

Explore the Bible Series for December 31: Working together to accomplish God's will

December 22, 2006

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Explore the Bible Series for December 31

Working together to accomplish God's will

- Nehemiah 1.1-11; 2:1-20; 3.1-32

By Howard Anderson

Diversified Spiritual Associates, San Antonio

The returning Jews showed spiritual lethargy and a coldhearted indifference toward God. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem and successfully led a 52-day rebuilding of the wall. Under the leadership of Nehemiah, the people were motivated to work cooperatively.

Holiday Health: Don't ditch diet during holidays

December 22, 2006

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Holiday Health: Don't ditch diet during holidays

The holidays are right around the corner, and that means parties, family get-togethers and plenty of favorite comfort foods. What would a holiday be without turkey, dressing, pie, cranberries and more?

Is it possible to navigate the holidays without ruining our diet? Yes, said Dee Rollins, clinical dietitian and nutrition educator for Baylor Regional Medical Center at Grapevine. The key is to be conscious of what we eat.

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Rollins offers these eight tips for healthy holiday eating:

1. Never go to a party hungry. Many people skip meals before a party. That sets them up for failure. Instead, eat regular meals that day and have a small snack before you leave home. Try cheese and crackers, a piece of

fruit or peanut butter on toast.

Holiday Health: How to survive flu season

December 22, 2006

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Holiday Health: How to survive flu season

It's flu shot season and this year the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention added a new recommendation for flu shots for children ages 6 months to 5 years.

"What we've found out is that up to one in 1,000 children can be hospitalized for complications from the flu—that's higher than we thought initially," said Steven Davis, an infectious disease specialist on the medical staff at Baylor Medical Center at Irving. "One of the most important things people can do is talk to their physician about getting vaccinated."

Not only do young children frequently come down with the flu, they often spread it to their grandparents. And grandparents who are weak or have chronic conditions like diabetes or lung problems may risk complications from the disease.

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“There’s lots of flu transmission over the holidays, with people traveling, visiting extended families and taking public transportation,” Davis said.

Holiday Health: Ways to care for your heart

December 22, 2006

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Holiday Health: Ways to care for your heart

With Christmas approaching, many of us are already in shopping mode, gathering gifts for friends and loved ones. This season, why not give yourself a present—the gift of a healthy heart.

Here are four ways to put your heart at the top of the list:

1. Know the risk factors for heart disease. They are smoking, age, obesity, sedentary lifestyle, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and family history.

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2. Know your numbers. Blood pressure and cholesterol are the big culprits in heart disease. Do you know your numbers?

Holiday traditions vary among Baptists around the world

December 22, 2006

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Holiday traditions vary among Baptists around the world

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

Waves crash along a sandy shore, flip-flops rest on a towel, and the smell of barbecuing shrimp drifts through the air. It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. At least, that's the way it looks in Australia—or South Africa, for that matter.

How Baptists celebrate Christmas varies from country to country and culture to culture around the world, but Christ remains the focus of the holiday festivities.

Israeli
Baptists
join other
Christians
in a
ministry
called
Nazareth
Village,
which
recreates a
first-century
town. The
site draws
local
residents
and
tourists,
providing
an
opportunity
for many
people to
hear the
gospel.

Cybercolumn by Berry D. Simpson: Merry Christmas

December 22, 2006

Posted: 12/22/06

CYBER COLUMN: Merry Christmas

By Berry D. Simpson

Saturday morning, Dec. 16, Cyndi and I woke up about 8 a.m., a true weekend indulgence. Cyndi left to take Lady the Running Labrador around the block before leaving for her class, and I squeezed in a run. It wasn't my best run, I must admit. I spent an hour and a half in a four-minute-walk-11-minute-run rotation, all designed to rebuild my left knee. But really, it was a great run, because it was good for my heart and soul. My knee feels much better than it did a year ago, I can run better, I'm not eating pain-reliever every morning for breakfast, and I don't wake up in the middle of the night with aches and pains. I'm thinking if I can drop another 20 pounds after Jan. 2 and keep my mileage constant, I will regain my old form from, well, at least four years ago, such as it was. What I'm trying to say is this:

Berry D. Simpson

I can smell hope in the air—hope of another marathon or two, maybe even an ultra on dirt—and hope is a mighty thing. Christmas is near, and the air smells like hope.

Baptists urge Wal-Mart to practice Golden Rule

December 22, 2006

Posted: 12/22/06

Baptists urge Wal-Mart to practice Golden Rule

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

DALLAS (ABP)—Wal-Mart, the self-styled low-price leader, can't seem to get a break these days. While the giant retailer has recently come under attack from pro-gay groups for backpedaling on diversity initiatives, a group of Baptist pastors and leaders has spoken against Wal-Mart for exploiting workers in order to increase profits.

Robert Parham, executive director of the [Baptist Center for Ethics](#), recently lead the charge against Wal-Mart on national TV. He appeared Dec. 15 on [CNBC's On The Money](#) to discuss a letter and television ad in which Joe Phelps, pastor of [Highland Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky.](#), demanded the retailer adhere to the Golden Rule—Jesus' command to “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”

A Truly Awesome Christmas

December 22, 2006

Posted: 12/21/06

A Truly Awesome Christmas

By Travis McClinton

Ah, the joys of the season are upon us. Christmas Trees, cookies and cake, peppermint sticks, the crisp breeze of a December wind, and the wonder in the eyes of children as the excitement of the glorious day comes closer. The feelings swell your heart, and overflow with happiness.

Being a father of two, this time of year always makes me giddy like a child myself. But the other day made me realize how wonderful this time of year truly is.

One Friday, I went to pick my children up from school and overheard my son talking to a friend of his. Living in the age of technology, they were, of course, talking about one of the new video games on the market. The words, “wow,” “amazing” and “awesome” came up in the conversation. I normally let things like this go, but I decided to ask Andrew what he meant by “awesome.” He told me it was something cool and incredible. I sat quietly and nodded. Then he asked why.

Baylor's oldest new graduate receives long-awaited degree

December 22, 2006

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Baylor's oldest new graduate receives long-awaited degree

By Cynthia Jackson

Baylor University

SHREVEPORT, La.—The list of graduates at Baylor University's December commencement included M.L. "Hub" Northen, who enrolled at the school 81 years earlier and left Baylor in 1929 one credit short of a degree.

Northen, who is 100 years old, was unable to attend the ceremony due to health concerns. But Terry Maness, dean of Baylor's Hankamer School of Business, told the assembly Northen is the oldest person ever to obtain a degree from Baylor.

Glenn
Hilburn,
retired
chairman of
the Baylor
University
religion
department,
presented
M.L. "Hub"
Northen
with his
official
Baylor
degree
during a
worship
service at
Trinity
Heights
Baptist
Church in
Shreveport,
La.

BGCT African-American ministries director named

December 22, 2006

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BGCT African-American ministries director named

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—Charles Singleton, pastor of [First Missionary Baptist Church in Fort Worth](#), is leaving the church he founded 22 years ago to become director of [African-American ministries](#) for the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

“The African-American congregations of the BGCT are growing and are committed to reaching all the people they can for Christ and discipling them in his call and way,” said Charles Wade, BGCT executive director. “I am excited and proud that Rev. Charlie Singleton has agreed to answer God’s call and our invitation to serve in this strategic role. He will be a great leader among us.”

Singleton

Chrismukkah? Hybrid holiday shows tension in religiously blended families

December 22, 2006

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Chrismukkah? Hybrid holiday shows tension in religiously blended families

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

DALLAS (ABP)—There's a new winter holiday on the rise, and it could be the perfect opportunity to enjoy Fa-La-La-La Latkes, Blitzen's Blintzes, and Christmas trees filled with "menorahments."

It's not Christmas. And it's not Hanukkah. It's both. And the humor and religious syncretism behind the hybrid holiday "Chrismukkah" cut to the heart of modern-day tensions in American society.

Warren confesses he was

Warren confesses he was 'blind' to AIDS epidemic

December 22, 2006

Updated: 12/15/06

Warren confesses he was 'blind' to AIDS epidemic

By Hannah Elliott

Associated Baptist Press

LAKE FOREST, Calif. (ABP)—For 20 years, Rick Warren was wrong about AIDS, he told listeners at the 2006 Global Summit on AIDS and the Church.

The megachurch pastor and best-selling author said he initially wasn't afraid of AIDS, nor did he judge those who had it.