Thoughts on Resurrection

E ver heard of Salamandrella keyserlingii? The Siberian Salamander lives in a severe climate where temperatures exceeding -50 F are not uncommon. What is uncommon is the little newt’s capacity to survive, though frozen solid in some cases for years! Once thawed, S. keyserlingii scampers off to the nearest pond. How can this be? Modern science doesn’t yet fully understand the mystery of such extreme adaptation, but what is known is that the Siberian Salamander’s blood is able to morph into an organic kind of antifreeze as fall temperatures give way to winter’s chill. (Sudden cold snaps are fatal.) What do biologists call this thawing-out-and-scampering-off phenomenon? “Resurrection.”

The resurrection of Jesus suggests plenty of mystery as well. Dead bodies in warm climates break down quickly, even in the tomb (see John 11.39), so we can surmise that somehow in His resurrection the decomposition process of Jesus’ body was suspended, then reversed, then He was reconstituted into a glorified state (see 1 Corinthians 15.53). And He walked away from the cemetery to continue His ministry through believers today.

Christians have grown accustomed to viewing the Easter event as just that, an actual event in history which guarantees the reality of physical resurrection! The risen Messiah with our lives today.”

can so easily begin by trusting Jesus to get us to heaven, then continue in our own efforts in this life (Galatians 3.2-3). Frustration and defeat are sure to mark our steps. Far too often overlooked is that aspect of resurrection that the apostle Paul attaches directly to a Christian’s growth, victory and fruitfulness in our day-to-day lives. Such passages as Romans 6.10-14 and Romans 8.10-13 tell us that the key to the daily Christian life is not in our performance, but in simply trusting the risen Jesus to live through us.

In his landmark book, The Saving Life of Christ, Major Ian Thomas quotes Colossians 2.6 to explain this point: “As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.” How are you to walk in Jesus Christ? As you received Him. How did you receive Him? By faith. How then are you to walk in Him? By faith! As you have learned to thank Him for His death, so you thank Him for His life, humbly assuming that He lives in you, as you have already humbly assumed that He died for you” (page 136). Having been “resurrected” the Siberian Salamander gets on with his life on this earth, radically different from his previous, popsicle condition. Would that God’s people get on with the same, in the name of Jesus and in the power of His resurrection!

Jim Carlson, President

Focus on the MBC Board of Directors – Jim Owenhouse

The Owenhouse name has been prominent in the Gallatin Valley for many years. Montana Bible College is honored to include Jim Owenhouse on our Board of Directors.

Jim Owenhouse spent thirty-two years in the retail hardware business in California. Following in the footsteps of his grandfather, who created the original Owenhouse Hardware store in Bozeman at the turn of the century, Jim acquired his first store when he was only twenty-two years old, and during the next thirty-two years, he developed it into three locations in northern California. Jim built loyal relationships based on excellent customer service and product knowledge – a trait which he transferred to other areas when he and his wife of fifty-five years, Ella May, moved back to Bozeman in 1985.

Beginning as a volunteer, Jim established a Bozeman Deaconess Hospital escort program and later, as the administrator of the hospital’s volunteer program, Jim implemented the Lifeline system, allowing individuals to live independently in their own homes with assurance of being “connected” to hospital assistance.

Jim believes one of his greatest achievements in how God used him to establish the men’s Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) in Bozeman. Hundreds of men have participated in this local program over the years, and it all began with Jim and another gentleman praying for God’s willingness to use them in making it happen. Jim has also served as deacon and is currently an elder for Grace Bible Church. Finally, Jim and Ella May built a loving family with their children, Mary Ann and Jay, and six grandchildren.

Bryon McCotter

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Montana Bible College is committed to glorifying God through Biblical higher education by training men and women for a lifetime of dynamic Christian living and service.
More of Marty!

He’s back! In the wake of our church leaders’ conference last October, a number of those who attended asked about how we might get “more” of Pastor Marty Giese. Marty’s sessions about rural/urban issues really resonated with many of us, so we’ve made arrangements to bring him back to Bozeman! Marty has crafted about 15 hours of focused discussion that will take our church leaders to a deeper level in understanding just how and why our churches click as they do. Dates are May 2-4, which is late day Sunday, all day Monday and half of Tuesday. Marty Giese for many years has been pastor of First Baptist Church of Park Rapids, Minnesota. He has researched, written and spoken extensively about the unique dynamics of rural and small-town churches. We’re delighted to welcome Marty back this May, and want all to come who would like to understand further your special field of Kingdom labor. A schedule and fees are forthcoming on our website at www.montanabiblecollege.edu.

ServantSong

Six o’clock in the morning. January. Montana. Dark. Snow. Eight sleepy but smiling students cram into my ‘94 Suburban loaded to the hilt with sound equipment, and away we go. We’re on our way to the MBC campus. (95 miles away! (Maybe your church?) This is the music ministry ensemble of Montana Bible College called ServantSong, and it’s our joy to serve and bless the regional church. Working with these eight students and connecting with many churches is one of my greatest joys at MBC. In addition to regular weekend forays around the state, ServantSong also takes a tour each spring in May. This year we’ll rack up the miles in eastern Montana and western North Dakota, connecting with churches, schools, and youth groups. We’ll add a car top carrier and trailer to the suburban. We’ll add my wife and two little ones. And we’ll trust God to accomplish His work in and through us!

- Ryan Ward

Pomp and Circumstance 2010

Montana Bible College is blessed to have our largest graduating class this year, with nine candidates receiving four-year Bachelor’s degrees and fourteen other students completing a one-year Certificate in Biblical Studies. We are so grateful to the Lord for His abundant provision for the College and to all the family and friends of MBC for your support as well. We are excitedly planning and looking forward to MBC’s annual Commencement exercises. Our desire is to have this ceremony display the excellence and quality of the education MBC offers. Those students who graduate have worked very hard, and we are delighted to showcase this milestone in their lives.

The evening will begin with Commencement at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 30, in the Worship Center at Grace Bible Church in Bozeman, followed by a catered banquet at 6:30 p.m. in the Activity Center. Complimentary tickets are necessary for the banquet. You may call 406-586-3585 to secure your tickets or for further information regarding this event.

Growing Pain

“I was so encouraged to see the gym full of students at lunch today. Montana Bible College has grown so much,” said Tim Tanner, East African missionary and former MBC student (1992), this afternoon when we were catching up. Yes, Montana Bible College has seen an incredible amount of growth over the past twenty-three years. It is a blessing to see so many peoples desiring to be equipped for ministry and seeking that training at MBC! Our total headcount for the current semester is 125 students – the highest number we’ve ever had. In fact, we have more students this term than we did at this time last year, and it is actually the sudden nature of this growth that has brought about some significant financial challenges for the college.

In early 2009, the financial committee of the board considered our five-year budget forecast and felt that we were considering a relatively realistic picture: growth of five Full Time Equivalent (FTE) per year over the five years (80 FTE by 2014), and a 4% increase in tuition each of those years ($170/credit by 2014) to assist in covering the costs of increasing student numbers. What we on the financial committee did not expect was that we would actually see an FTE of 85 (a 47% increase) in just a short few months, fall semester, 2009. Because our financial information was already published in the 2009-2010 catalog, we did not feel it was appropriate to adjust it to match the financial need for the current year. However, the 2010-2011 financial information reflects a 17% increase in tuition ($175/credit) over the current rate. As always, our desire is to keep the training MBC offers affordable, and this significant increase is difficult, but in order for the school to continue, we must increase the cost of tuition with our increasing student numbers.

But how could increasing student numbers cost the college more money? This is a commonly heard question and the answer to it lies with regular business considerations. There is a “production cost” for any business – e.g., materials, facilities, salaries – and an educational institution is no exception. Montana Bible College invests financially in each of our students (our product) through costs associated with recruitment, facilities, materials and salaries. When student numbers increase, so do the “production costs” to the college.

In light of the financial strain of this past year, several people have suggested that since federal monies are now available to MBC, that our financial concerns would be of we just took advantage of this funding. After much prayer and seeking of wise counsel, MBC has chosen to not pursue participation in FAFSA (federal financial aid program). The financial benefits of involvement in this program are not currently overshadowed by the power it would give to an outside entity to determine many areas of Montana Bible College’s future.

As a result, our tuition will increase. However, even with our tuition at $175 per credit hour, Montana Bible College is a very affordable option for ministry training. Comparing MBC’s tuition costs to Montana Bible College’s cost of $175 per credit is clearly a financial deal.

Montana Bible College has always committed to keeping the cost of schooling affordable so that when our graduates go into ministry, they are not saddled with debt that will disqualify them for whatever work to which the Lord might direct them. We are still deeply committed to this goal.

- Jen Lundstrom, Business Manager