



# THE BLUSTS

**EMPIRE BAPTIST TEMPLE • PASTOR ERICH P. MCCANDLESS, PHD**

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Dear Pastor and Brethren,

September-October 2022 Prayer, Praise & Progress Report

**Never forgetful of God's salvation in times past (May 1987).** A total rejection of the Catholic religion and the Catholic Jesus for a total surrender to the Bible Jesus as LORD, BOSS, MASTER, OWNER. A costly decision. No regrets. Living a Biblically surrendered life to Christ on a daily basis seeking first the kingdom of God in strict adherence to the Word of God. Hating compromise, deceit, hypocrisy, iniquity, stupidity, worldliness from among brethren. Truly blessed to be trained and sent out by EBT to fulfill the Lord's calling and surrender to the ministry in preaching the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ to fulfill His commission given to His local Baptist church.

**Eight souls repented and believed the Gospel of Christ.** [No reciting of prayer in I Cor.15:1-4; Rom.10:9-10; Eph.2:8-9; Jn.1:12; 3:16]. **Four elderly ladies** (physical sisters) in their late sixties and early seventies. They want to be baptized, but I told them that they need to be faithful in our church meetings first. Sometimes they come. Sometimes they don't. They, their adult children, grandchildren walk two miles on a muddy road to go to church. [There is rain almost daily all afternoon]. **Two men** established in the local community have connections. One of them is close friends with governor of Bukidnon. **One man** (drunkard GARBC member). **One man** (bodyguard).

**By God's amazing grace,** we see God's mighty hand and wondrous work in our local congregations. They have experienced significant spiritual growth, and have recognized the many ways that God has been faithful to them, and they live a life that truly reflect Biblical obedience and service as a follower of God. Not only do they engage more in spiritual disciplines like spending time in God's Word and prayer, they authentically developed a lifestyle where they seek to lead others to Christ and they use the gifts that God has given them to serve His greater purpose.

**Our members** are fully aware that our Baptist forefathers practiced a separation from the world which was NOT the shallow separation from sinful amusements so common today, but a deep radical separation that went to the very roots of their lives, their activities and their worldly fortunes. They believe that being a Baptist is a way of life twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week. They live for God, denying self, dying to the old man and not living in the lusts and passions of the flesh. They put aside their own desires to serve God with a pure heart. They have NO days off or day time hobbies (like fishing, hunting, sports, vacations, etc...) that keep them from God's calling (preaching, education, evangelism, ministry, service, etc...). We go out and meet people whose souls are in need of eternal salvation to proclaim Christ regardless of unfavorable circumstances during these last days.

**Our evangelism** during the past four months. 1. Evangelized a king and his wife (thrice), bodyguards, military and police generals, Muslim and New People Army communist commanders in our house at the same time. Two church people quit as they believe it's improper to evangelize such people as they might rape our church women. 2. This king invited me to preach the Bible to two hundred people in the mountains (so I did on Adam's sin nature, Christ's divine sinless blood and Christ's free gift of eternal life). 3. Evangelized Higaonon, Manobo, Talaandig, Tigwahanon and Umayamon datu tribal leaders and some of their tribal people. 4. Evangelized Muslims and Catholics together, then took Muslims aside to showcase the difference between Christianity and Islam. 5. Evangelized many religious people who are trusting in sinner's prayer formula, baptism or works for salvation. My wife and I have slept overnight outside on the back of a truck bed (causes back pain) to evangelize unbelievers. 6. Evangelized and witnessed Freemasons (Catholics, Protestants even so-called Fundamental Baptists). They must repent (including Freemasonry) and believe Gospel of Christ to receive God's salvation. Very few Masons today, or in any age, understand that their beloved organization has its roots in Satanism. They have this continuous public relations campaign promoting the big lie that Freemasonry is not a religion (worship of Lucifer), but is just a good works social organization. [NOTE: We preach the Gospel of Christ to every creature (Mark 16:15). So, we don't make the choice of who God puts before us. We evangelize infidels, pagans and religious people (which includes a king, tribals, Muslims, Freemasons). I had to decide if I was going to evangelize and witness to this type of people regularly (which we have done) or if we could even have an effective ministry with them. The tribals have their animal sacrifice rituals. The Muslims have their daily prayers to Allah (moon god religion). They asked us "why do we show them love? treat them with respect? why do our women wear dresses? why are we not worldly like the other Christians? why do we read the Bible every day?" The Freemasons have their Kabbala, occultism, sacred geometry (Luciferianism)].

**Our members are faithful to the Lord and boldly proclaim the Gospel of Christ within a godless culture.** Most unbelievers who have heard the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ that brings salvation have spurned it in exchange for worldly lusts. The things of the world have captivated their minds, hearts and lives. The cross of Christ doesn't move them. We warn the ungodly that they have an appointment with God where they will be judged for their sin. That they will be ultimately separated from God in eternal torment and punishment in hell. All who have denied God's mercy and salvation for the ways of sin will face God's wrath. Yet they continue to express little to no interest that the free "gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23). Some say "why do I want that when I have everything I need now?" Others say "that's nice, I'm a good Catholic."



**Some members during soul-winning** have asked “why the majority of people in public claiming the name of Christ are drunkards, drug addicts, revelers, revilers, fornicators (live in partners), adulterers, homosexuals, sorcerers, idolaters and such like who justify their sinful lifestyle as Biblical?” I said they’re unrepentant deceived Christians who have an image of being a Christian, but don’t have the indwelling Holy Spirit within to be Christian.

**Two Catholics allowed the Charismatics to have Bible studies on Friday and us to have Bible studies on Saturday.** After a few months of Bible studies, they decided to become Charismatics. They said “with Charismatics, no heart/life change required, you get to keep your sinful lifestyle, all you have to do is ‘add’ Jesus.” They can serve Jesus as DJ, church dancer, church musician (drummer, electric guitar player) while we preach repentance (forsake sinful living) and believe the Gospel of Christ for salvation, obedience and service to the Lord.

**A Bible Baptist woman from Kalinga province** who married a Fundamental Protestant man in Bukidnon quit attending the Fundamental Protestant GARBC group due to biblical errors and sought for a sound Baptist church. She regularly attended our Sunday meetings and really wanted to join our membership, but finds travel time two hours away and travel costs too burdensome. She believes her husband is not saved. She said “the Fundamental Protestant GARBC group doesn’t preach against sin or doctrinal error and invites Catholics and cults to attend. During invitation, they ask visitors to raise their hand if ‘Jesus is their Saviour.’ If they do, they are baptized into the membership. If they don’t, they say the sinner prayer formula and then they are baptized into the membership.”

**Mike (30) is a Catholic from Tondo Manila who attended a Bible Baptist church in Batangas** before relocating in Bukidnon, Mindanao (southern Philippines). This is his testimony of salvation: “I was drowning in water and called upon God to save me. He saved me from drowning in water. My Baptist sister and her pastor encouraged me to get baptized. At the baptism, the pastor said “do you profess Jesus as Savior?” He said “yes, he’s a Catholic.” The pastor said “upon your profession of faith, I baptize you...” Then he said since then “he hasn’t gone to church in fourteen years.” I graciously said to him “please don’t be offended, but this testimony you shared isn’t Biblical.” Then I preached the Gospel of Christ to him. He said that he never heard it before. Pray for his Biblical salvation.

**Our Bible schools** in Bukidnon disciple all members, train men in evangelism and some men as pastors in training. This has been a consistent aspect of our ministry since we have been in the Philippines. Our preachers have a fire in their soul and they have the grace and guts to convey what the Word of God has laid upon their hearts (Lk.24:32).

**Our tribal mission works.** Government telling tribal people along a mountain range in Bukidnon that they don’t own ancestral land. “They are only caretakers.” Must relocate in the next year. South Impasugong mission work will be part of a city. San Fernando mission works will become agri-farms. Bro. Yandong and South Impasugong mission work will be transferred. San Fernando mission works considering relocation to Malaybalay mission work. In the meantime, Sacramento Valley San Fernando mission work built a temporary makeshift wood structure to accommodate more people for church meetings. It’s built according to Filipino standards not American standards.

**Five people saved in our new mission work in Kalabugao, Impasugong, Bukidnon.** We gather in a house for Bible studies, then eat some mountain food (one of the main dishes is frog. I’m told it taste like chicken. I’m sure it does, but no thanks), then my wife and I sleep overnight on the wood floor. Three hour travel time. Need four-wheel drive vehicle when traveling through areas of deep mud and prevent sliding down muddy mountain roads. Government telling residents and tribals that they must relocate in the next year due to the development of a new city being built (that will grow by leaps and bounds) with a six-lane interstate highway system from four directions.

**Re-opened a mission work in Kalilangan, Bukidnon** from 2019 mission trips through early 2021 as thirty adults (and their children) refused to continue Bible studies due to Covid. We have re-established Bible studies. Mixed group of Catholics and Church of God who believe in baptismal regeneration. They have religion, but not Christ.

**What a blessed hope that God has given to us through Jesus Christ!** We are honored to serve Him. Our deepest respects brethren for your friendship, love, fervent prayers and cooperative investment in our ministry. We have a huge debt of gratitude. We greatly value personal integrity and Biblical obedience. May God bless your unceasing faith and your extremely important local Baptist congregation and all your ministries with the goal of bringing the Word of God and the Gospel of Christ to a local populace who are so desperately in great need thereof. Hopefully many others will follow your biblical and godly example. Praying for the Lord’s local Baptist churches.

- Bearing His Reproach (Psalm 42:10; 69:7; 89:50; 119:22; Isaiah 51:7; Lamentations 5:1; 1 Timothy 3:7; Hebrews 13:13).
- In Spiritual Warfare (Ephesians 6:10-20)
- More Than Conquerors (Romans 8:34-38).

Because Of His Faithfulness And Abundant Mercies ----- Let Us Go Forth And Sow The Seed!

*Jeffrey C. Blust*

## Philippines

*“People that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many” (Dan.11:32-33)*

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