



Tennessee Baptist
Children's Homes

Journey Guide

A black and white photograph of an elderly man with white hair, identified as Dr. Bryant Millsaps, sitting at a desk and writing on a document with a pen. He is wearing a dark sweater over a light-colored collared shirt. The background shows a window with blinds and a dark wall. A blue circular graphic is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text 'A Letter from Dr. Bryant Millsaps'.

A Letter from
**Dr. Bryant
Millsaps**

Friends of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes...

These are exciting days for Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. After 123 years of success in providing residential care, God is calling us into a deeper season of ministry as we expand into the creation of a statewide foster care network. I've never been more confident in the direction that the TBCH ministry is moving!

On November 6, 2013, Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes signed a no-cost contract with the Tennessee Department of Children's Services to provide Foster Care (Resource) Homes for

the State. This new opportunity further expands TBCH's role in "ministering the love of Jesus Christ to children and families in crisis."

The partnership with DCS is to recruit, train and certify foster care families to meet the critical need for safe, strong homes for Tennessee's at-risk children. TBCH staff will train the families and once certified will monitor and provide on-going support to the families. TBCH will not receive government funding for this program; however, the foster care family will receive a stipend from the State.

An added component to the TBCH Foster Care program is the Caring Community Ministries. We feel it is important that families who open their homes to care for children have local support in order to be successful. TBCH is looking to the local churches to provide this support. Some of the ways the Caring Community Ministries can assist foster families is to provide meals on an as-needed basis, respite care to foster parents, transportation assistance, encouragement, and prayer support.

In addition, we have the rare opportunity to revamp our existing residential program with updated technology, renovated facilities, and a heavier focus on development for our current and future initiatives. As we all know, with such an incredible opportunity comes an equally incredible need.

Continued on next page.

Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes has never accepted government funding. This has been possible due to the faithful support of individuals and Tennessee's Baptist churches. As we seek to broaden our ministry to children, we must also broaden our support base among churches, individuals, and organizations. This requires two things from those who feel called to the mission of TBCH: faith and sacrifice. Our goal is to conduct a three-year capital campaign raising \$5.2 million for the aforementioned initiatives.

We know that we wouldn't be where we are today if it weren't for a community of people who have over and over again trusted God in amazing ways.

It's through prayer and sacrifice that we experience spiritual growth. We want the single motivation for our gifts and sacrifices to be at the direction of Jesus Christ. The following pages contain devotionals that will help you discover direction through The Word. Would you be willing to prayerfully consider how you can be a part of changing the lives of at-risk children all across Tennessee?

We're waiting with great anticipation to see how the Lord moves through His people and how he continues to grow this 123 year old ministry for His kingdom.

In Christ Alone

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryant Millsaps". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "M".

Bryant Millsaps
President/Treasurer



TBCH President/Treasurer Dr. Bryant Millsaps (second from the right) meets with Tennessee Baptist Convention President Dr. Randy Davis, Governor Bill Haslam, and DCS Commissioner Jim Henry to sign a no-cost contract with the Tennessee Department of Children's Services to provide Foster Care (Resource) Homes for the State.



**Who
We
Are**

Mrs. Georgia Eastman and a group of ladies from First Baptist Church, Nashville, founded the Tennessee Baptist Orphans' Home in 1891.



The Tennessee Baptist Orphans' Home was first housed in the Delaware Hotel in West Nashville. In 1911, land was purchased from Major C.T. Cheek and the orphans' home was moved to its present location in Brentwood. For many years children were served at this one location. In 1950 a second campus was opened in Memphis and in 1954 one followed in Chattanooga. By the 1950's most of the children in residence were from homes in crisis, not orphans, so board members decided in 1953 to rename the ministry to more accurately reflect its work--Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes.

The significance of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes (TBCH) to children whose family is in crisis in the state of Tennessee has been evident for more than 120 years. Because of the generosity of people like you, we celebrate a storied history of ministry and service. We also recognize that the opportunity to help more children with significant needs has never been greater.

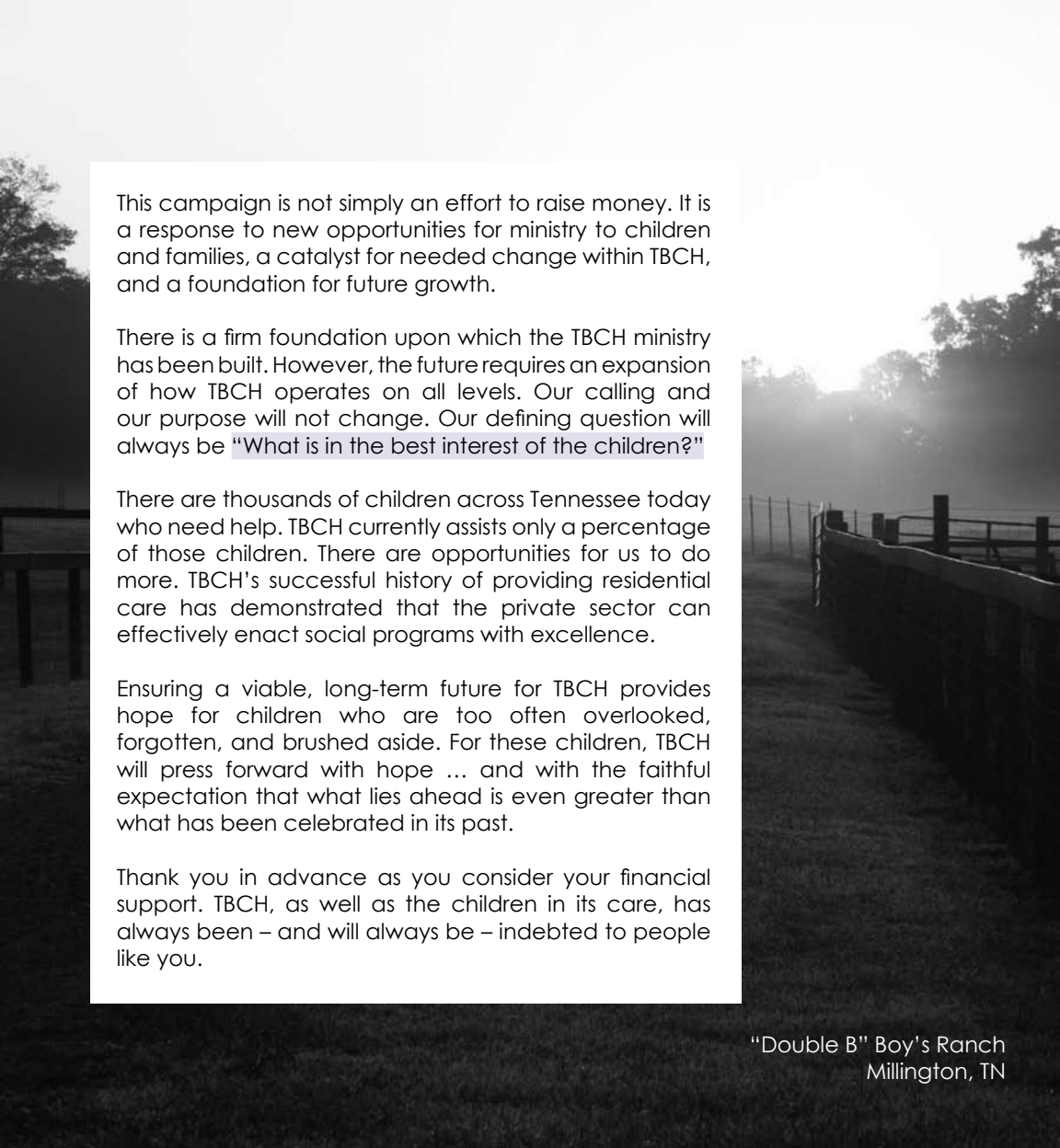


TBCH does not accept money from local, state, or federal government.

While that decision carries a cost, the leadership of TBCH believes in operating biblically-minded and state-approved programs in a way that reflects the values of the churches that have shaped its ministry to children. We believe Christian kindness, hospitality, and love are in the best interests of children.



**Our
Vision**



This campaign is not simply an effort to raise money. It is a response to new opportunities for ministry to children and families, a catalyst for needed change within TBCH, and a foundation for future growth.

There is a firm foundation upon which the TBCH ministry has been built. However, the future requires an expansion of how TBCH operates on all levels. Our calling and our purpose will not change. Our defining question will always be "What is in the best interest of the children?"

There are thousands of children across Tennessee today who need help. TBCH currently assists only a percentage of those children. There are opportunities for us to do more. TBCH's successful history of providing residential care has demonstrated that the private sector can effectively enact social programs with excellence.

Ensuring a viable, long-term future for TBCH provides hope for children who are too often overlooked, forgotten, and brushed aside. For these children, TBCH will press forward with hope ... and with the faithful expectation that what lies ahead is even greater than what has been celebrated in its past.

Thank you in advance as you consider your financial support. TBCH, as well as the children in its care, has always been – and will always be – indebted to people like you.

"Double B" Boy's Ranch
Millington, TN

NEW FOSTER CARE PARTNERSHIP \$2,430,725

Initial funding (three years) for dedicated staff to identify, screen, train, certify, and support families to receive children in the Tennessee Department of Children's Services system for foster care. These dollars will provide foster care staff for each of our three regions (West [2], Middle [2], and East [3] Tennessee) plus one managing director and support staff for the program/partnership in the state office. Additionally, it will cover funds needed for programming and training materials.

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVE \$394,000

Tennessee school systems are moving to a BYOT (bring your own technology) position. To ensure that the children in residential care are equipped for success in school, funds are needed for a laptop computer for each TBCH child in school (an initial buy of 100 computers and the capacity to add 25 computers per year) and to fund an IT staff position to oversee the residents' technology needs.

RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE \$1,500,000

TBCH, with the help of church mission work teams and other individuals, has been a good steward of its physical plant over the last 50 years. TBCH is now at the point where there is a need for renovations and improvement of structures statewide. Funds for these needs will be distributed based on the most critical need.

LONG TERM FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE \$835,500

To sustain current and new initiatives, TBCH must become more intentional, savvy, and creative in developing and cultivating funding sources to fully support its ongoing ministries. TBCH, under the leadership of the Director of Development, will create and implement an intentional long-term development plan to grow sources of financial support. The Director of Development will also recruit and train three Regional Development Officers to achieve these goals.

TOTAL \$5,160,225

As we begin to pray about raising such a God-sized amount of money, we cannot help but ask ourselves “what does it take to raise that kind of money?” Our counsel, based on experience with similar endeavors, has assisted us in developing the chart below that presents the kind of gifts that are needed to raise \$5,200,000. As you discern how God wants to use you to support TBCH, seek His guidance in how He has gifted you to make a difference in the lives of children.

Commitment Profile

THREE YEAR COMMITMENT	
1	\$1,000,000
1	\$500,000
2	\$250,000
3	\$125,000
4	\$75,000
5	\$60,000

16 Commitments
\$2,975,000 or **57.2%** of Goal

THREE YEAR COMMITMENT	
7	\$50,000
11	\$40,000
14	\$35,000
19	\$20,000
21	\$15,000
25	\$10,000

97 Commitments
\$2,225,000 or **42.8%** of Goal

113 Commitments
\$5,200,000 or **100%** of Goal

WANT TO BE INVOLVED, BUT NOT SURE HOW?

If you're excited about getting involved, but you're not sure where to start, here are some suggestions! The truth is, there are several creative ways to contribute to our IMPACT campaign.

Here are a few:

DECREASE

Is there something in your daily life that you can take advantage of less frequently? By decreasing a weekly expense, regardless of what it may be, you can save a significant amount of money to contribute to IMPACT.

Things I can decrease:

DELAY

Are there any plans that you might be making that involve a financial commitment? If so, prayerfully consider delaying these plans and use that extra income to contribute.

Things I can delay:

DONATE

Another way you can contribute to IMPACT is by giving existing assets like real estate or stock. Giving the asset to the TBCH-- and then letting the TBCH sell it-- eliminates potential capital gains taxes and can increase the after-tax proceeds.

Things I can donate:

Make an IMPACT

DELIBERATE—TALK WITH GOD

First we ask that you go to God and ask that His will be done in your life. It's important that you are striving to follow the direction He has for you and that you find the doors He wants you to walk through.

DEFINE—WHAT SACRIFICE LOOKS LIKE FOR YOU

What changes can you make in your life that will better enable you to invest in what you believe in? How can you give in ways that will make a difference in you?

DETERMINE—A STARTING POINT

Not all of our gifts will be of the same amount, but every one of us can meaningfully invest in proportion to the resources God has given us to work with. Your three-year commitment is to be a demonstration of the definition of sacrifice that God has revealed to you.

DECIDE—CREATE A PERSONAL GIVING PLAN

Prayerfully establish a three-year plan of giving. Remember, we are not just caring for children and families in need, we are investing in the future of our community and impacting generations to come.

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.”

Matthew 6:33-34



Devotions



As a friend of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes we encourage you to travel on a fourteen day journey through God's Word. The following pages contain a Biblical example that will bring us to the heart of our Savior. It is a process laid out for us in [Psalm 100:4](#). The Psalmist writes; "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name." Days 1 - 4 focuses our attention on a Heart of Gratitude. Beginning on Day 5 and concluding on Day 7 our focus will be on Worship. The last segment of our journey is about giving and covers days 8 - 14. Begin your journey with us tomorrow as we seek the direction of God. God has a plan for you as it relates to the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes.

“And he fell down on his face at
His feet, giving Him thanks: and he
was a Samaritan.”

Luke 17:16



God
Notices
Gratitude
Todd Pendergrass
Director of Development

As a child my parents always taught me the importance of saying *thank you*. We never could open a gift or receive a toy without an unstated commitment that a thank you note would soon follow. In today's society it is becoming less and less a part of the culture to simply say *thank you*. Though others may have passed on saying these two simple words, the necessity for us to say them still exists.

When we look at the life and ministry of Jesus we find an incredible example of how to approach our heavenly Father. **We approach the throne of God by simply saying "thank you."**

Before Jesus performed many miracles His first act was to pray and give thanks to His heavenly Father. Though Jesus set the example we have somehow lost that sense of gratitude. Our scripture today shares the story of ten lepers who Jesus healed. Though they all were healed, only one said "Thank you." The Samaritan who gave thanks also received something else, not only a healed body but through his gratitude Jesus made him "whole." **God notices gratitude.**

Our challenge from this day is to say "thank you." Not "thank you" after the miracles but "thank you" before we even know how God will work out each situation in our lives.

A hymn written by Johnson Oatman Jr. says it best:

Count your blessings name them one by one,
Count your blessings, see what God hath done!
Count your blessings name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.

“Rejoice evermore, to pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”
I Thessalonians 5:16-18



Step Into The River

Dr. Gerald Stow
Former President/
Treasurer of TBCH

The lady next door was negative about everything. Her neighbor sought to help her develop a more positive attitude. One bright sunny day the neighbor looked outside and said, "Isn't this a beautiful glorious day?" She replied, "Yes but it's got to be raining somewhere."

In 1 Thessalonians 5:19 we are challenged not to "Quench the Spirit" restricting the power of God in our lives. There are things we can do to keep the river of power flowing; rejoice always; pray about everything and give thanks in everything. The world is filled with "naysayers." We have never done it that way before; it costs too much; it just won't work. Here are some ways to make it work. Rejoice evermore means living life in the Spirit, and it is like stepping into a river with a very swift current. We can maintain this flow of joy by being in constant prayer. Rejoice and pray at all times in all circumstances. In the misfortunes of life we can have an attitude of gratitude.

**...rejoice always; pray about everything
and give thanks in everything...**

So what are you thankful for in your life?

How about your family, friends, church, Jesus, Bible, freedom, America, your vocation? The list is endless. Joy flows in your life like a mighty river when you have an attitude of gratitude. This happens when you focus on what our Lord focused on: the hurting, helpless, homeless people.

Some years ago, Vance Havner said that he made a picture of his wife on the last trip they took before she died. He said he never had the film developed until several months later. When the pictures came back there she was smiling and so beautiful. All those months the joy that came to him in that moment had been stored away in the darkness of a closet, just waiting to be discovered. Turn your negative into a positive. Step into the river by having an attitude of gratitude.

“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, And into his courts with praise: Be thankful unto him, and bless his name.”

Psalm 100:4



Day 3
Gratitude

Never Forget
Where You
Came From

Jeff Epps
Ranch Director, “Double B”
Boy’s Ranch

If someone were to ask what my thoughts were regarding gratitude, my mind would certainly be drawn toward the service and sacrifice that many of our military personnel make to ensure and protect the freedom and safety we as Americans get to experience on a daily basis. However, in the busy world we live in today, these sacrifices are often overlooked or forgotten.

I often wonder as we journey through our Christian lives, how many times we overlook or forget the sacrifices our Lord made for us. Do we assume that God should just know that we realize what was selflessly given for us on the Cross, even if we don't acknowledge it in our daily lives? Of course He knows what we think, He knows us better than we know ourselves. But, should we not humbly and joyfully give thanks to Him on a daily basis for where He delivered us from and for His unending grace, mercy, and love. Our salvation and the sacrifices Christ made for us came at a costly price and we should be drawn to worship Him and give Him all the praise and glory that is due His holy name.

There should be no mistake in daily lives to whom we belong and this should be evident in our prayer life, in how we treat others, and in how we live our lives.

We should always be grateful for the sacrifices that our Lord made for us and that He provided a way for us to spend eternity with Him. We never want to forget that He delivered us from a life of eternal separation from the Lord, and for that we should always be grateful.

Prayer: Lord, I pray that through my life, I will acknowledge that you are the Lord of my life and You are so worthy of all my praise. I will forever be grateful that Christ came and died on the Cross for my sins, then rose again to reign victorious over sin. Amen.

“And let the peace of God rule in
your hearts, to which also all of you
are called in one body; and be all
of you thankful”
Colossians 3:15



Day 4
Gratitude

Gratitude
With
Attitude
Mary Wasson
Regional Development
Officer

If we examine the word gratitude, it is interesting how you can find the word attitude, less one "t", as part of the root word. For me, the "t" is a reminder to be thankful! In all things, be thankful. Now, this is fairly easy when things are going our way and we are enjoying the path that God is leading us down. Don't you agree? Well, the "t" can also be a reminder for us to trust when the path is not so enjoyable, it is scary and unknown, a road of complete uncertainty. The days we cannot even see the path due to a thick fog that blocks our view are the days we have to cry out to God to take us by the hands and lead us – trust.

To be thankful and to trust describe being grateful with a positive attitude.

Many times we have never had to deal with true suffering; however, we have a bad attitude, one of ungratefulness and untrustworthiness. On the other hand, many children who have walked into a home on a campus of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes who deserve to have an ungrateful and untrustworthy attitude choose to see a glimmer of hope in an otherwise dark world they have left behind. In time, God blesses these children as he gently knocks on their hearts' doors and introduces himself to them. He honors a beautiful attitude, an attitude of being grateful and trusting others. He teaches his children to be grateful in all circumstances, knowing it is part of his plan for our life. Through gratefulness comes obedience to follow his will as we want what our Heavenly Father wants for us. The hands of trust are opened to Him as we allow Him to lead us to a victorious life, walking hand in hand with our Savior. Let us choose today to have a heart full of gratitude with an attitude that mirrors Christ – an attitude of patience, perseverance, hope, joy, peace, and most importantly, love.

Prayer: Dear Father, thank you for teaching me to be grateful in all things. Teach me to have an attitude of gratitude in all things, big and small. Thank you for the children at Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes who teach us daily that you can turn something so beautiful from something that once was so painful. May we learn from their changed lives, lives that have trusted in you and you alone. Amen

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Romans 12:1



Day 5
Worship

A Living Sacrifice

Dr. Darren Andrus
Campus Director

Our greatest purpose on this planet is to offer our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to the Lord. In the Old Testament, sacrifices were slain, but today we are called to be living sacrifices. When we do this, it makes sense of the service we do, how tired we feel, the weight we bear, and the sacrifices we make for God's kingdom.

I think of our House Parents at the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes when it comes to living sacrifices. Erica, once a resident at the Children's Homes, is now a young, successful professional adult to the credit of the living sacrifices her house parents made. I had the pleasure of meeting Erica several months ago and this is what she had to say:

I was abused by my biological father from the time I was 3 to 8 years-old. At age 8, I was removed from my home and lived in several foster homes. Through ages 8 to 11, I attempted suicide twice and was abused once more by a foster parent. I ran away from the foster home and lived on the streets for two weeks before being picked up by police officers. I was scared and when the police came for me I instinctively tried to protect myself and was arrested for assaulting a police officer.

I spent one month in Juvenile Court and then I was taken from Juvenile Court to a mental health hospital for substance abuse treatment and therapy for post traumatic stress disorder. I came to the Tennessee Baptist Children's Home when I left the hospital, and lived in the Davis Cottage from ages 11 to 18. While at the Children's Homes I had my ups and downs. I attempted suicide three more times. I was hospitalized after each event... **But the House Parents of Davis Cottage never, ever gave up on me!** At age seventeen I gave my life to follow Christ and have been living for him ever since. My House Parents at the Children's Homes literally saved my life. I am forever indebted to them and want to spend my life advocating for children who have been abused and forgotten.

Erica has a powerful story because of the living sacrifices her house parents made several years ago. What about you? Are you presenting your body today as a living sacrifice that pleases the Lord? **Romans 12:1** is equally applicable to you and me. Today and every day, let's offer our bodies as a living sacrifice for Jesus.

“But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ” Philippians 3:7-8



Day 6

Worship

Trophies

Jeff McGinnis

Regional Development
Officer

Growing up in a sports oriented family led to receiving my self-worth through accomplishments, awards, and winning. The daily grind to get better was all for the reward of playing in games, pats on the back, and trophies. In a split second my freshman year of college it was all taken away. I heard the snap and as the x-rays later revealed I had a terrible break in my ankle. The doctor broke the news that I may not play again, but after 4 months in a cast, 2 months in a walking boot, and hours of therapy I was able to play again. Little did I know at the time that it would start my quest to find Jesus as my personal Lord and Savior.

It was 2 years after this event when the Lord called me. I was able to play basketball again at a competitive level, but now I had a different reason for playing. God revealed Himself to me and allowed me to play for Him instead of the "trophies." I was invited to go on two mission trips to share the Gospel through sports evangelism.

Even though I thought I had let go of the trophies years later my parents gave me my trophies from childhood. As I started my own family and was about to move I had to make the decision to take them with me or throw them away. Knowing that I had all I needed in Christ I was able to walk them to the trash can.

What are you holding on to today or what accomplishments are you trying to receive that would take the place of Jesus being all you need?

Prayer: Lord, thank you for sending Your Son as all we need in this life. Nothing we gain on our own is worth the value of Jesus and His sacrifice for us. May my work every day be for your glory and not the "trophies" of this world.

“Give unto the Lord the glory due
unto his name; worship the Lord in
the beauty of holiness”

Psalms 29:2



Day 7

Worship

What's
For
Dinner?

Kelly Campbell

Regional Vice President

The cafeteria at Greenfield High School was in the basement. You descended from the world of academia into this large open room filled with tables and chairs; and that distinctive school cafeteria smell of hot rolls and grease traps all rolled up into one. But on this particular night something special was happening. Several youth from churches in the area came together to worship, and before the night was over many of us found ourselves lying prone before the presence of a Holy and Righteous God. No singing, no preaching, just humbled worshippers praying and seeking after Him.

Having been in the ministry for over 30 years, I have seen many different worship services, conducted in many different ways. However, I can count on one hand the number of times where I was in a worship service and a true movement of God happened. Truthfully, on every occasion very little was said by the preacher, or anyone else for that matter; it mainly was a response from the people to the undeniable presence of God.

Psalms 29:2 is a command from God to worship Him for all the right reasons. We are to worship Him because all glory, honor and praise have their beginning and ending in the Holy God. We give back to God in worship what He already has, His glory. We bask in that glory as we are privileged to see God robed in the beauty of His own holiness. Our only response to being in His presence and seeing Him in all His majesty is the act of worship.

Why not take a moment and simply live out the command in Ps. 29:2?

Let's acknowledge God for who He is, and bathe in His presence as we admire the righteousness of God.

We might just find ourselves on our faces before Him humbly enjoying the privilege of being there, no matter when or where that might be. Maybe in the school cafeteria.

“But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?

1 John 3:17



Day 8
Giving

Open Heart,
Open Hands

Greg McCoy

Pastor, First Baptist Church
Portland

Everywhere we turn, people are in need. We see them on the street corners of America's cities. We see them on the television screen as news reports highlight daily tragedy. We see them in our hometowns. People come to our churches needing clothes, food and utility bills paid. Many families struggle to make ends meet. There is often too much month left at the end of the money. Very often, the ones in need are brothers and sisters in Christ who sit across the room from us in our Sunday School classes.

Maybe, however, your needs have been met, and you even enjoy a number of wants. The question 1 John 3:17 poses is this: "Do we have any responsibility to those whose needs are not met?" John assumes the answer that if we claim Jesus as Savior, the presence of God abiding in us will cause us to respond to our brother's need with a heart of compassion.

To have compassion is to have a deep sympathy and sorrow accompanied by the desire to alleviate suffering. Compassion is not just feeling sorry for someone. It is not saying, "I know how you feel," or "I hope things turn around for you."

Compassion leads to action! Compassion opens our heart, which results in open hands.

This verse makes me wonder. Have I opened my heart and opened my hands lately? Have I recently met a need for someone personally? Have I enlisted a few friends to assist me with a need that was bigger than I could handle on my own? Have I been faithful to give to my church's ministry budget, part of which goes to meet the needs of the poor?

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, You are full of compassion. Fill me with the desire to open my heart and to open my hands. Help me to resist the urge to hold too tightly to the goods of this world while my brothers and sisters are in need. May You love people through me as You enable me to be a generous giver to those who need what You have provided. Thank You, Lord, for meeting all of my needs. Amen.

“One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.”

Proverbs 11:24-25



Day 9
Giving

The
Greater the
Generosity
the Greater
the Blessing

Dr. Bryant Millsaps
President/Treasurer
of TBCH

One of the most familiar passages of scripture in the Holy Bible is found in Acts 20:35, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Jesus clearly understood that the faithful use of God's blessings in our lives and the lives of others was a key to a full and rewarding life.

Focused stewardship of the blessings that God has poured out on us is a primary indicator of a person's genuine appreciation for His provisions. Many years ago, John Wesley wrote, "When the possessor of Heaven and earth brought you into being and placed you in this world, He placed you here not as owner but as steward."

Stewardship is not only about appreciation, it also reflects what our real life goals are. Do we see the blessings that He has poured out on us as resources for His gain or ours? Do we see the resources (money, time, energy, health, etc.) that He has provided for us as something to be spent for our glory or His?

Ron Blue in his landmark book **Master Your Money** answers these questions very clearly: stewardship is the "use of God-given resources for the accomplishment of God-given goals." As you read today's devotional, the question that you need to reach a definitive answer to is: **"With all of my blessings, in whatever form they take, am I using them to glorify His name and assist in accomplishing His goals?"**

Your answer to that single question will have an eternally significant impact.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, show me today what you want me to do with all that You have provided for me and my family so that Your goals and Kingdom objectives can be accomplished in the world in general and in my life specifically.

“Blessed is he who has regard for the weak; the Lord delivers him in times of trouble. The Lord will protect him and preserve his life; he will bless him in the land and not surrender him to the desire of his foes”

Psalm 41:1-2



Day 10

Giving

To Give and
to Receive

Dr. Gerald Stow

Former President/Treasurer
of TBCH

I want to share a true story that comes from a young child as she recalls:

"I am nine years old and I am in the 2nd grade. I should actually be in the 4th grade, but since this is the third school I have been placed in during one school year, I have gotten really behind on my school work. My feelings get hurt every day as all the children laugh at me because I am so much bigger than they are. I had to be taken away from my parents because my daddy drank all the time and he would become so violent and he would even touch me in a way that I thought was wrong. I was so afraid and felt so alone, but what could I do? One day I finally had the courage to tell my teacher and that is when they removed me from my home. I struggle daily because I feel like all this is my fault and maybe I should have remained silent. I do not want to share my name with you because you may know me as I live in the same county where you reside."

In the months that passed, a Godly family became foster parents to this young nine year old girl. Within months, their loving Christian home began to make a positive impact in her young life.

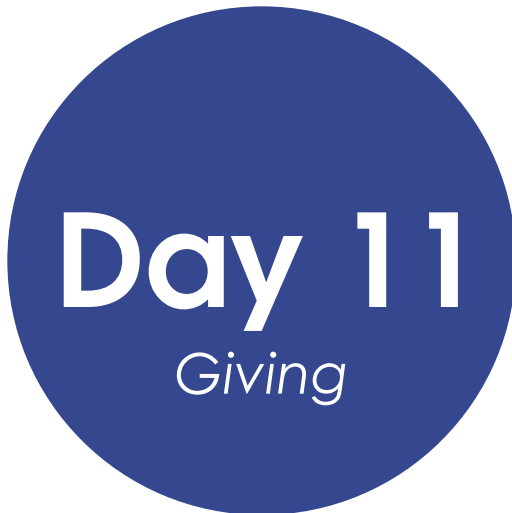
They made a beautiful sacrifice by giving of their time, resources, home, and most importantly, their love to make a difference in the life of one.

The unselfish giving of our resources, especially those in need like this young girl, is a recurring theme in God's plan for our lives too. He promises in his living word that he will help the helpless and he uses people, people like you and me, to accomplish this purpose.

In closing, a dear friend reminded me one day to always keep my palms turned upward. Why you may ask? When God chooses to give us something, our hands are already open to respond. If he wants us to give in return, our hands are already open and he does not need to pry something out of our tightly clinched fists. Today, what is in your hands that God wants to use to bless someone in need and then in thanksgiving back, bless you in return?

“Give and it will be given to you.
A good measure, pressed down,
shaken together and running over,
will be poured into your lap. For
with the measure you use, it will be
measured to you...”

Luke 6:38



Priceless Gift

Mary Wasson
Regional Development
Officer

God used a certain day in my journey of visiting donors to help me gain a greater understanding of giving to others. When we hear this word "giving," we immediately allow financial resources to become the interpretation of this word. As I was visiting with several donors this day, I came upon a small home tucked away far in the country. At first glance of their giving to Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, it was not a large monetary amount. I am always touched by every gift, though, knowing that God can impact gifts, whether big or small, when they are given in complete love and devotion to him. I knocked on the door and this sweet lady answered the door with her hands literally full. She was keeping several of her grandchildren ranging in ages from 1-5 years; however, she was very warm and welcoming as we visited at her front doorstep. I shared with her how much we appreciated their family's support and I always find it so fascinating how Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes is special to each family. Her reply sent chills down my spine. She said, "My husband, Bryan, was a child at Tennessee Baptist Children's Home from the gentle age of 5 until 17.

He cannot give much; however, he wants to help, if even with a little because he told me, 'This is where I gained my salvation.'"

As tears welled up in both of our eyes, I hugged her and told her how touched I was to hear that he wanted to give because he was given the most priceless gift ever.

This is just one example of how children who live at Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes are impacted in a positive way due to negative circumstances they have had to face. May your gift deliver another priceless gift, the gift of eternal life, in a child today.

Prayer: Dear Father, thank you for every gift given in love to Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. Through these beautiful financial blessings we receive, in return, you are using them to transform the life of a child as you welcome them into your loving arms...Amen

“He and his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, ‘Cornelius!’ Cornelius stared at him in fear. ‘What is it, Lord?’ he asked. The angel answered, ‘Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God.’” Acts 10:2-4



Day 12
Giving

You Never
Know What
a Gift
Might Do

Carl Willis
Regional Vice President

This passage in Acts tells a familiar story of Cornelius, who was selected by the Lord, to invite Peter to come to share the Gospel with him and his household. It's important to note that the Lord chose a Roman, not a Jewish believer or even a believer in Christ, to do this. Cornelius had never even heard the Gospel, but was a God-fearing man and was open to His leadership in his life.

That just proves to me that God can use anyone to accomplish His kingdom's work.

It is obvious from the scripture that he prayed "regularly." I have to believe that he prayed about whom to give to. As we enter this time of asking others to give or to give ourselves, we need to be mindful of Cornelius' practice – to pray regularly. I truly believe the Lord will lead us to give or to approach others to give through our prayer time.

My wife and I recently were asked to give to a couple who are raising support for the Mission field. We both prayed about this and then talked about it. The Lord led us both to the same dollar amount without ever discussing a figure. Now I just know that was the Lord because normally she would want to give more than me. She's much more generous. But the Lord had urged me to give bigger this time and it matched perfectly with her amount.

Will you give or ask for a gift knowing that each gift has the potential for an eternal impact?

Whosoever sows sparingly will also
reap sparingly and whosoever sows
bountiful will also reap bountiful.
2 Corinthis 9:6



Day 13
Giving

God
Provides
Theresa Davis
Regional Development
Officer

Losing a job is never easy. Actually it is very painful, especially when it is a job you are passionate about and love.

Three years ago I thought I would die. I thought my family would go hungry, and I thought for sure we would have some sort of catastrophic illness that would cause us, as an uninsured family, to lose our home and everything we had worked so hard for. I was devastated and hurt by what God was allowing to happen in our lives.

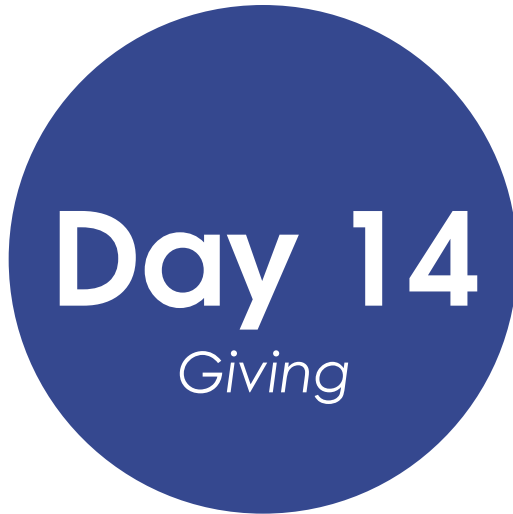
Three years has passed and to this date I am amazed at how we made it. No one went without. We had meals on the table, food in our pantry, the children had their yearly check-ups on time and the offering check was dropped in on Sunday morning.

There were weeks that I wondered how we would meet our financial obligations, but I prayed and God provided.

I can't say that period of time in our lives was easy. There were "wants" that we could not buy, but through our faithful giving God provided our needs. He provided in ways that I never dreamed he would. Looking back I know God allowed this period to take place to teach my family about perseverance, growing in our faith, and believing in God's plan. I am thankful we were faithful in our giving, even when I was unsure we would make it through the week. Our God is good and merciful and without him as my strength, my refuge, I don't know if this trial would have been bearable.

“For where your treasure is, there
your heart will be also.”

Matthew 6:21



What and
Where
is Your
Treasure?

Dr. Bryant Millsaps
President/Treasurer
of TBCH

In Chapters 5, 6, and 7 of the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus teaches the disciples, the crowds that surrounded Him on the mount, and us some very important lessons about the choices that we make in life. Of the 19 topics that he addressed, one was the questions posed above.

What do we treasure? The answer to that question tells us more than what our value system is. It tells us what we value most about our lives and the lives of those we love. It tells us where our heart is in relationship to God's plan for our lives. And it tells us, given the choice, whether we will choose our way or God's.

Where is our treasure? Are the things we value most committed to the temporary things of this world? Or are we placing value on those things and actions that honor and glorify our Heavenly Father and His son and our Lord, **Jesus Christ**.

These two questions are very important, but not nearly as important as our answers to them. Are we investing not just our financial resources, but our gifts, talents, and passion to the advancement of the His Kingdom? The decision is ours to make.

Prayer: Holy Spirit guide our stewardship of God's gifts to us so that our heart and priorities will mirror the heart and priorities of God.



FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

Dr. Bryant Millsaps, President/Treasurer
Todd Pendergrass, Director of Development
615-376-3140 or impact@tbch4kids.org
www.TBCH4Kids.org