graham crusade. She began to witness to Terry, and he surrendered his life to Christ shortly thereafter. Peggy married Robert Terry Riggsby on April 17, 1965, in Dayton, Ohio. As Terry began his career in education, Peggy was a devoted and loving homemaker helping to raise their four children. In 1978, Terry started a private school, Calvary Baptist School, in Holland, Michigan. In addition to taking care of the home, Peggy worked as Terry's full-time secretary while being involved in numerous school functions.



In 1984, she followed her husband Terry to Texas as he was called to be the Administrator for Norris Bible Baptist Institute. She joined Worth Baptist Church on August 19, 1984. In Texas, Peggy worked as a typist for Tandy Corp., a caregiver for Punkin Patch Daycare, and as the Nursery Coordinator at Worth Baptist Church.

Her devoted service to Worth Baptist Church included serving as the Jr. High unit head, the Homebuilders class unit head, 29er's assistant director.

Peggy Riggsby is preceded in death by her parents, Lawrence and Eva Carter, husband Terry Riggsby, and her son, Mark Riggsby. Peggy Riggsby will be remembered by her children Amy (David) Bryant, Becky (Doug) Sonsel, and Josh (Kristen) Riggsby as well as her grandchildren Blake (Shelby) Bryant, Meagan (David) Whitehead, David Bryant, Jr., Dakota Sonsel, Nathan (Paaton) Riggsby, Mason Riggsby, Jacob Riggsby, Beau Sonsel, Keathley Riggsby, and Carter Riggsby. She also leaves a great-grandson, Hayden; three great granddaughters, Rose, Addy, Brynlee; and her brother Larry (Linda) Carter.

The family of Peggy Riggsby wishes to extend our sincere gratitude to the loving community of Worth Baptist Church. In lieu of flowers, please make contributions to the Widows and Widowers of Worth Baptist Church.

