

MISSION MESSENGER



Take FIRM hold of instruction, do not let go; Keep her, for she is your life.
Proverbs 4:13

August, 2010

I Shall Not Pass This Way Again

At a Touchdown Club meeting many years before his death, Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant told the following story:

I had just been named head coach at Alabama and was off in my old car down in South Alabama recruiting a prospect who was supposed to have been a pretty good player and I was having trouble finding the place. Getting hungry I spied an old cinder block building with a small sign out front that simply said "Restaurant."

I pull up, go in and every head in the place turns to stare at me. Seems I'm the only white fella in the place. But the food smelled good so I skip a table and go up to a cement bar and sit. A big ole man in a tee shirt and cap comes over and says, "What do you need?" I told him I needed lunch and what did they have today? He says, "You probably won't like it here, today we're having chitlins, collard greens and black eyed peas with cornbread. I'll bet you don't even know what chitlins (small intestines of hogs prepared as food in the deep South) are, do you?" I looked him square in the eye and said "I'm from Arkansas, I've probably eaten a mile of them. Sounds like I'm in the right place."

They all smiled as he left to serve me up a big plate. When he comes back he says, "You ain't from around here then?" I explain I'm the new football coach up in Tuscaloosa at the University and I'm here to find whatever that boy's name was and he says Yeah I've heard of him, he's supposed to be pretty good."

And he gives me directions to the school so I can meet him and his coach. As I'm paying up to leave, I remember my manners and leave a tip, not too big to be flashy, but a good one and he told me lunch was on him, but I told him for a lunch that good, I felt I should pay. The big man asked me if I had a photograph or something, he could hang up to show I'd been there. I was so new that I didn't have any yet. It really wasn't that big a thing back then to be asked for, but I took a napkin and wrote his name and address on it and told him I'd get him one.

I met the kid I was lookin' for later that afternoon and I don't remember his name, but do remember I didn't think much of him when I met him. I had wasted a day, or so I thought.

When I got back to Tuscaloosa late that night, I took that napkin from my shirt pocket and put it under my keys so I wouldn't forget it. Back then I was excited that anybody would want a picture of me. The next day we found a picture and I wrote on it, "Thanks for the best lunch I've ever had."

Now let's go a whole buncha years down the road. Now we have black players at Alabama and I'm back down in that part of the country scouting an offensive lineman we sure needed. Y'all remember, (and I forget the name, but it's not important to the story), well anyway, he's got two friends going to Auburn and he tells me he's got his heart set on Auburn too, so I leave empty

handed and go on to see some others while I'm down there.

Two days later, I'm in my office in Tuscaloosa and the phone rings and it's this kid who just turned me down, and he says, "Coach, do you still want me at Alabama?" And I said, "Yes, I sure do.." And he says OK, he'll come. And I say, "Well son, what changed your mind?" And he said, "When my grandpa found out that I had a chance to play for you and said no, he pitched a fit and told me I wasn't going nowhere but Alabama, and wasn't playing for nobody but you. He thinks a lot of you and has ever since y'all met." Well, I didn't know his granddad from Adam's housecat so I asked him who his granddaddy was and he said, "You probably don't remember him, but you ate in his restaurant your first year at Alabama and you sent him a picture that he's had hung in that place ever since. That picture's his pride and joy and he still tells everybody about the day that Bear Bryant came in and had chitlins with him. My grandpa said that when you left there, he never expected you to remember him or to send him that picture, but you kept your word to him and to Grandpa, that's everything. He said you could teach me more than football and I had to play for a man like you, so I guess I'm going to."

I was floored. But I learned that the lessons my mama taught me were always right. It don't cost nuthin' to be nice. It don't cost nuthin' to do the right thing most of the time, and it costs a lot to lose your good name by breakin' your word to someone.

When I went back to sign that boy, I looked up his Grandpa and he's still running that place, but it looks a lot better now; and he didn't have chitlins that day, but he had some ribs that woulda made Dreamland proud and I made sure I posed for a lot of pictures; and don't think I didn't leave some new ones for him, too, along with a signed football.

I made it clear to all my assistants to keep this story and these lessons in mind when they're out on the road. If you remember anything else from me, remember this. It really doesn't cost anything to be nice, and the rewards can be unimaginable.

Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant

Literacy Fair Mercedes, Texas

August 13-15, 2010

Cost \$35.00

Limited to first 10 female and first 10
male responses.

We will leave from Cameron on Friday about noon and return after morning church services on Sunday. We will stay in the Philadelphia Baptist Church fellowship hall which is also where the fair will be held on Saturday afternoon. Each person going on the trip will be responsible for a meal going to Mercedes, on Saturday night, and coming back on Sunday.

September Pastor Anniversaries

	yrs
David Cox-Davilla	17
Carl Jennings-FBC Rosebud	4
Edgardo Martinez-Primera Rockdale	3
Art Vestal-Little Deer Creek	2

September Birthdays

	Date
Carolyn Sipe-Cottonwood	1
Debbie Ortner-FBC Bremond	1
Karen Sanders-Gause	2
LouVonne Johnson-FBC Caldwell	5
Wayne Shuffield-Battetown	7
Gary Maroney-FBC Cameron	9
Rosie Morin-Primera Marlin	10
Samuel Buhl-True Love	14
Delmar McCracken-Friendship	15
Stan Ortner-FBC Bremond	16
Bill Perdue-FBC Lott	24
Dorothy Commander-FBC Cameron	25
Brenda Cole-FIRM	25

September Wedding Anniversaries

	Date
Freddy & Marsha Burden-FBC New Baden	5
Delmar & Treva McCracken-Friendship	8
Tim & Danna Cheatham-San Gabriel	10
Buddy & Carolyn Sipe-Cottonwood	16

Faith in Public Schools is Legal

One source for resources on how faith can be expressed and taught in our public schools is *Gateways to Better Education*. They publish a parent's survival kit called "Keeping the Faith in Public Schools: How to help your children graduate with their faith and values intact". For more information visit their website at www.gtbe.org or call 800-929-1163.

Church News

Tanglewood has added 2 new members by baptism and averaged 45 children in VBS.

FBC Cameron has added 4 members by baptism.

FBC Calvert has added one by profession of faith and one by letter.

FBC Hearne had 86 enrolled in their VBS.

FBC Franklin has added 2 by baptism and 2 by letter.

Henry Prairie will be in revival August 19-22 with Dale Wells and Bob Wimberly preaching. The evening services will be at 7:00 pm and the Sunday Morning service will be at 11:00 am.

Upcoming Events

Aug 13-14: Childhood Ministry Summit at Dallas Baptist Univ.

Aug 14: Children's Choir Clinic at Great Hills in Austin

Aug 13-14: Equipping Churches Conference in Houston

Aug 16-21: Sent Vision Tour to Peru

Aug 21: Love & Marriage At FBC Dallas

Aug 26: Youth Ministry Webinar

Aug 29: Offering for World Hunger Day

Sep 3-6: Singles Adventure at Ridgecrest

Sep 9-10: Church Leadership at Minute Maid Park in Houston

Sep 12-19: Mary Hill Davis Offering

Sep 16: Sr. Day at Latham Springs

Sep 17-19: Southern Gospel and Bluegrass Festival at Ridgecrest

Sep 19-26: Reach Texas Offering

Sep 20-25: Fly Fishing at Glorietta

Sep 22: See You at the Pole

iPhone Users, do you know that you can purchase an application called "Twisted Scripture" for \$0.99 at the iTunes store online. This application has been developed to help Christians answer questions and be equipped to discuss theological issues with non-believers.

August Planning Meetings

Have been moved!!

The Falls meeting will be on August 23rd. The Milam meeting will be on August 24th, the Robertson meeting will be on August 25th, and the Independence meeting will be on August 26th. The times and locations have not changed.

September Association Meetings

Falls: Cedar Springs at 6:15 pm on September 13th. The topic is Prayer.

Milam: Primera Cameron at 6:00 pm on September 14th. The topic is Youth Ministry.

Independence: Independence at 6:00 pm on September 16th. The topic is Youth Ministry.

Robertson: Henry Prairie at 6:00 pm on September 21th. The topic is Senior Adults.

September Prayer Guide

September 1-4: Please pray for the Mary Hill Davis and Reach Texas offerings.

September 5-11: Please pray for the FIRM office as we gather the information from the planning meetings and prepare for the annual meetings in October.

September 12-17: Please pray for our seniors, for their health and for their ministry in our churches.

September 19-25: Please pray for the "See You At The Pole" event that our youth will attend and make a statement about their faith in their communities.

September 26-30: Please pray for the pastorless churches in the FIRM Baptist Area and the pastors that God is preparing for each church.