

DOM Report on Sabbatical

When I requested this Sabbatical, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. In the four week period, I spent the first week coming up with the questions I felt I needed answered to accomplish my strategy or purpose for the Sabbatical. The purpose for the Sabbatical was to insure that the ministry of the Heartland Baptist Association and my personal ministry remained relevant to our churches. I felt that I needed a renewed vision of God's working in my life and in the life of the Heartland Baptist Association. The Administrative Team then met in retreat will mainly deal with those things that God spoke to me about during the Sabbatical.

There were three words/phrases that came out of this time away. I believe that we as an Association need to deal with our ministry in three areas: 1) "Interdependence"; 2) "Intentionality"; 3) "Walking by Faith". During the Administrative Team Retreat, we based many of our discussions on these three words/phrases. These were not be the only words/phrases we used. Another theme I believe God would have us grapple with is in the area of evangelism. Over the years we have accomplished some wonderful projects and events (block parties, camp, VBS, etc.). I believe we need to expand our efforts to help our churches become more evangelistic. Obviously, the next part of that would be discipleship. We must help our churches develop multiplying believers. Multiplying believers are those who multiply themselves in the souls of others brought into the Kingdom who also become multiplying believers. Further, I believe we must help our churches develop a missions strategy based upon the Great Commission and Acts 1:8. And finally, we need a renewed sense of a need for worship and fellowship. I do not speak of what style of music used in a worship service. I do speak of turning our hearts toward God in corporate worship. Part of the "interdependence" we will be dialoguing about will be fellowship based upon a Kingdom Mindset. We fellowship so that we can be more effective in Kingdom Work.

The task before us is huge, but when God calls, He calls us out of our "comfort zone". We must stay flexible enough as the Heartland Baptist Association so as to insure relevancy to our churches and to help them become and/or stay healthy. We are all in this together!

In Appreciation of Your Good Work,



Jerry Palmer, DOM

Administrative Team Retreat Report:

The Administrative Team met in retreat on Saturday, March 5, 2011 at our Missions Center. We were going to meet the previous weekend at Grand Oaks but we were snowed out. Coming from the Director of Missions, the Administrative Teams focus was on **Interdependence, Intentionality and Walking by Faith**. Here is some of the discussion that took place.

INTERDEPENDENCE: We need to revitalize the Evangelism Team. Has a lack of effort in our association led to a lack of effort in our churches? We aren't accomplishing what we need to there. We must pray about people to nominate and develop this team. It must be a priority. We should bring Gary Taylor in to help. We will need pray about the next 2012 GPS event.

This Association has suffered from difficulties in the past but we have made a focus Kingdom work. By making this focus we have not only weathered those difficulties but have thrived. We as an Association still believe strongly in local autonomy, not only for our Association but also for each of our churches. Having said that we must also be interdependent. We as the Administrative Team believe we must make it clear we are strategic partners with the MBC and SBC as in keeping with BF&M. We want to be autonomous but full partners and we don't want to drag up the past. We desire to approach our brothers and sisters to address unresolved issues based on Matthew 18. We want to stress an emphasis on interdependence. This is who we are now and establish how we are going to partner.

The Administrative Team is recommending Heartland Baptist Association add the words "**and encourage**" to the wording in the purpose statement in Article 2 of the Constitution to read:

"Our purpose as the churches that form the Heartland Baptist Association is to support **and encourage** one another in reaching and growing people for Christ."

The Administrative Team is recommending we also change Article 2, Section 4 to read:

"**be a full strategic missions partner** with the Missouri Baptist Convention, the Southern Baptist Convention, their agencies and programs."

If these are changed, we will stress them in the letterhead, newsletter, website and other forms of correspondence. We are doing this now, but we need to do it with a new urgency and keep it before the people.

NAMB is establishing 5 new regions of emphasis. We are in the Midwest region. Emphasis will be placed on unreached areas- we are the key state for our region. They will stress evangelism and church planting. The flow chart from MBC is going from series of experts to a series of networks. The HBA flow chart begins and ends with the churches.

Administrative Team Retreat Report Continued

INTENTIONALITY: The Director of Missions led in a devotional on INTENTIONALITY. He discussed how the lame man's friends helped him to Jesus through the roof. We like them have to do whatever it takes to get people to Jesus. Mentioned Dub Jackson's book "Whatever It Takes". It's so easy for us to do the same thing over and over again. We are doing good things, but are they the best things? VBS Clinics and camps are non-negotiables. We must look at our ministries and see how it's lining up with our purpose statement. We realize that we have no real strategies to develop leaders in our churches that will help them become and stay healthy. How do we do it? Some of the discussions were as follows: Conferences aren't working because we can't get people to come. Webinars and other technologies was mentioned as a possible help. The churches need fellowship with each other and networking. It was also mentioned that maybe we could network by having teams call and encourage the churches through personal contact. We have to find out the needs of the churches. One member mentioned they would like to see more deacon training. Another member mentioned that distance sometimes plays a factor in the lack of attendance for things. Maybe we could do a couple of regional events within the Association. Maybe we should spend more time with smaller groups. We want a rifle rather than a shot gun effect.

WALKING BY FAITH (LIVING BY FAITH): Our Director of Missions led a devotional on WALKING BY FAITH (LIVING BY FAITH). He read from John 9. He stressed that we must get out of our comfort zones. It was noted that walking/living by faith can't be done alone. You can't give up. One member mentioned that you have to have a core group. It was also noted that you can't live by faith without a struggle and you can't plan to live by faith. You do or you don't have faith. Hebrews 11, the "faith chapter" was referenced. Walking indicates movement. You must find time for prayer, intimacy and fellowship. Churches may learn this through the revitalization of the Evangelism Team. Walking by faith must be caught, not just taught. Maybe if we have a year long emphasis on this, the churches will catch on. Jerry also mentioned our possibly of partnering with an association in South Central Iowa. It was decided that while this is a good thing and we don't want to rule it out, we need to concentrate on partnerships within the HBA. We should give the internal partnerships a year, then see about doing a partnership with Iowa or elsewhere. We would partner up smaller churches with larger ones. Might have a getting to know you event at the beginning with each of the two partnering churches. We could have officers, staff pictures with their names to pray for them by name. The churches might try to do things together throughout the year. At the end of the first year have a big anniversary celebration.

Administrative Team Retreat Report Continued

Here's the thematic outline for "Walking By Faith" based on Acts 1:8 for the next 4 years:

YEAR 1- Internal Partnerships within the Association (Jerusalem)

YEAR 2- Evangelism (Regional- Judea- Iowa)

YEAR 3- Outside the Box (Samaria)

YEAR 4- International (The World)

We will seek to start this by July 1, 2011.

FINAL OUTLINE:

I. Revitalize the Evangelism Team

II. Constitutional changes recommended

A.- Change wording of purpose statement in Article 2.

B.- Change wording of Article 2, Section 4.

III. Association will create a network/volunteer list to help members with various members.

IV. Effective July 1, 2011 we will develop an Acts 1:8 strategy over the next four years:

A.- Year 1- Walking by Faith- Develop a continuing and strategic missions partnership among the HBA churches.

Year 2- Develop a Judea strategy by partnering outside Missouri.

Year 3- Develop a Samaria strategy to get out of our comfort zones and think outside the box.

Year 4- Develop an International strategy to reach the world.

Submitted by the Administrative Team

April 11, 2011