



CONNECTED

July—September 2019

An Experience Unparalleled

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I never tire of standing at the door of the empty tomb! Praise God, He's alive! Forever more! Christ Jesus lives today!

In less than 5 months I will lead a group of approximately 50 people on a tour of Israel. For serious Christian people, especially preachers, there are no words to describe the impact of a vintage *Holy Land Tour*. To travel through the land of the Bible, walk where Jesus walked and re-live many of the great Bible stories will inspire and challenge like nothing else. I have had the blessed privilege of being in many places around the world, and have enjoyed many tremendous experiences; but none of them come even close to a tour of Israel. I hold graduate degrees from Liberty University where I learned many things, but an intense week touring Israel tops by far any course I have ever taken anywhere. It is truly a Bible education within itself.

We will spend the first part of our tour in the Galilee. Our hotel is in Tiberius right on the shores of the beautiful Sea of Galilee. From there we will visit places such as Capernaum, Nazareth, Megiddo, the Jezreel Valley, Mount Carmel, the Golan Heights and Caesarea Philippi.

In the middle of our tour, we will move south through the Jordan River Valley with a stop at Beit Shean. We will see the Dead Sea, visit

Qumran and go on top of Masada. Our headquarters for the rest of our tour will be Jerusalem, the city of God. We will be on the Mount of Olives, see the giant Olive tree at Gethsemane, stop at the Western Wailing Wall go inside the Antonia Fortress and go inside the empty tomb. All along the way there will be explanations of where we are and of the biblical event(s) which happened there. I have prepared a tour manual with explanations of the sites we will visit, and all along the way I will be orienting us as to where we are in light of the Bible.

On Tuesday, November 12 at 8:55 PM we will depart Houston's Bush Intercontinental Airport on Turkish Air. After a 5 hour layover in Istanbul we will fly to Tel Aviv, arrive at 5:35 PM on Wednesday, clear customs and go to our room for a good night's sleep. Just over a week later, on Thursday, November 21 we will arrive back in Houston at 7:05 PM.

The tour is almost full; however, there are still a few available seats. Through our tour operator I was able to arrange for a 60 passenger bus. Also things sometimes happen where someone has to drop out. Things like that create empty seats.

If you are interested in being a part of this tour, you should contact me right away by email (lesterhutson@gmail.com) or text: 713-206-8367. If you do not already have one, it takes time to get a passport which is essential to the tour. Also, getting a visa takes time. The price is \$4,499.00 per person based on double occupancy. This includes 3 meals a day, airport taxes, gratuities, hotels, tour bus, guide and airfares. It does not include bottle water, soft drinks and other such nonessentials. Of course, it does not include souvenirs. All essentials are met. It would be possible to make this tour with no extra money; however, most people want to buy personal items while in Israel. There will be ample opportunities for shopping.



ONE NATION UNDER GOD!

"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Jesus

BELIEVERS IN AN INCREASINGLY GOD-REJECTING WORLD

At no point in the history of humanity since Adam and Eve have believers been in the majority. They have always been a part of God rejecting societies, some more evil and tyrannical than others. From Creation to The Flood, society degenerated to the point where the Bible says, *“And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,”* **Genesis 6:5**. Just eight believers in a sea of God-rejecting, sex-crazed, violent, self-engaged, pride-filled skeptics. As soon as Noah and his family got off the Ark, Nimrod arose on the scene and society built the God rejecting Tower of Babel. Follow history since then to today; one godless society after another: Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, China, Japan, Genghis Khan. Do a little research on the Russian Czars, read about Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany, acquaint yourself with Joseph Stalin or the Mayan Indians. It seems with few exceptions that Israel has led the pack. Read the book of Judges. The kings that followed Solomon will make you sick at your stomach. God rejection has been the order of the ages.

Early America with her God conscious and era of freedom was somewhat an exception to the rule, but even America had plenty of dark sides. However, even the dark sides of America 100 years ago look pretty good today. Today’s society including America and the rest of the world is truly a fulfillment of Romans 1. America increasingly turned from God and has now become a society with a reprobate mind. *“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,”* **Psalms 111:10**. As a whole today, men do not know how to think. Their reasoning is fatally flawed. Good has been turned into evil, and evil is good. Even America is on a collision course with disaster and destruction. It’s just a matter of time.

Do not misunderstand me. The godless conditions in which we live are no excuse for Christians to remain silent or opt out. We are God’s ambassadors, His representatives to a lost and dying world. We are to *“be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear,”* **1 Peter 3:15**. Jesus said believers should be the light and salt of the earth, **Matthew 5:13–16**.

Christian should never be silent on truth. Nowhere in the Bible do you find that believers should never mix religion and politics. The Christian side is always the side of truth and righteousness regardless of political parties. I am first a Christian; not a Republican, Democrat, Libertarian or other party politician. Unless it pits them directly against the laws of God, Christians are to obey civil government (**Romans 13**), *“Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s”* **Matthew 22:21**.

Usually when believers stand up for truth and righteousness, they are scorned and even ridiculed. They are accused of mixing religion and politics which is supposed to be a *no-no*. The thought of standing out like a sore thumb and being scorned scares the pants off most believers. Too many are as silent as a tomb. Most of the people where they work and in their neighborhoods don’t even know they’re Christians let alone what they believe.

Multitudes of believers have been severely persecuted and even killed. Regardless of the risks, they have been willing to stand up for what was right. No doubt at Judgment Day many of them will rise up and call us cowards and poor representatives of the God whom we serve.

Once again we are about to enter a political season in America. Let the voices of those who believe in truth and righteousness be heard. God honors those who stand up for Him. We do not have to go along with the God rejection of our day. We do not have to be silent. Noah is positive proof that you can take a stand for God even when you have to stand alone.

WE HAVE THE HIGH GROUND

It doesn’t take a scholar to realize that those who *have the high ground* have the advantage. People have recognized this reality for a long time. Many ancient cities had an *acropolis*. This high ground gave them the advantage of advanced notice of attackers, a place of safety and refuge and distinct military advantage. Many believe the union victory at Gettysburg turned on their capture of the high Ridge in the city. King David said of God, *“The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower,”* **Psalms 18:2**.

Every other concept and system that deals with salvation, life beyond the grave or eternal life is vastly inferior to biblical Christianity. Imagine a system like Judaism where salvation depends on your ability to both have and maintain it; every one of us knows we’re not good enough to get it or keep it. How about reincarnation? Doesn’t the thought of coming back as a cow, cobra or cockroach thrill you! I don’t get very lit up about thinking I might come back as a crow or wolf. How about those Eastern religions which promise you stasis when you die? With tongue-in-cheek I say, *“Going to a place where you are not known and where you know nothing really fills your heart with hope.”* Suppose you are a really good atheist? It’s all right here. Now isn’t that a hoot? Just a blink with diseases, ageing, nursing homes and trouble on every side! I’m glad I’m not an atheist with zero hope.

I’m a Christian, and I have the high ground where peace, joy and hope are.



My son Mark and I. Colorado
Dry flies. June 25, 2019

Contact us at:

lesterhutson@gmail.com

I'M MAKING A SPECIAL GIFT AT THE RODGERS MISSIONS CONFERENCE

My plans are to attend the Rodgers Baptist Church Missions Conference July 22-24. I will have several hundred copies of my *Survey of Bible History* books. This is a 3-book set which covers Genesis and includes a couple of chapters on Job. Each of the 3 books as 13 chapters for a total of 39 chapters. They move through Genesis on a story by story basis. Each major story is addressed and includes a systematic outline study plus a prose summary. They are prepared in lesson form and each lesson has 20 group participation questions. They are designed as teaching material for Sunday schools or small groups.

These books will be in the book room at Rodgers. I am giving free copies to each pastor who wishes to use them as a teaching curriculum. I am providing enough free copies so that each student in a Sunday school or small group can have a copy of each of the 3 books in the set. Any pastor who would like a set of these free books should see me at the Missions Conference. There are no strings attached.

THREE YEARS & COUNTING

When I retired from the pastorate of Berean Baptist Church after 33 years, I expected to spend the rest of my life mostly writing good Christian materials. It was my heart to spend some of my time in evangelism, conducting seminars and workshops and doing everything within my power to help preachers, especially young preachers. For a few years I worked with the Christian Law Association in many places throughout the country.

I didn't see another pastorate in my future; however, God seemed to have other ideas. I was a member of Northwest Baptist Church in Houston when Pastor Tim Dulany announced that he was moving to Panama as a missionary. After a lengthy pastor search, God made it unmistakably clear that I must assume the pastorate of Northwest. Next month that will be 3 years ago, and I'm still here. When I accepted this position, I told the church that my time here would be *temporary*. Obviously I'm not very good at defining *temporary*.

My goal is to help Northwest Baptist Church find a pastor with the potential for a much longer stay. I am working toward that end with considerable diligence. I would appreciate your prayers in this regard. My heart is to as soon as possible return to a ministry of writing and limited evangelistic work.

"Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you! Pericles." (430 B.C.)

Yes, they really say things like this!

"We must be able to arrest people before they commit crimes. By registering guns and knowing who has them, we can do that . . . If they have guns, they are pretty likely to commit a crime."

Vermont State Senator Mary Ann Carlson

A BOOK I HAVE READ & HIGHLY RECOMMEND

A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23

Phillip Keller

ISBN 0 310 26790 0 ([Amazon link](#))

Zondervan Publishing House

Many years ago a friend recommended this little book to me; I'm glad he did. It is truly insightful. So many of the analogies of the Bible are directly tied to the natural world. For people who have lived in cities and urban areas all of their lives, much of the truth of God Word goes unrealized. They have almost no grasp of different kinds of soils, grapes and vineyards, farming especially when the seeds are sown by hand in a broadcast fashion and the tending of sheep in mountain areas. The relationships between sheep and a Shepherd are totally foreign to most Bible students.

Phillip Keller wrote this book from first-hand experience. He grew up and lived in East Africa surrounded by simple native herders whose customs closely resembled those of their counterparts in the Middle East. Furthermore for about 8 years, Mr. Keller made his living as a sheep owner and sheep rancher. He was uniquely qualified to share so many shepherd insights into the well known and loved 23rd Psalm. Keller had first-hand experience in every phase of sheep management. His book will dispel many false allusions and claims about Psalm 23; but best of all, it will share beautiful insight into this popular Psalm of King David who was also a shepherd, and who wrote this song from a shepherd's perspective.

A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23 walks through the 6 verses of this great psalm phrase by phrase. From a shepherd's viewpoint Mr. Keller elaborates and sheds tremendous light and insight on every phrase. What's so special about, "*He leadeth me beside the still waters?*" Why not *running waters*? Keller explains it. Why anoint the sheep's head with oil? Once you understand *bot flies*, you will see. Once you read this book, "*Yea, though I walk to the Valley of the shadow of death*" will take on a brand-new understanding for you.

The shepherd-sheep analogy is not limited to Psalm 23; it is found throughout the Scriptures. Understanding shepherds and sheep not only provides a better grasp of Psalm 23; it provides a better grasp of the entire Bible, especially places like Isaiah 53 and John 10. It will also add great insight into the relationship between a pastor and a church.

This is not a long book, only 142 pages; but it's great, real dynamite and very encouraging. I recommend it without reservation.

Here are links to the Calvinism videos:

<http://www.lesterhutson.org/products/videos/>

<http://nwbchouston.org/media/nwb-sermons-2/>

<http://nwbchouston.org/media/answers-that-build-faith-2019/>

I CAN'T IMAGINE BEING BORED

It has become painfully obvious to me that my time on earth is going to run out before I complete everything that is in my heart. The closer to the finish line I get the more urgent the words of **Psalm 90:12** are to me: *“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”* Even a long life is pretty short.

Everywhere I look there are good things that need to be done. It is not a matter of hunting for things to do; they are already there. It's just a matter of seeing them. There are always people in need of help, more things to learn, books to read, an unending flow of things in need of repair, relationships in need of attention and a steady flow of basic life essentials. As the years pile up, so do doctor appointments, therapy and attention to diet and exercise. It is doubtful that very many of us spend enough time in the Word of God and in prayer, not to mention mentoring and bringing people to Christ. When you pastor a church, Pandora's Box is always wide open.

For Mrs. Hutson and me, the past three months have been as busy as *a bee in a tar bucket*. Like everyone else in April, we dealt with taxes and other domestic issues. On this Easter Sunday, I decided to do a dramatic impersonation of the apostle Paul (video: [The Last Passover](#)). It was such a blessing to me to rehearse the life-changing impact which Jesus Christ made on his life. May brought birthdays for each of us, graduations and a wonderful time with Bro. Don McFarland and Parkview Baptist Church in Childress, Texas. At the end of June, we were able to spend a few days of quiet time in the gorgeous San Juan Mountains of southwestern Colorado. In our church, we entertained several missionaries and other guest speakers. There were more funerals, and my heart is always moved when there are people with major sicknesses and hurts of other sorts.

Every year Northwest Baptist Church hosts an *Answers that Build Faith Seminar*. This year our subject was *Calvinism and Choice*. Our speaker was Attorney Hutson Smelley. In this seminar he actually put the TULIP on trial. In their own words he used the Calvinist definitions and proof texts. He examined them in light of the immediate contexts and overall context of the Scriptures. The complete seminar was videotaped and is available on my website: lesterhutson.org. Contact NWBC (713-686-5885 or nwbcsec@gmail.com) to order DVDs. The [Deconstructing Calvinism - Third Edition](#) book is available on Amazon.

Lord willing, in April 2020, I will present my seminar on *The Reliability of Your Bible*. In this seminar, I deal with God giving of his Word, preservation and translation. The seminar will take a look at source texts and target texts, formal equivalency and dynamic equivalency, the Masoretic texts, majority manuscripts, Textus Receptus, the King James translators, Westcott and Hort and much more.

I thank God for giving me three more months to labor in his vineyard. He owes me nothing; I owe him everything. I am aware that every day is a gift from Him. God forbid that I ever succumb to idle time with nothing to do.



DR. DAVID GIBBS, JR. COMING TO NORTHWEST BAPTIST CHURCH

What a joy it is for me to announce that my friend Dr. David Gibbs, Jr. will be our guest speaker at Northwest Baptist Church on Sunday night, October 27! Each of you is invited and encouraged to attend this special service.

Dr. Gibbs is one of the greatest spiritual champions of our age. In the legal world of the last half-century, God has used Dr. Gibbs as much or more than any other person to secure and defend religious liberty. He is founder and president of the Christian Law Association. He has helped thousands of pastors, churches and individual Christians who have faced legal difficulties because of their stand for the faith. He has done it at no charge; the ministry of the Christian Law Association is sustained by the free will giving of God's people. Legal work is very expensive, yet Dr. Gibbs has continued to help God's people who face legal opposition to their work for the Lord.

The Lord has blessed me to personally know several of his great heroes. I have worked with David Gibbs, Jr. I know he is a true champion. In an entire lifetime, it is not too often that you get to personally meet a person of his stature. If it all possible, I encourage you to attend this special service. Many years ago when I was pastor of Berean Baptist Church, I had opportunity to host Dr. Henry Morris who is now with the Lord. Dr. Morris is the true champion of modern creationism. I consider that meeting one of the special privileges of my life. Dr. Gibbs is in that same league.

I encourage you to mark Sunday night, October 27 on your calendar. We will start at 6 PM. This is one of those events that merits your best efforts to be a part of it.