

CBA MISSIONAL INSIGHTS

Missional Insights from the Cumberland Baptist Association

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Missions Focus: Annie Armstrong

This month is a great time to consider the families of those who serve in Missions and Ministry. Our TBC WMU office can help you to connect with children of missionaries so that you could send them something and pray for them. Even back here in the US, children of NAMB church planters have a unique family situation. Children of pastors, missionaries and church staff often miss their parents who are keeping unusual hours and who have lives that in some ways rotates around the ministry of their parents. Have you thought lately about those children? What could you do to lift them up and encourage them, even from a distance. Be creative and reach out. You won't regret it! These young people also need to be lifted up in prayer. Their families are often in the midst of spiritual warfare.

Sermon Ideas

This month's idea is to do a series of messages or Bible Studies on the statements of Jesus that can be difficult to understand. A great resource for this series is the book by F. F. Bruce entitled *Hard Sayings of Jesus*. "Render unto Caesar," The "Camel and the Eye of a Needle," "Casting Pearls Before Swine," and "Turn the Other Cheek" are examples of statements that take us deeper into God's Word and the teaching of Jesus. So many things are misquoted, misunderstood, or ignored that are great teaching points from the message of Jesus. Take time to look through some of these and you will be amazed at their application to our world today.

Servant Evangelism Ideas

Life Savers are a favorite candy that has been around forever. One idea is to find a place where you have access to lots of people. Buy the rolls of candy cheaply at a warehouse club or big box store. Print a label with church info and a Bible verse and apply the label to the candy outside wrapper. Then give them out to people as they pass by or as they are gathered in one place, like a community baseball park or soccer games. You would be surprised how many will accept a little gift like this and the ways it can open up conversations about the Lord and about your church.

Children's Connection

Children are a treasure from the Lord. This idea can work for your church or just for your family. Consider targeting a place that serves the community like the police department, fire department or even public utility. Work with the children to make cards, pictures, or notes and some small gift like brownies and set aside a time to take the children to the place with supervision. Allow them to go in and introduce themselves and give the gifts and cards to the people who work there. You would be amazed at how this opens up doors and allows the children to meet people who might only be seen from a distance in the normal routine of life.

Book Nook

This month, looking at a book to recommend, there is a great little read called *In a Pit with a Lion on a Snowy Day*. Mark Batterson wrote this book as a response to the very short mention in 2 Samuel 23 of Benaiah. The story is largely overlooked, but is a story of unquestioned courage shown in the life of a man who would serve King David. Batterson writes about the way that fear, failure, and challenge serve as tests of our faith and service to God. Batterson says "God is in the business of strategically positioning us in the business of strategically positioning us in the right place at the right time.... Here is the catch: The right place often seems like the wrong place, and the right time often seems like the wrong time." If you are facing some challenges in your life or your ministry today, this is a great word of encouragement and a spiritual challenge to see your difficulties in a different light. Batterson follows this book with a second called *Chase the Lion*. I encourage you to look at both.