

The Brighton Light

BRIGHTON ARP CHURCH

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A Pastoral Visit That Changed History

In the year 1700, a young Scottish pastor named Thomas Boston made a pastoral visit to an elderly member of his congregation. The exact age of the man is unknown, but he was old enough to have been a soldier in the English Civil War, which was fought more than a half-century before. While in the man's home, Boston discovered a copy of an out-of-print book entitled *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*. Boston borrowed the book, read it, and the history of the Church of Scotland (and our own history) was changed forever.

Thomas Boston would recommend the book to other pastors, and in 1718, the book was reprinted in Scotland. It influenced a number of pastors who became known as Marrow Men. This group included men like Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine. Eventually, disagreements over *The Marrow* and its theology led to the formation of an "Associate Presbytery." The Seceders, as they were called, are the historical ancestors of the Associate Reformed Presbytery Church.

Why was this issue, which became known as "The Marrow Controversy," so controversial? It all related to the nature of the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. There seems to have been very little true gospel preaching in Scotland in those days, partly because there were those in the Church of Scotland who insisted the gospel should only be preached to those who first showed signs of God's grace at work in their lives. That may sound strange to our modern ears, but it led to a lot of self-doubt as those within the church agonized over whether they were truly believers in Jesus Christ. The Marrow Men, on the other hand, insisted on what they called *The Free Offer of the Gospel* – that is, the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be preached to every person. God is the One who saves by His grace alone. The Holy Spirit is the One who must change hearts so that sinners will come to believe in the good news of salvation in Christ. It is not sorrow or emotionalism or feelings that save us, but only faith in Christ, trusting in His atoning work to save us. There is indeed a sorrowing over sin and repentance that are evident in the life of the Christian, but these are the fruit of salvation, not the cause of it.

When Jesus first appeared to His disciples after His resurrection, He told them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:46-47). The ARP Form of Government states, "All that the Church says and does is to be a witness to Jesus Christ, God's living Word, as He is spoken of in the Holy Scriptures, God's written Word. God has sent His Church into the world to present Jesus Christ through preaching, witnessing, teaching, sacrament, worship, and corporate living. All of the Church's people, in every phase of their lives, are to be God's ministers to the world by being servants of His Son, the King of the Church" (1.7). While they may be many activities that take place in a Christian church, Christ must be central to everything a church does. Pointing people to salvation in Jesus Christ, along with helping Christians live lives of devotion to Jesus Christ, must be the church's primary mission.

The Free of Offer of the Gospel changed the course of history in the Church of Scotland, and it is the reason that we have an ARP Church in North America today. Has the gospel made a difference in your life? Has it changed the course of your own personal history? Jesus Christ promises salvation and rest and eternal life for all who put their trust in Him (Matthew 11:28-29; John 3:16; John 6:37-40). What Jesus Christ did in history must be a part of our history – our church history, and our personal history.

Prayer List

Shut-ins:	Mary Frances Bennett,	Martha Jean Goulder
Ill/Recovering:	Richard Billings – Cancer	Lucille Bridges – Health issues
	Andrew Brunson – House arrest in Turkey	Ty Bryan – Heart Issues
	Ginger Carter – Cancer; Improving	Norma Columbus – Health Issues
	Zoan Landrum –Nursing Home in Ripley	Kenneth McCain – Health Issues
	Jerry Molder – Health Issues	Bobby Rochell – Cancer
	Sandy Williams (Huffman) – Cancer	Glenda Wilson – Bone Cancer
	Jimmy Wylie – Hip Surgery	Ina Yarbro – Health Issues
Military:	Tim Donahoo	Rod Dooley
	Debra Hill	Austin Starnes
		Matthew Heathman
		Robert “Trip” Young III
Missionaries:	Jim & Gala Coad	Rebekah Carson
Presbytery:	Church plants in Little Rock, Arkansas and Murray, Kentucky	
Please remember to pray for the Fall 2018 meeting of Mississippi Valley Presbytery, which will be held at Brighton on October 1-2.		

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

2	Joey Sides	14	Cooper Curtis
5	Joe Sides	15	Kaitlyn Moore
	Kevin Heath	17	Austin Starnes
	Kristian Ray Donahoo	19	Amber Scott
6	Nev Trotter	22	Amanda Heath
7	Alec-Thomas Ruffin	27	Ina Yarbro
	Hillary Hill-Balen	28	Richard Moore
9	Ashley Curtis		Sarah Smith
11	Kinley Donahoo	30	Larry Crum
12	Chris Gravley		
	Dustin Goulder		

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

September 12	Mr. and Mrs. Richard Moore
September 17	Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Trotter
September 24	Mr. and Mrs. Robert Young

NURSERY VOLUNTEERS

Sept 2	Molly Huffman
Sept 9	Haley Alsbrook
Sept 16	none
Sept 23	Alton Woods
Sept 30	Brooklin Mortin

Upcoming Events

THE DEACON OF THE MONTH is Chris Gravley. If you have any requests for the deacons, please contact Chris at 901-674-3851.

PRAYER/VISITATION: If anyone is sick, in need of prayer or a visit, please contact Milton Murphy at 901-476-2808.

OUTREACH: If you would like to participate in community outreach or know of someone who needs a pastoral visit, please contact Milton Murphy. We also need prayer warriors to enlist.

SUNDAY EVENINGS: Beginning September 9th at 6 pm, we will be beginning an Outreach Worship Service. The goal of these meetings will be evangelism and the basics of biblical worship. Invite a friend and join us.

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY: There will be a Wednesday Night Bible Study beginning September 5 on the Sermon on the Mount. Make plans to join us at 6:30.

FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER: Wednesday, September 26 at 6 p.m.

WEDNESDAY SUPPER AT SIX MENU:

- **Sept. 6:** Hoagies, chips, ice cream
- **Sept. 13:** Chicken nuggets, macaroni and cheese
- **Sept. 19:** Spaghetti, green beans, garlic bread
- **Sept. 26:** Family Night

MISSIONS: This September, B.J. Maxwell will travel again with Catalyst Missions to Indonesia. After 4 years, the first class of graduates will complete final module of Pastor training. Visit bjmaxwell.com/Indonesia to help support this trip. Or, you can mail a check to Catalyst Missions, PO Box 449, Ellendale, TN 38029 noted "Maxwell Indonesia." Contact B.J. for any questions of further information.

New Website and Email address for the church.

Website: <http://www.brightonarp.org>

Email: baarp@att.net

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the church website, please contact Chris Gravley, webmaster, at 901-674-3851 or e-mail at chris_gravley@bellsouth.net.