

Brushy Fork Baptist Church

A Light to the Counties and to the World

NEWSLETTER

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A Cup of Cold Water

Bottles of Water at the Switzerland County Fair

The end of June set several heat records, and so far it has not let up in July. With heat like this water is a necessity and one drink that will truly quench your thirst. Water may not be as enjoyable as a nice cold Coke-a-Cola, but it will quench your thirst and satisfy your body. Jesus had never had a Coke-a-Cola, but he realized the necessity of a drink of cold water on a hot day, and he uses this universal experience to draw a spiritual object lesson. In John 7:37, Jesus says, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink."

Spiritually, we all find ourselves thirsty at times, and those who do not have a relationship with Jesus Christ are actually in a much worse state. They are dead in their sins according to Romans 6:23. Ezekiel 37 describes those who do not have a relationship with God as a valley of dry bones who were "very dry" – meaning they are sun dried and have not had the breath of life for quite a while. Jesus in turn points to the fact that this spiritual state is not necessarily the final state of all humanity. In fact, if they come to him, then he will breath the breath of life back into them (Ezekiel 37) and give them living water to quench their spiritual thirst.

We are going to attempt to live out this very message at the Switzerland County Fair this year. We will be there under a tent handing out physical bottles of water with the hope that we can enter into a spiritual conversation with the people we meet so the Lord can turn the physical water we hand them into an avenue for

them to hear of the spiritual water he gives. We pray that we can encourage people to embrace the gospel while meeting their physical need of thirst. If you would like to take part in this outreach ministry, please contact us and we will add you to our schedule, and if you are at the Switzerland County Fair look our booth up and come by and get a free bottle of water.

written by Chris Clemans

Missionary Stories

Sam James and his wife Rachel along with their three young children landed in Tan San Nhut Airport near Saigon, Vietnam on November 9, 1962. They were the first Southern Baptist Missionaries to be commissioned to Vietnam under the Foreign Mission Board (FMB - now the International Mission Board [IMB]).



The James' decision was not a rushed or rash decision. Actually, Sam had received the call to be a missionary to Vietnam while he was on an aircraft carrier (U.S.S. Sitkoy Bay) as it was traveling up the Saigon River. He was serving in the Navy during the Korean War. Sam had just turned his life over to Christ and he found himself traveling up the Saigon River, and he was asking the Lord to show him what to do now that he was a Christ. He was asking how he could serve the Lord. The Lord gave him a burden for the people he saw on the banks of that river and he later wrote to the FMB to ask them to consider sending a missionary to Vietnam. At the time, Vietnam was not in the strategic plan for the FMB.

Sam would leave the Navy after his tour of duty and enter Wake Forest University to earn his bachelors degree, and then he entered Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary to receive his graduate degree. All the time still feeling called to go to Vietnam. While at Southeastern preparing his heart and mind to go to Vietnam, Sam heard that the FMB had voted to expand their missions strategy in the Pacific to include Vietnam. Sam and his family could now go to Vietnam under the FMB.

At their appointment, Sam and his family would receive what would be prophetic advice. Dr. Baker James Cauthen, executive secretary of the FMB, said this to James and Rachel, "Things are not looking good there [Vietnam] for the future. Take whatever you want to take. Take your piano, your appliances, and anything else you want to take. But, take them in your hands. If they ever get into your heart, you are through as a missionary." Sam could not know, but God would call him to leave everything behind even the people he had grown to love as brothers and sisters in Christ.

In the middle of April 1975, Sam realized that his time in Vietnam was short after 14 years of service. He would have to make the toughest decision he has ever had to make. Should he stay endangering those Vietnamese who served alongside him, or should he go deserting them in their most desperate time of need. Sam chose to leave after the secretary of the seminary where he previously was president was beaten at her desk by men looking for him. Sam's last evening in Saigon was spent going through his house and choosing a small momento for each of his children. He knew he would have to leave virtually everything behind. Dr. Cauthen's

words were now a reality. He was leaving all his earthly possessions behind, but that did not matter to him nearly as much as leaving the Vietnamese friends he had behind. Sam left Vietnam that night with a heavy heart.

Fourteen years later Sam would return to Vietnam not knowing what he would discover when he got there. He found previous students that had suffered greatly at the hands of the communists. Yet, these students would wear their sufferings as badges of courage because they suffered for Christ. They did not harbor hard feelings toward Sam for leaving. Instead, they carried on the work in his absence. They had been conformed to the person of Christ and they sought to make Christ known throughout Vietnam.

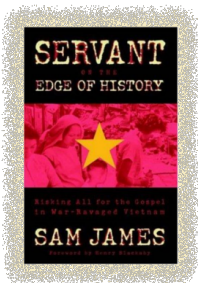
written by Chris Clemans

Youth Shout Out

Do not forget that our Youth Ministry has moved nights. We now meet on Sunday night at 7:00 PM in the basement. We will be going through a study to teach us to live out our faith boldly and with courage. You will not want to miss our Sunday Night lesson and fun activities. Did I mention, we will have fun activities each night you will not want to miss.

We will also be going to Holiday World in Santa Clause, Indiana on July 25. We will announce the cost soon, but don't let the cost stop you from coming. We will need to know approximately a week before we leave if you are planning on going with us, so give us a call or let us know at church. You will not want to miss this event and you are more than welcome to bring friends along. Actually, I would love to meet your friends.

written by Josh McClure



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