



AMERICAN BAPTIST MEN-USA

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Greetings, my Brothers In Christ. Please allow me to introduce myself. My friend and companion, Leola, and I have been married for 47 years. We have 2 children. Our daughter, Lisa Norman, 45, is an assistant youth leader with her husband, Randy, in their church, Genesis Fellowship and she holds an executive position with the Mcjunkin Corporation. Our son, Kevin, age 43, has served as Deacon at our church, Bethel Baptist of South Charleston and is a Lt. Col. in the WV Air National guard.

I retired from Bell Atlantic Telephone Company in 1992 after over 26 years of service in both craft and managerial positions. After several interim jobs, I retired from the position of State Administrator for the WV Wing Civil Air Patrol, but continue to be a volunteer for that organization with the rank of 1st Lt.

My Mother began taking me to Bethel Baptist Church of South Charleston when I was 4 years old. I have been a member for 58 years. Currently, I am a Deacon and Head Trustee on the Church Council. I have held various positions, such as Christian Education and Trustee Boards, Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School Teacher, Youth Leader, Usher, Newsletter Editor and faithful Choir member.

My desire to know Jesus Christ was stirred by observations of my Mother's life. She was a living saint on earth. She showed me the love of Christ. A man named Curt Thomas was my mentor at Bethel. He is the one who taught me about Jesus' life and why I should know him as Lord. In 1957, I asked Jesus to forgive me and to come into my heart and my life and be my Lord and Savior, Master of all that I was to be. I was baptized on Christmas eve in that year.

During my early adult life, I was bombarded with sadness and great tribulations, one after another. I became weak and started believing satan's lies, falling into despair for a few years, angry with God. My work took me to a new town for a short while, where I met a young Pastor who saw my hurt and introduced me to a few good men. They and my loving wife helped me to realize that God never left me, I had turned away from Him. I rededicated my life to Christ, again asking Him to allow me to Honor and to Glorify Him in whatever way He chose. He chose Men's Fellowship. Since 1993, I have been active in men's ministries in various forms. Besides working in men's fellowship in my church, participating in many ABM Disaster Relief Missions and over a dozen missions to Nicaragua, I have held positions of Vice-President and President of the ABMen of the Kanawha Valley Association, Vice-President,



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President, and Regional Representative of the ABMen of WV and I have served on the Executive Board of the WV Baptist Convention on the Outreach Commission. I recently completed terms of Vice President and President of ABMen-USA and currently serve as Past-President and Executive Director-Acting.

Although it is difficult for a person to claim one particular passage in the Bible as his or her favorite passage, I claim Matthew 11:28-30 as my favorite scripture, because that is what God put in front of me to read at my darkest time. I read it again "for the first time" and truly believed that He will take my burdens and He will give me rest. I was asked once by a non-Christian, "Who is the God of the Bible?" I replied that He is the "I Am", the "Alpha and Omega", "the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." He created all that was, is and will be. I truly believe that He is a living God who caused himself to be born of a virgin and to live on earth as both God and man. He lived among us as Jesus Christ, preaching love and forgiveness and was chastised and crucified on the cross for my sins. After being buried in a tomb for 3 days, I believe Christ arose from the grave like He said He would, left us the Holy Spirit to guide and to comfort us, and that He sits at the right hand of God the Father on the throne in heaven, waiting for that day which has been chosen, when He will come again, rid the world of satan and sin and take us to Heaven to be with Him eternally. In the meantime, it is our task on earth to tell others about GRACE, "God's Riches At Christ's Expense". We are to strive for perfection, condemning sin and loving the sinner. Sin is sin, whether it be lust of the heart, mind or soul, or sexual immorality, lying, stealing, murder, cheating or even gluttony. We must read and study God's written word, the truth, the Bible, the Gospel, the living word and live by it and teach it. We must forgive others as Jesus forgave those who even took His life. We must pattern ourselves after Christ, live like Him and live for Him. Our task is to let others know what we know.

I give thanks for the opportunity to serve you in the Ministry of ABMen-USA. I pray that I will meet and work with many of you before my time ends. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any problems you may have or praises you may wish to share. I am available to assist you and your local ministry in any way I can. My prayer is for God to use you and me in such a way that He will be honored greatly and glorified each day. Please dedicate yourselves to our mission, "To bring men and boys into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ". If we all will just pursue that goal in truth and spirit, what a blessed day it will be when we see His face.

In His Service
Kenna S. "Lucky" Ray
Past President,

Executive Director-Acting, ABMen-USA