

# The Rocky Mountain American Baptist

A Newsletter of the American Baptist Churches in the Rocky Mountain Region

## What sin?

I could ask if you have sinned, and even admit that I have sinned. But since mostly adults read this newsletter, let us skip the niceties and just say it: We have sinned. Then, because we



What are those radical dreams? There are dreams of going on a mission trip, and dreams of working with the disadvantaged. There are even more dreams of volunteering

are Christians and can, we asked our Savior, Jesus Christ, to take that sin and use it as the nails that held him to the cross. This accomplished a great thing for us: God saw someone pay for our wrongs and we didn't have to. Jesus paid for us. Forgiveness came and pushed guilt and shame out the door.

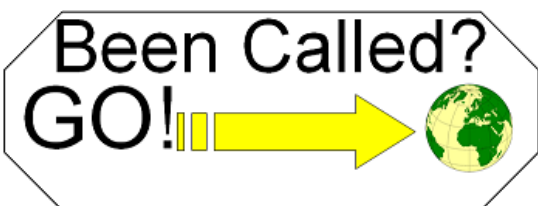
Except we don't want guilt and shame pushed out the door. Many times they are the best friends we have: always there, listening to our woes, and making good suggestions. In a recent *Christianity Today* article, John Piper said the following: "The tragedy is that Satan uses guilt from these failures to strip you of every radical dream you ever had or might have. In their place, he gives you a happy, safe, secure, American life of superficial pleasures, until you die in your lakeside rocking chair."

to work in a youth program or work with seniors. Some may dream of writing a letter to a dear someone. Most Christians dream of bringing the reality of God's Kingdom into the places where they live in little and big ways.

Instead of allowing us to chase our dreams, Satan reminds us of our failures. Then we are like a hobbled horse- we can't roam far.

Dear friends, take off the hobbles. Read the Word looking for two of the critical Christian doctrines: substitution and justification. You may want to begin by looking in Romans 4:4-6, Romans 5:19, Romans 8:1, Romans 10:4, Philippians 3:8-9, 2 Corinthians 5:21. Read it, think about it, pray about it, and accept it.

Take off the hobbles. Act and think like you are forgiven. Dream of radical obedience to Jesus Christ and then do it. Send Satan with his guilt and shame packing, and then grab the bag of discipleship and go!



Submitted by  
Jenita Calton  
ABCRCM Missions Team

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Lent Begins on Feb 6.  
Let God work in your life  
this Easter season!



## A Forbidden Passage

*“And his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.” - Ephesians 4*

This is the passage that someone (who most of us call “Satan”) did not want me either to read nor to digest. It happened one January evening during my college years. I was doing some devotional reading during the lax time of my college job. I was reading through the book of Ephesians and was suddenly in chapter five and not able to remember anything from chapter four. So I went back to reread the chapter and the interruptions started. Every time I started to open the Bible to this passage, another distraction popped up. But when finally I took the time to pray and ask for God’s intervention—for a stop to the distraction and the Spirit’s direction and illumination as I read—this passage caused me to hear God’s call for my life.

As such, this passage has been the foundation for how I try to live and to practice my profession. Now, I know many who read this article will have at least two or three good commentaries you could pull down off the shelf to tell you what Paul probably intended in the original Greek and to help you understand how this passage has traditionally been interpreted. No doubt many of you will have preached from this passage multiple times during your own ministry. But permit me, as a means of introduction for many of you, the audacity to share how this passage has shaped me.

My Bible study that night was one of the few times in my life that I can say has come close to what Moses experienced when he saw the burning bush. My experience and my belief is that God most often works through the ordinary, not the extraordinary. But that night, I can honestly say that God spoke to me in a clear, concise and extraordinary (one might contend—miraculous) manner. Because of this,



I know God intended and called me to preach and teach the Gospel of Christ. And in fact, I am happiest and most fulfilled when I am preaching and teaching the Gospel.

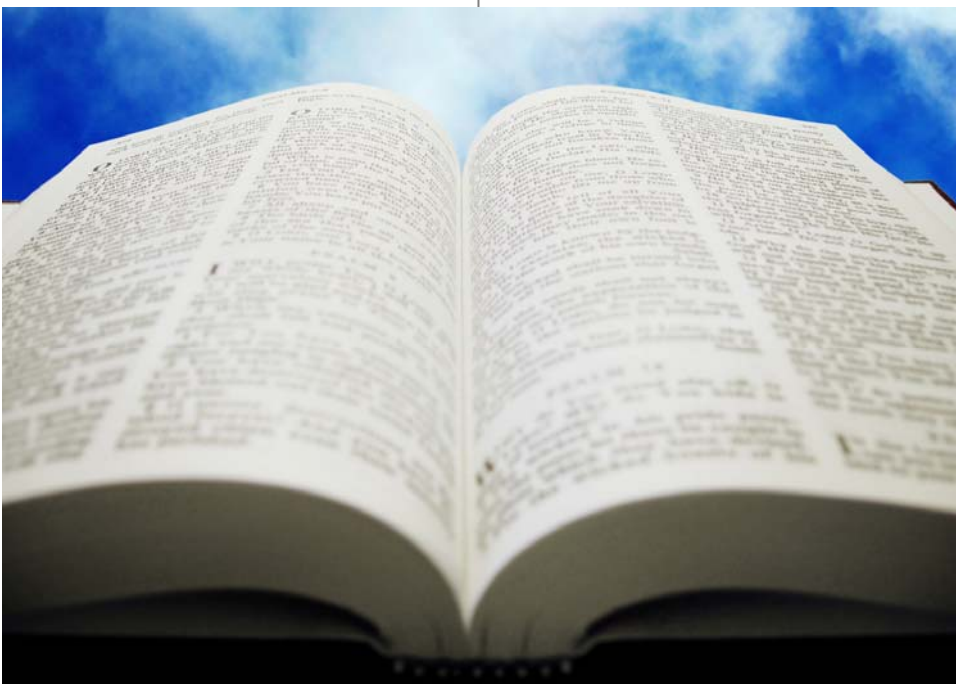
I love to teach Bible Studies and attempt to stretch a student in order for them to discover the power of

the Holy Spirit, in transforming a person’s life. But I also believe that God gave us the ability to reason and to learn certain truths about God through the world in which we live. I therefore love to teach the Gospel through this means as well—to observe the world around us and to allow the Spirit to lead us into a deeper knowledge of who we are as God’s best and most loved Creation (a love so great that God permitted the Son, Jesus, to die for us). I love to teach about the realities of the world we live in, the nature of the Church as we have discovered it and about ways in which we can better relate to one another as parts of His Incarnated Body in our world. My experience that night explains to me this great passion I have for teaching and preaching, because I was created to do this and am gifted for it. And while that does make me special, I am also aware that it does not make me privileged.

You see, a part of my struggle to accept the call to ministry was the idea that one had to be—well, “a cut above”—to be called to preach and teach. I was concerned that it was my own vanity that made me want to teach the Sunday school class or to be in front of the congregation on Sunday morning sharing God’s word. But as I have had this passage opened up to me over the years by the Spirit, I have discovered that to be gifted to preach and teach is not any big thing. The big thing is “the work of the ministry.”

*Continued on page 3*

*[What's in this RMAB?](#)*



## Put Some Vowels into Your Marriage!

With Valentine's Day just over the horizon, I'm trying to focus on ways to put some more snap and sizzle into my marriage. Because love is an ongoing adventure, we must constantly find new ways of communicating it on its journey. The language of love must always be gentle and soft, comforting, and easy on the ears of the heart. That is why vowels provide us with a good formula to express the key elements of love. Vowels connect the abrupt and sometimes harsh consonants of sound and life. Life finds meaning and value only when the percussive consonants of life are buffered by the vowels of loving actions.

Try putting some of these vowels back into your marriage:

**A** is for **Approving** of and **Applauding** your spouse, cheerleading his or her efforts and positive traits. Flatter one another constantly. This kind of approval is to be found in many forms of expression, including verbal and physical.

**E** is for **Enjoying** one another. Too many marriages fail to work out because the couple hasn't learned to play and explore. Take the time to enjoy both the world around you and the depth of the worlds that lie within each other.

**I** is for **Intuiting** each other's needs. Keep each other always in mind. There is some truth to the phrase, "You should know what I want without my having to tell you." Learn both mind reading and more importantly, soul reading.

**O** is for **Opening Up** and revealing to each other your most secret dreams and fears. Relationships must be based on truth, so risk telling your spouse the truths that lie in your heart.

**U** is for **Understanding**, even when no one else does or even is interested in trying.

**Y** and yes, sometimes Y -- because Y is for **Yielding**, surrendering your own desires and wishes so that the relationship may be one beautiful chord where each note, when sounded together, is rich with harmony.

*Submitted by  
Rev. Mike Williams  
Pastor of Congregational Care  
Calvary Baptist Church  
Denver, CO*

## A Forbidden Passage

[\*Continued from page 2\*](#)

Furthermore, that work is done not by pastors alone but by all the saints. This passage is not so much about the gifting of particular individuals but about the mission for which these individuals have been gifted! We have catchy slogans to capture this idea, like "Every member a minister." The reality is that a church full of preachers and teachers would be a pretty miserable place. I have some great colleagues in ministry, but I would hate to lead a congregation of only these ministers. It would be like trying to build a building with a bunch of architects. We would come up with all kinds of grandiose plans, but we wouldn't know how to begin to lay the foundation or even where to drive the first nail. That is not a slam on architects or preachers. It is recogniz-

ing that we all are gifted in different ways and that we all need one another in order to accomplish great things. Just as the architect needs the builder, the pastor needs the flock to fulfill their purpose and live up to their potential.

Despite being a life-long Chief's fan (hazard of growing up in eastern Kansas I'm afraid), one of my all time favorite running backs is a former Denver Bronco, Terrill Davis. What I liked about him was his willingness to acknowledge that his success was dependent upon the efforts of the offensive line. I remember the stories of his taking the line out to dinner each week to acknowledge their contribution to his success. I hope that I have learned this lesson in my ministry. Anything that the church accomplishes is not simply because of my leadership and preaching, but because

of the joint ministry of the body of Christ in that particular setting. To God be the glory for the things done through us, to us and in spite of us.

So, it is out of this sense of giftedness and calling to a particular type of ministry that in turn facilitates the unique function of the church—to be the "body of Christ"—that I come to be with you in the Rocky Mountain Region. It is my hope and desire that we can minister along side of and with one another in order that the individual bodies continue to grow in strength, in number and in vitality. That is a huge calling, one which is perfectly achievable since we are not in it alone, for God is with us always.

*Rev. Steve Van Ostran  
ABCRM will be welcoming  
Rev. Van Ostran as our  
Executive Minister effective March 1.*

## Colorado American Baptist Women Gather for a Weekend of Relaxation and Time with Jesus

As the snow fell on Colorado, the women of the state began to gather at the Franciscan Retreat Center in Colorado Springs. The weekend was to be a time to relax and reconnect with Christ.

Friday night session began with ice breakers. The women mingled around the room discovering fun facts about the women they were spending the weekend with. Running late because of the weather, Virginia Holmstrom (*right*) arrived and began her teaching with introducing the group to *lectio divina*. It is a practice of scripture reading and meditation. She encouraged the women to use this practice in their devotional times throughout the weekend and carry it back to “real life.”

Saturday morning was cold, but the conference room was warm. The morning session started with singing lead by Martha Lee Lowe and her soon to be daughter-in-law, Louellen Hurst. Virginia Holmstrom spoke about the old testament, and inclusion or exclusion of Gentiles. She also spoke about the “Break the Chains”

program the ABWM is sponsoring in 2007 through 2009. (Look for an article to come in the Feb. 15, 2008 newsletter.)



The afternoon was free time for everyone. Many of the women spent time in fellowship with others. Some ventured out into the cold to walk the labyrinth the Center has. Others took long walks around the property, and others left to venture out into Colorado Springs. Still others just stayed at the Retreat Center and took a well deserved nap or rest.

At 5:00 p.m. the group came together again to watch and discuss the movie “Fields of Mudan.” This short movie (only about twenty minutes) centers on a young girl who was forced into the sex trade. It is a very powerful video that emphasizes the need to be aware of what is going on in the world, and around the corner from your house. This movie was produced by Florida State University in 2005 ([www.fieldsofmudan.com](http://www.fieldsofmudan.com)).



After dinner, provided by the retreat center, there was more singing. A discussion of creation, a new way of looking at it, and how I can relate to our lives today, was conducted by Virginia. The evening then wrapped up with the annual talent show. The show consisted of a piano piece, a poem recitation, jokes read, dances done, stories told, many songs sung, and even a cow horn was played. The “Five Star Generals” (also known as five former ABWM Colorado presidents) had the women rolling in laughter as they sang a rendition of “My Favorite Things.” See the pictures on [page 5](#) of the talent show.

Sunday morning the women came together for one last gathering in a service of worship. Virginia Holmstrom delivered the message and Rev. Kathy Bird-DeYoung and Rev. Jo Morrow (*left*) lead communion. Songs were sung, prayers were said, and the women were sent on their way back to “reality” rested and renewed in Christ.

Look for news to come about the Wyoming and Colorado ABWM annual conferences.

Jessica Fischer



## Retreat Talent Show Pictures

See article on [page 4](#)



Denise lead some women in a short and funny dance.



The Five Star Generals sang "My Favorite Things."



(Clockwise from top left)

- Martha Lee sang "She Swallowed a Fly."
- Adelaide played her cow horn.
- Kathy and Virginia sang a song in Spanish.
- Judy recited a poem.



[What's in this RMAB?](#)

## Lyn King Installed as Pastor of First Baptist Church in Cheyenne, WY

The installation service was held for Reverend Lyn King on Jan 20, 2008 as new pastor of First Baptist Church, Cheyenne, WY. The celebration began with an invocation, hymns, scripture, and special music.



Rev. Wayne Dvirnak gave the charge to Pastor Lyn, saying he needed to draw courage from God's Word, be decisive, move forward, and think big. He drew similarities between Joshua and Pastor Lyn, noting that he needed to follow Joshua 1:8 "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."

Giving the charge to the congregation, Rev. James Watson reminded them that their new pastor is "human like they are" and to be sure and not have a double standard for their pastor. He will be a fellow believer, growing daily in grace just like the congregation. He pointed out 7 things he wanted to offer the congregation regarding their new pastor.

1. Always give him credit.
2. Trust him to be sincere.
3. Thank him.
4. Hold him accountable.
5. Be patient.
6. Share his vision.
7. Genuinely love him and his wife.

Pastor Lyn King has been married to Bonnie for 35 precious years, with 3 married children, and 11 grandchildren. Their eldest son, Jason, is the youth pastor under Pastor Lyn. The 2 King men are excited about working together, sharing God's vision together, and leading countless numbers of people to know Christ. Pastor Lyn will tell you that all eternity changes the day you accept Christ into your heart, and loves to share with anyone how much Jesus Christ loves them. His motto moving into this new leadership role is, "helping people become fully developed, devoted disciples of Jesus Christ."




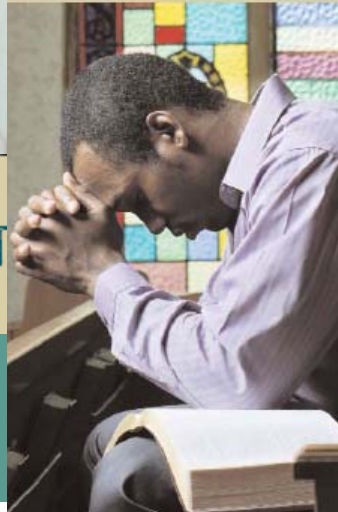
Submitted by  
Kay Phelan

# HOME MISSION ON OUR DOORSTEP

America for Christ gifts support Christ-centered ministries that are transforming lives across the United States and Puerto Rico—from building new homes on the Gulf Coast and resettling refugees violently driven from their homelands to providing training in evangelism and developing resources that help Children in Poverty.

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 AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES USA



**GIVE TO THE  
AMERICA FOR CHRIST  
OFFERING 2008**

**“For the love of  
Christ urges us on...”**

2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-15

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