

Summer Report BMA Seminary

“My God shall supply your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”
Philippians 4:19

When Paul was writing to the Philippians, his comments on supplying our needs was in the context of his learning to be content in good times or in bad (in plenty or lean). In my 25 years at the Seminary we have seen lean and plenty. Yet God has always supplied our needs.

In the last two years the Seminary has had two distinct needs that God has provided for: renovation of Dorman Memorial Chapel and re-roofing all of our main buildings.

The chapel renovation was definitely a need. The pews were the most critical issue. Our chapel furnishings were over sixty years old. The veneered pews served well, but after so many years, the wood panels were separating and splintering (to the point of tearing people’s clothing). God, through His people, provided the cost of the whole remodeling project (\$65,000).



More recently God provided for our new roof. About twenty years ago when I became president of BMA Seminary, one of the first of my major problems to solve was a badly leaking roof. A large campaign to re-roof all the buildings was launched. The total was about \$80,000 and the new roof was estimated to last about twenty years. The friends of the Seminary gave about 1/2 of the cost before

the work started. The balance was financed by the Revolving Loan Fund of Mississippi. The loan was paid off within the next year.

The new roof this year cost \$175,000, over twice the cost of the old roof. This roof is constructed of a better, more modern material which will last longer than I will. Best of all, the Lord provided all the expenses before the job was completed.

God can be trusted!!



This summer has also extended and enhanced the influence of the Seminary abroad. I was able to make my 5th trip to help our association around Tabora, Tanzania. The area is extraordinarily poor and resources for pastors and churches are very limited in the Swahili language. One result of the isolation and poverty has been the polluting of doctrinal stability, primarily by charismatics. I have been teaching a few men each year by reviewing historical Baptist doctrinal statements. The results of this endeavor include an increase in the number of churches from 22 to 33. The face of the congregations has also changed. Before the Seminary work of supporting Evangelistic International Ministries (EIM), the attendance was sharply weighted to women and children. Approximately 90% of the congregation was women and the remaining 10% was children and adult men. Now, the attendees are almost evenly divided – 50% adult men/50% women and children.

God has been faithful to supply the need for travel expenses and travel safety. This is a crime-ridden area – to the point of having an underground slave economy. In all the trips I have made, I have never been accosted or robbed. Additionally, I

have never become ill in an area notorious for infectious diseases (typhoid, malaria, cholera, etc.) and a lack of sanitary food/water.

God can be trusted!!



Tanzanian pastor group studying together



Bros. Renuus and Cosmos Kanunu along with two converts – one an Imam and one a witch doctor – shown with a visitor from America



Cityscape of Santiago, Chile with the Andes Mountains in the background



Dr. Ricky Williams teaching assembled workers in Santiago, Chile

Another faculty member teaching abroad this summer is Dr. Ricky Williams. Dr. Williams and his sister, Belinda Caudle, have been conducting training in Chile. There is over 50 years of missions experience in Latin America between the Williams and Caudle families. Dr. Williams is working to help equip local workers to write their own Sunday School and Bible study materials. When study helps are composed in country, the end product is better adapted to the local culture and language.

While this is being written (late June) we are in one of our perennial “lean” seasons - summertime and the period between Thanksgiving and mid-January. During these periods there is no tuition income. Offerings lessen, perhaps because of lower church attendance/vacations, etc.

Regardless of the cause, the general fund is critically low. Additionally, the Seminary’s computer server has crashed and is currently being replaced at a cost of approximately \$12,000. This is a **need** and not a **want**. The school needs to have at least three months’ reserve to be able to handle ongoing bills and payroll in a timely manner. The school needs to have a modern server rather than an unstable, 15-year-old server. More than half of our students are now enrolled in online courses. This means that there is more demand on technological resources, such as the server. In addition, since Baptist Publishing House has moved onto our campus, all of the bookkeeping and correspondence related to BPH now flows through the server.

Pray for your Seminary that God will supply these **NEEDS!**

I will ask you to pray three times in the next few days:

- 1) Personally pray when you finish reading this letter.
- 2) Pray with others in your Sunday School class or fellowship group the next time you meet.
- 3) Ask your church to pray at the next Sunday service.

If you will, please send us a note telling us who you are (individually or as a group) and when you prayed. This would be an encouragement to our staff and students – reminding us that others care and are praying and the God **will** provide these needs for our students.

Your co-laborer with Christ,

Dr. Charley Holmes
President – BMA Seminary

