

# The Challenge

News of Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary  
Spring 2004

## BMA Seminary to Offer New Degree

BMA Seminary has approved a new **Master of Arts in Theological Studies (M.A.T.S.)** degree beginning in Fall 2004.

The degree will be available to qualified students with prior seminary work or an extensive undergraduate degree in religious studies from a properly accredited institution.

The degree should take one to one-and-a-half years to complete. It will require 36-semester-hours of study with a thesis project. Students may choose not to enroll in the thesis and complete the degree in 39-semester-hours.

*“This degree should be attractive to individuals who have completed seminary courses in the past but were unable to complete a degree. It may also be attractive to graduates of Bible colleges, such as Southeastern Baptist College in Mississippi or Central Baptist College in Arkansas. These students may complete this degree in considerably less time than other seminary degrees,”* says Dr. Philip Attebery, BMA Seminary Dean.

Obviously, the degree will concentrate on theological-historical studies. Eighteen hours will be required in Old and New Testament studies. Six of those hours will be in Greek or Hebrew language studies. The remaining 18 to 21 hours will be in theological-historical studies.

Some prerequisites do apply to secure the intent of BMA Seminary for all students to be well rounded in their religious studies. Attebery says, *“If a student has completed previous and sufficient courses in Christian Education or Church Ministries, he or she may be ready to enroll in the M.A.T.S. degree immediately.”*



Dr. Philip Bryan Explains On-line Courses to Students

## Associate Courses On-Line

BMA Seminary is nearing the completion of a project to make most of its Associate of Divinity (A.Div.) degree available to on-line students. Students will continue to have the option of paper-based correspondence courses in addition to the new computer-based program.

With proper computer software, students may either print lessons and send them to the seminary by postal mail or actually complete them on-line and return them to the seminary via e-mail.

According to Dr. Philip Bryan, BMA Seminary professor and on-line project supervisor, these **See ON-LINE, Page 7**

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## Laymen Help Roof Seminary Apartments

The seminary is grateful to several volunteers for their recent work on the seminary's student housing. Bro. Lonnie Polk of Matthews, Missouri organized a work-crew to replace the roofing on three of the seminary duplexes. The duplexes are normally used to house students with families.

Polk came up with the idea while visiting his son's family in one of the apartments. Jeff Polk is a Master of Divinity student at BMA Seminary. He noticed a leak in the roof and began planning a way to make the needed repairs.

The volunteers from First Baptist Church, Matthews, Missouri (Lonnie Polk, Chris Polk, Al Hill, and Chuck Curry) and Sheridan Terrace Baptist Church in Palestine, Texas (Jeff Polk and Jessie Williams) worked in November 2003.

Bro. Donald Hammock, seminary business manager, said, "It was a pleasure to work with these volunteers. Thanks to their sacrifice the seminary was able to roof three buildings for the price of one. Such dedication of time and willingness allows the seminary to keep down costs to students."

Chuck Curry, one of the volunteers, said, "I am not called to be a preacher but I can certainly be a servant. I am capable of doing manual labor. People can find a way to serve if they want to."

Dr. Philip Attebery, BMA Seminary Dean, added, "The seminary greatly appreciates the time and energy these men have devoted to helping our ministry. I am grateful to their families for lending them to us for a few days. Many student families will be protected by these roofs for many years. These repairs will help those students to concentrate on their studies, etc., rather than leaky roofs."

## Erickson Receives Asher Scholarship

David A. Erickson is the recipient of the annual Louis F. Asher Scholarship for 2004.

Erickson is originally from Rolla, Missouri and is the pastor of Blackjack Baptist Church, Troup, Texas. He is currently working toward a Master of Divinity degree.

He is a graduate of Central Baptist College in Conway, Arkansas where he received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Bible in 2003.

He graduated from CBC with honors, Summa Cum Laude, and made the President's List. He has also made the seminary's Dean's List for Fall 2003.

The award was announced during a seminary chapel service on February 10, 2004. Mrs. Jean Asher, Michael Asher and members of Glenfawn Baptist Church were present for the presentation.

Bro. Asher served BMA Seminary as a professor for twenty-five years. He also spent twenty years as pastor of Glenfawn Baptist Church of Cushing, Texas.

Bro. Asher was an avid historian and authored the book *John Clarke (1609-1676): Pioneer in American Medicine, Democratic Ideals, and Champion of Religious Liberty*.

He also served as a company commander in the U.S. Army during World War II and the Korean War. He received two Purple Hearts and the Bronze Star.

The scholarship was established by the Glenfawn Church as a memorial to their pastor to promote and reward good scholarship. It is awarded to outstanding students each spring semester and used for tuition, fees, and textbooks.



Michael & Jean Asher, David Erickson, Pastor David Hayes



### Administration

**Dr. Charley Holmes, President**  
**Dr. Philip W. Attebery, Dean**  
**Donald Hammock, Business Manager**  
**James C. Blaylock, Library Director**  
**Dr. Thom South, Extension Site**

### Faculty

**Dr. Philip R. Bryan, Theological-Historical**  
**Dr. Ronnie Johnson, Christian Education**  
**Dr. Elton B. McCann, Church Ministries**  
**Dr. Harold McNeill, Christian Education**  
**Dr. Greg W. Parsons, Biblical Studies**  
**James D. Shine, Biblical Studies**

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***"Earnestly Contending for the Faith"***



## Thanks For Inviting Me

Dr. Charley Holmes, Seminary President

The BMA emphasizes the philosophy of local church autonomy, one of the strengths of our association. That strength works best when local congregations have an opportunity to meet representatives of the national departments.

This past year, BMA pastors have been especially kind to BMA Seminary by extending more opportunities for me and others, such as faculty members, to preach in their churches and present the ministry of the seminary.

In gratitude, I would like to recognize the following pastors, churches and associations that have allowed me to meet their congregations by issuing invitations for revivals or by hosting seminary rallies.

### Pastors and Churches

Greg Payne and Antioch East, Magnolia, Arkansas; Harley Gordon and Beacon Hill, Waco, Texas; Bill Jackson and Bethel, Springtown, Texas; Danny Cresswell and Big Creek, Soso, Mississippi;

Terry Skinner and Calvary Fairfield, Texas; Tom Mitchell and Chenal Valley, Little Rock, Arkansas; Kenneth Brady and College Heights, Ada, Oklahoma; Tim Boatright and Faith, St. Charles, Missouri;

First, Jacksonville, Texas; Jack Hobbs and First Missionary, Howe, Oklahoma; Jim Bosley and First Missionary, Cleburne, Texas; Larry Tapp and First of Windsor Park, Ocean Springs, Mississippi; Allen Tilley and First of Carthage, Texas; Charles Harrell and Forest Lawn, Saraland, Alabama; Bryan Wilson and Friendship, Baldwin, Mississippi;

Billy Dotson and Good Hope, Edgewood, Texas; Greenwood, Broadus, Texas; Harold Brunson and Hillcreek, Whitehouse, Texas; Buddy Johnson and Hillcrest, Texarkana, Texas;

Mike Harmon and Lake Highland, Sulphur Springs, Texas; T. C. Haynes and Landmark, Cushing, Texas; Mark Cummins and Little Flock, Lufkin, Texas; Ray Grissett and Little Flock, Jewett, Texas; Coy Quesenbury and Lonesome Dove, Southlake, Texas; Lost Prairie, Groesbeck, Texas;

Merrill Bailey, Jr. and Martins Prairie, Iola, Texas; Dennis Knight and Paramount, Perkinston, Mississippi; G. H. Gordon and Pear Orchard, Jackson, Mississippi; James Spurgeon and Pilgrim Rest #2, Golden, Texas;

Scotty Rayburn and Red Creek, Wiggins, Mississippi; Charles Johnson and Rosewood, Gilmer, Texas; Jerry Fulton and Sheppard Drive, Euless, Texas; Gary Smith and South Green, Tupelo, Mississippi; Doug Brewer and Southgate, Moore, Oklahoma; Paul Silvey and Stone Ridge, Kilgore, Texas; J.D. Courtney and Vardaman Street, Wiggins, Mississippi; Jack Cook and Wyatt Drive, Fort Worth, Texas;

### Associations

Angelina Association of Texas; Cane Creek Association of Missouri; Harmony Association of Mississippi; Harmony Association of Texas; Landmark Association of Texas; Liberty Association of Texas; Springhill Association of Louisiana; Tom bigbee Association of Mississippi; Trinity River Association of Texas; Tryon Association of Texas; Wood County Association of Texas.

### Interested Churches or Associations

We are always eager to visit with churches or associations considering the support of Christian education in some way. If you are interested in a visit, please give us a call.

## BMA Seminary Summer 2004 Classes

Preparation and Delivery of  
Sermons/Homiletics  
(PR 311/611)

June 1-4

Dr. Virgil Porter

Administrative Christian  
Leadership  
(RE 512)

June 7-11

Dr. Elton McCann

Intermediate Greek  
(Grk 415)

June 21-25

Dr. Philip Bryan

Old Testament Introduction  
and Survey I  
(OT 511)

June 28-July 2

Dr. Thom South

Christian  
Psychology/Advanced  
(RE 325/535)

July 12-16

Dr. Ronnie Johnson

(Location: Conway, Arkansas)

Evangelism Explosion  
(EV 311/411/521)

July 26-30

(Location: New Harmony Baptist  
Church, Tyler, TX)

Classes at BMA Seminary unless  
noted. Registration deadline is  
May 1, 2004.



## Graduate Spotlight: Dr. Jentry Bond



Dr. and Mrs. Jentry Bond

Jentry Bond was reared on a small farm in southern Mississippi near Wiggins. After graduation from high school, he immediately enrolled in Southeastern Baptist College in Laurel, Mississippi. With the exception of five years, when he pursued higher education, he has been in Laurel ever since.

He has held several positions at Southeastern including faculty member, dean of students and executive vice-president. He has been president there for the past eight years.

In August 2004, he will celebrate twenty-five years as an employee of Southeastern Baptist College. His wife, Emma, is also an employee of the college. The Bonds have two children. His daughter, Amy, is the librarian at Southeastern and his son, Aaron, will be enrolling in a master's degree program this fall.

Dr. Bond's educational background is notable. He has attended BMA institutions in Mississippi, Arkansas and Texas. After receiving his A.A. from Southeastern Baptist College in 1974, he moved to Conway, Arkansas to attend Central Baptist College. Following his graduation with a B.A. in 1976, he moved to Jacksonville, Texas to attend the BMA Seminary. He completed his M.Div in 1979 and returned to Laurel, Mississippi to be an instructor at Southeastern.

Since no BMA institution offers a doctoral degree, he enrolled in Reformed Theological Seminary and earned his Doctor of Ministry Degree in 1991. In 1993, he was awarded the Delta Epsilon Chi Award of the Honor Society of Bible Colleges.

Dr. Bond believes that the education he received at BMA Seminary was *"Biblically based and doctrinally sound with a good combination of the academic and practical."* He admits that Jacksonville was a long way from home but he felt like it was where the Lord wanted him. *"It was a very positive experience,"* he says.

The Bonds were expecting their first child when they moved to Jacksonville. They remember feeling welcome and being a part of the seminary "family." He also recalls that several babies were born to seminary students during the three years they lived in Texas.

The friendships established during his days as a student at BMA Seminary have enhanced his participation in the BMA of America. Dr. Bond went to school with several BMA missionaries, departmental directors and pastors. He says, *"A good percentage of us became denominational workers in the BMA."*

Dr. Bond also believes that his degree from BMA Seminary helped to prepare him for his continued education after a few years of service at Southeastern. He says, *"Work at the BMA Seminary was a very good foundation for my doctoral studies."*

He feels that seminary training that is built upon a Bible college foundation will enhance a student's ministry. *"Any minister will establish friendships that will continue long after graduation,"* he says. Students who plan to serve in the BMA will gain a lasting network of friends and colleagues within the association.



Bro. Grady Higgs

## Higgs To Receive Kellar Award

Bro. Grady Higgs has been chosen as the recipient of the BMA Seminary's 2004 Gerald D. Kellar Award for recognition of outstanding contribution, service or participation in Christian ministry.

The award was recently created to honor seminary graduates whose ministries have typified that of Dr. Gerald D. Kellar, founding president of BMA Seminary.

Higgs, Executive Director for the Baptist Missionary Association of America Department of Missions, received his M.Div. from BMA Seminary in 1971. He also served several years as a seminary trustee.

He has pastored several churches in Arkansas and Texas, served as President of the BMA of America, has been a writer for the Baptist Publishing House and was Spiritual Emphasis Week Speaker for BMA Seminary in 1985 and 2000. He served the First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Texas for nineteen years.

Dr. Kellar served as the seminary's first president from 1956-1967. He was instrumental in the organization of the BMA of America and served as president of each BMA institution of higher learning.

In 1964, the BMA Seminary library was named Kellar Library in his honor. He passed away in May 2001.

## Update on Arkansas Extension Site

The BMA Seminary has been privileged to offer graduate level courses on the campus of Central Baptist College in Conway, Arkansas during the 2003-2004 school year.

Students have completed courses in Old and New Testament, Expository Preaching, Effective Teaching, Administrative Leadership, Missions, Theology, Church History and Hermeneutics.

The extension program is designed to provide adequate course offerings for students within commuting distance to earn a Master of Arts in Religion or Master of Divinity degrees.

Dr. Thom South, Extension Site Administrator, is pleased with the number of students currently enrolled in the program and is looking forward to increased numbers in the near future.

*"I think we have students of good quality and with interest in these degrees and the education to help them prepare for the ministry," he says.*

He adds that interested students should contact his office in Conway at 501-328-5776 or the main campus in Jacksonville, Texas for access to a seminary application.

Students may begin or continue work toward the M.A.R., M.Div. or M.A.T.S. degrees by enrolling for Summer 2004 courses by May 1. Fall courses at the extension site tentatively include Hebrew, New Testament, Systematic Theology and Church History.



Students at Arkansas Extension Site



Pastor Danny Pitts

## Brand Lectures

### Spiritual Emphasis Week

The 2004 "Brand Lectures" were held March 2 and 4 in the BMA Seminary's Dorman Memorial Chapel.

Pastor Danny Pitts, Hopewell Baptist Church, Fulton, Mississippi, was invited to present the lectures.

Pitts is a graduate of BMA Seminary (M.Div. '81) and lectured on *"The Value of Biblical and Jewish Backgrounds to Christian Ministry."*

The lectures are named in memory of Dr. and Mrs. Ralph A. Brand of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Dr. Brand was both a graduate (M.R.E. '67) and a trustee of BMA Seminary.

# Memorials and Gifts Winter and Spring 2004

## IN MEMORY OF:

**Dr. John Attebery**  
Peggy Attebery

**W. E. Barnette**  
Neatha Cagle

**Larry Burleson**  
Charley and Dianne Holmes

**Paul Congour**  
Peggy Attebery

**LaVay Crawley**  
Charley and Dianne Holmes  
Forrest and Marie Priest

**N. L. Eddy**  
Pat Ratton

**Dessie Fling**  
James and Jo Ann Blaylock  
Ladies SS Class, Corinth,  
Jacksonville, TX

**Myrtle Foreman**  
Austin Bank, Jacksonville, TX  
Mr. and Mrs. Terry Bolton  
Mr. and Mrs. Don Crawford  
Charley and Dianne Holmes  
Ronnie and Alicia Johnson  
Juanita McMahan  
Mr. and Mrs. T. D. Stevens

**Virgil J. Fusselman**  
WMA, Weddington,  
Fayetteville, AR

**Miss Emma Hairgrove**  
James and Jo Ann Blaylock

**Clyde & Alma Hollingsworth**  
J. Selwyn Hollingsworth

**Benton S. and Laura Ella  
(Reid) Jackson**  
Polly and Geraldine Jackson

**Dr. Gerald Kellar**  
Barbara Rarick

**Charlene Gower Kent**  
Robert F. Kent

**Vernelle Lemons**  
Bobby and Martha Nelson

**Mrs. Evie Nunn**  
Charley and Dianne Holmes

**Hansel Pearce**  
Pat Pearce

**Carolyn Pendleton**  
Dr. and Mrs. Harold McNeill, Jr.

**Hildegard Perdue**  
Corinth Baptist Church,  
Jacksonville, TX

**Dr. William C. Pruitt, Jr.**  
Mrs. Ellen Ruth Pruitt

**Donald L. Ray**  
Mrs. Helen Ray

**Mrs. Dorothy Schoenrock**  
James and Jo Ann Blaylock  
Charley and Dianne Holmes

**Joe Slater & Murle Slater  
Bowerman**  
J. Selwyn Hollingsworth

**Mason Smith**  
James and Jo Ann Blaylock  
Floyd and Jeannette Gaston  
Charley and Dianne Holmes  
Ronnie and Alicia Johnson

**S. T. Sullivan**  
Mrs. Jean Sullivan

**Rexine Walthall**  
James and Jo Ann Blaylock  
Charley and Dianne Holmes

**Austin B. Watson**  
Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Nelson and  
Family

## IN HONOR OF:

**Wade and Joanna Allen**  
First of Cave Springs, AR

**Pastor Charles Breithaupt**  
Red Springs WMA, Tyler, TX

**Mr. and Mrs. Homer Cagle**  
Mr. and Mrs. Tracy Bulin

**Wayne Camille**  
Red Springs WMA, Tyler, TX

**Joe Caudle**  
Mr. and Mrs. Harold Williams

**J. D. Clark**  
Mr. and Mrs. Harold Williams

**Kenneth Cline**  
Red Springs WMA, Tyler, TX

**Ray Fleming**  
Red Springs WMA, Tyler, TX

**Harley and Bettye Gordon**  
Billy J. and Sandra Nixon

**Rick Hensley**  
Red Springs WMA, Tyler, TX

**Charles N. and Johnnie Ruth  
Holmes**  
Erik and Amy Fleming  
Charley and Dianne Holmes

**Bettye Ann Hamm-Jackson**  
Douglas Jackson

**Leta Jackson**  
Ward Prairie, Fairfield, TX

**Mrs. Mary Lou Kellar**  
Gen. WMA, First, Shady Grove,  
Laurel, MS

**David McAdams**  
Ward Prairie, Fairfield, TX

**Deana McAdams**  
Ward Prairie, Fairfield, TX

**Dr. Elton McCann**  
Mrs. Helen Ray

**Dennis McNutt**  
Red Springs WMA, Tyler, TX

**O. Y. Null**  
Red Springs WMA, Tyler, TX

**Forrest and Marie Priest**  
Charles and Linda Bullington

**Alonzo and Billie Sherman**  
Eugene Tankersley

**Joseph Simpson**  
Ward Prairie, Fairfield, TX

**Tim Thompson**  
Red Springs WMA, Tyler, TX

**Lurline Tisdale**  
Ward Prairie, Fairfield, TX

**Mack Winters**  
Red Springs WMA, Tyler, TX



# Evangelism Explosion Summer 2004

The BMA Seminary will offer training in Evangelism Explosion July 26-30, 2004, at New Harmony Baptist Church, Tyler, Texas.

BMA Seminary has offered the intensive week-long training sessions since the Summer of 2000. In 2003, the seminary teamed with New Harmony Baptist and Evangelism Explosion International to provide the week of training.

*"We are grateful," says Dr. Philip Attebery, seminary dean, "to have a church like New Harmony demonstrate what EE ministry is about in a local church setting. Our hope is for students to take what they learn about evangelism back home or into their future ministries for an increase of soul-winning and soul-winners."*

Anyone is welcome to participate in the seminary's EE course this summer. Many pastors and lay-persons have taken advantage of the training over the past several years. Several state mission departments have pledged to provide financial support for individuals from their states who would like to attend the clinic.

Students seeking seminary credit need to contact BMA Seminary and register before May 1, 2004. Students not interested in earning credit may contact Evangelism Explosion directly at [www.eeinternational.org](http://www.eeinternational.org) for registration details after May 1.

Members of New Harmony have volunteered their homes for lodging to those interested. Low-cost housing will also be available to students who would prefer a church-camp-style lodging.

Students will be asked to donate a specific amount to help defray the cost of meals which will be provided at the church.

Richard Summers, BMA North American Missionary, attended the 2003 training at New Harmony. In reference to the training, he said, *"When the*

*opportunity came to go to the EE training class, I knew I had to go. It was amazing how God brought all the finances together and I found myself in Tyler, Texas."*

He adds, *"That week during training I met a lot of new friends and started to see the bigger picture of EE and I understand the importance of training others to witness. When I arrived home to Portland (OR), we were in training within a month. During our 13 weeks we had nine professions of faith and one family has started to come to church. We are a soul-winning church and thankful for the tool of EE."*

Please consider taking EE this summer. If you are not able, please pray for the Lord's blessing upon the week of training and for all who will be involved.

## Three Trustees End Their Terms

The terms of three BMA Seminary trustees will expire this spring. Their contributions to the ministry of the seminary are appreciated and will be greatly missed, according to Dr. Charley Holmes, BMA Seminary President.

Jim Montee is a layman and member of First Regular Baptist Church of Galena, Kansas.

Pastor Danny Bullock (M.Div. '77) serves First Baptist Church, McNeil, Arkansas.

Dr. Eugene Murphy (M.R.E. '58) pastors the Good Hope Baptist Church, Columbia, Mississippi and recently celebrated 50 years in the ministry. He is also a member of the seminary's first graduating class.

Holmes says, *"All three of these men have been exceptionally faithful in tending to seminary business for a number of years. They have also been excellent supporters of the Christian education ministry in their local areas of service."*

## Parsons Published in Scholarly Journal

Dr. Greg W. Parsons, BMA Seminary Professor of Biblical Studies, contributed an article to the April-June 2003 issue of *Bibliotheca Sacra* entitled "Guidelines for Understanding and Proclaiming the Book of Ecclesiastes, Part 1."

*Bibliotheca Sacra* is a theological quarterly that has been published by Dallas Theological Seminary since 1934. The publication itself dates back to 1843.

The article notes that the Book of Ecclesiastes is *"one of the most difficult Bible books to understand."* Parsons says that the first guideline is to interpret each verse in light of the overall context of the book— structure, purpose, and message.

He advises students to avoid excessive generalizations from Ecclesiastes and to discover the book's overall purpose in light of its conclusion (12:13-14).

Parsons admonishes students to *"recognize that the concept of the fear of God is not an afterthought but is a theme woven into the fabric of the book (3:14; 5:7; 7:18; 8:12-13)."*

The article also notes several implications for interpreting the book. First, is to be aware of the rare words and phrases that are repeated. Second, is to *"note various suggestions for interpreting seemingly contradictory verses."* Third, is to *"avoid the proof texting used by various cults."*

### ON-LINE

courses will also be made available on CD. *"Research and supplemental resources will also be available to on-line students,"* he adds.

Fifteen of the twenty-two courses required for the A.Div. degree will be available to students by computer. Remaining courses may be taken on campus or during intensive classes in January and summer months. As much as nine hours of certain courses may be taken at a local college and then applied toward the degree.

The Associate of Divinity degree is especially designed to assist students over the age of 30 who have little or no college background.

THE CHALLENGE is published by  
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We would really like to know how to keep in touch with you! Please help us by letting us know if your address has changed or if you think we do not have a correct address for you! Thanks for thinking about BMA Seminary!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Dean's Honor Roll for Fall 2003

Students must have at least a 3.5 grade point average, have no letter grades below "B," and must be enrolled in at least four courses.

Kofi Boahene (BAR-Ghana)

Michael Cormier (BAR-TX)

David Erickson (M.Div-MO)

Harold Fox (BAR-TX)

Shirish Kasab (MAR-India)

Geoffrey Mwape (BAR-Zambia)

John C. Smith (BAR-AR)

BMA Seminary is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097; Phone 404-679-4501) to award the Associate of Divinity, Bachelor of Arts in Religion, Master of Arts in Religion, Master of Arts in Theological Studies, and Master of Divinity degrees.