

# The Messenger

Holston Baptist Association

Vol. LXXI

March, 2025

NO. 3

## GUEST ARTICLE

### Working With the Best

by John Wilson

*But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."*

- John 5:17

How do you know when God is calling you? Many Holston Baptists have clearly answered God's call on their lives, whether it is to serve a local church as a pastor, or to lead a specific ministry that fits (more or less) the gifting of the Holy Spirit in their lives. What factors affect someone's ability to attempt great things for God?

#### Community

Ministry is often lonely and discouraging work. I have seen pastors approach church work like vigilantes, fighting sin and church problems on their own. I have been there, too.

It becomes very tempting to hang up the old cape and cowl. However, having a community of encouraging pastors and ministry leaders puts your own calling into perspective. This frees a minister to attempt great things for God.

Pastor or church leader, God has not called you to be alone. At least, not for long. Remember Elijah? He was called to be faithful in very dark days in Israel.

When he had reached the end of himself, God brought him to see the faithful remnant (1 Kings 19:1-18). In many ways, I feel that I have found a faithful remnant in Northeast Tennessee here at the HBA. Apart from your encouragement, prayer, and counsel, my wife and I would have never decided to move halfway across the country.

#### Service

I read an article last year that changed my view of ministry and reminded me of a few things I had forgotten. Entitled, "Fruitless Busyness," the article warns against spinning the wheels of ministry without having clear Kingdom goals, like discipling others, engaging our community with the Gospel, or helping another local church. Spoiler alert: Troy wrote it as one of the newsletter articles for The Messenger.

It is easy to slip into habits of so-called ministry that lose sight of making disciples and teaching them to observe Jesus' commandments. While this might mean you need to change your ministry models, it definitely means that you need to keep the Great Commission in mind in every church ministry.

What do you enjoy doing at your church? How can you lean into discipleship there?

In Romans 12:3-8, Paul provides a quick list of spiritual gifts. It is clearly not exhaustive, as Dr. Hershael York pointed out at a recent men's conference. Why not? Because Paul does not intend for us to spend a great deal of time discovering our gifts. He intends us to use our gifts! We discover them by serving. In serving, God displays His glory through us and will entrust us with more talents for His purposes (Matt. 25:24-30).

*continued on p2*

### In this Edition

- p1 -- Article "Working With the Best" by John Wilson
- p2 -- Letter "Excited for all God has in Store" by Matthew Powell
- p3 -- About Matthew Powell, March Birthdays, & the HBA Job Board
- p4 -- Announcements and Upcoming Events

## Working With the Best (Cont.)

In summary, God calls each of us to serve in the context of His community of faith with the goals of discipleship and holiness. He will work along the way to make the path clear (Prov. 3:5). Your job will be to trust that He has you right where He wants you for now.

### My Father and I

This brings us to John 5. Jesus has just healed a lame man by the pool of Bethesda on a Sabbath day. The Jews have accused both the man healed and the Healer of breaking the Sabbath by their actions. Jesus' response to their accusations is staggering.

He claims equality with God, who works at all times to uphold the universe by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3). It impacted His own ministry as Mediator (v. 21) and Judge (v. 22-23).

We can attempt great things for God because we expect great things of God (William Carey.). He has not stopped working through His people, and He will not stop working through you to reach Northeast Tennessee for the honor of His name.

Holston Baptists, it has been an honor to work with you. It is an even greater honor to know that our God is at work in us.

Keep teaching the Bible, keep practicing repentance, and keep attempting great things for God. I expect that He will do many great things through you for many years to come.

Article by

## John Wilson

A farewell from the former  
HBA Ministry Assistant

---

## LETTER FROM THE HBA MINISTRY ASSISTANT

# Excited for all God has in Store

by **Matthew Powell**

I am certain that we have all seen a child excited for something. But, I have noticed that, the older we get, the less "normal" it is to feel true excitement - the kind of excitement that causes children to look as if they will burst if the object of their excitement does not arrive sooner. I believe that adults begin to feel less excitement because we begin to feel like we have already done everything there is to do, and start to resonate with the author of Ecclesiastes, when he writes,

"What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun."

(Ec 1:9)

We begin to feel this way so soon, as if we genuinely believe that life has grown predictable. But, we must remember that no man is the author of his own destiny, and we are wholly incapable of knowing what the Lord has in store, except that which he has clearly told us in the Scriptures.

I will readily admit that I know little about what the Lord has in store for the years to come, but I do know for certain that everything that will happen, will be for God's glory and for the good of those who believe.

So, it is with great excitement for all that the Lord will do that I announce that I will be

taking up the position of HBA Ministry Assistant, effective March 3rd, 2025.

As I take up my new role, I ask that you join me in looking forward to all that God has in store for us. But, do not look forward as someone who has no hope. Look towards the future with an eager, childlike, expectant *excitement*.

David writes, "You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you... I have set the Lord always before me; because He is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices; my flesh also..."

*continued on p3*

---

## Excited for all God has in Store (Cont.)

dwells secure. For [God] will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let [His] holy ones see corruption. [He] makes known to me the path of life; in [His] presence there is fulness of joy; at [His] right hand are pleasures forevermore." (Ps 16)

Let us hold fast to the Lord, knowing that He is our only good, and remembering always that He is in control of all things to come. Let us look forward to these things with hope, joy, and great excitement, believing wholeheartedly that the Lord will answer our prayers and do a great work for His Kingdom through the Holston Baptist Association in the years to come.

Praying for grace, peace, and fruitful work always,  
In love and in Christ,



HBA Ministry Assistant

---

## About Matthew Powell

Matthew is a 22 year old student at Northeast State Community College, pursuing a call to ministry. He has served in various HBA church & ministries and is excited to serve the association. He is engaged to be married to Joanna Hester in May 2025. In his free time, he most enjoys reading, coffee, and music.

## Job Board

### **Ninth Street Baptist Church -- Youth Director**

Erwin, TN | *Part-Time*

Ninth Street Baptist of Erwin, TN is seeking a Part-Time Youth Director this position is about 15- 20 hrs. a week. For a questions and a full job description contact Pastor Peter at (423) 743 7551 OR

[youthatninethstreet@gmail.com](mailto:youthatninethstreet@gmail.com)

### **Cherokee Baptist Church -- Senior Pastor**

Jonesborough, Tennessee | *Bi-Vocational*

Please send resume, references and cover letter (experience and vision) to Cherokee Baptist Church, 143 Mayberry Rd. Jonesborough, TN 37659. ATTN: Pastor Search Committee or via email: [cherokeepastorsearch@gmail.com](mailto:cherokeepastorsearch@gmail.com).

### **Oak Grove Baptist Church -- Music & Worship Leader**

Gray, TN | *Part-Time*

We are looking for someone with experience and preferably Music Education to help us develop a blended style worship service.

Visit [holstonba.org/jobs](http://holstonba.org/jobs) to view more information or apply for the listed openings.



**March 12 -- Rick Dinkins**  
**March 26 -- Craig Ponder**  
**March 31 -- Todd McLaughlin**  
**March 31 -- Bill McDaniel**



## Trail Ministry Spring Schedule

### Trail Worship Service & Meal

- Sunday, May 4, 2025
- 11:00 a.m.-12:00p.m.
- At Chestoa Picnic Area (subject to change)

If you are unable to attend but still want to participate in this service or any AT ministry opportunity, please call Sam Dalton (423)895-2487

**BIBLE DRILL**

Mark your Calendar

**Associational Bible Drill**  
April 8th, 2025  
6:00 pm  
(Southwestern-Johnson City)

Are you thinking about starting Bible Drill? Make plans to attend the Associational Drill and contact the Bible Drill team for more information.

State/Regional Drill:  
April 26th  
Wallace Memorial  
Knoxville, TN

Questions? Call Susan Schiwitz (423-794-8182) or Anna Huggins (423-767-0578)

## Pray for Churches Without Pastors

- Blountville First Baptist
- Cherokee, Jonesborough
- Colonial Heights
- Clifton View
- Friendship Chapel
- Muddy Creek
- Piney Flats First Baptist
- Tennessee Avenue



---

## SAVE THE DATE

Clark Street Baptist Church  
Invites all women to a Ladies  
Tea

Saturday, April 12, 2025  
9:00-11:30am



continued on p5



HBA Student Conference  
March 21-23, 2025

I PRESS ON TO TAKE HOLD OF THAT FOR WHICH CHRIST JESUS TOOK HOLD OF ME. PHIL. 3:12

HBA STUDENT CONFERENCE • 2025

MISSIONS GET-TOGETHER

*what* JOY

APRIL 4-5 \* FIRST BAPTIST DICKSON  
DICKSON, TN

TennesseeWMU

Visit [TNWMU.ORG](http://TNWMU.ORG) for Event Schedule, Breakout Sessions, Lodging Recommendations and more!

*continued on p6*



Cohort #2  
Tuesday, March 25, 2025  
11:30-1:00 p.m.  
West Hills Baptist Church

Measurement 2: Invite People to Become Disciples

Lunch will be provided.