

Well, summer moves on toward its end and the beginning of school has appeared on the horizon for many. Have you begun thinking yet about what you're going to do *next summer*?

When the July-September issue of *Baptist World* arrived recently from the Baptist World Alliance,<sup>1</sup> I was reminded that the quinquennial Baptist World Congress is going to happen next July. Every five years since 1905, Baptists from around the world have gathered for worship, friendship, encouragement and mission at locations all around the world. Next year's congress will be extra special in that it will be the first time the Congress has ever been held on the continent of Africa, where nearly 25% of BWA Baptists make their homes.

From Wednesday evening, July 22, 2015 through noon on Sunday, July 26, thousands of Baptists from around the world will gather in Durban, South Africa for the 21<sup>st</sup> Baptist World Congress. The program will include inspirational evening plenary sessions when thousands of participants will sing songs from various countries and cultures, celebrating God's love.

Morning Bible studies will enable persons to participate in the language of their choice. The Bible studies will be enriched by the diversity and many perspectives that will be represented at the Congress. Afternoon seminars, workshops and fringe festivals will include streams focused on worship and Christian fellowship, mission and evangelism, freedom and justice, and aid in development. There will be a children's program for those under eleven years old as well as a youth track.

One person described the Congress this way: "Short of becoming a missionary and serving overseas among Baptists in another country, I can't imagine a better way to engage with the global Baptist family than to attend the upcoming Congress in Durban. At the BWA Congress you will meet Baptist leaders from all over the world. You will hear choirs and learn songs of worship from other lands, and discover the rich variety of Baptist worship in different languages and styles.

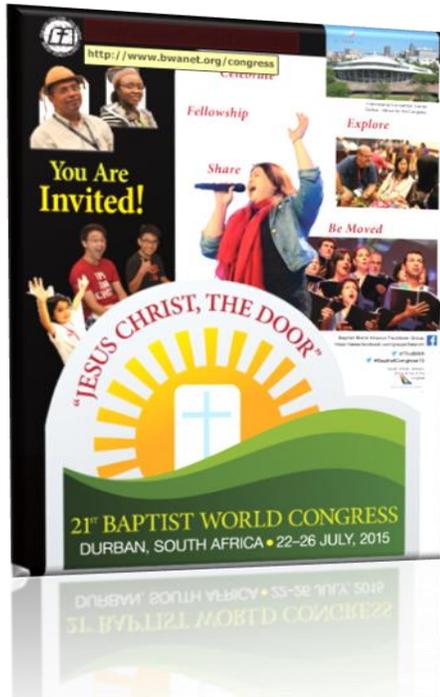
"You'll come home with a solid recognition that you are part of a global reality, and that our Baptist family is widely dispersed and alive and well among the peoples of the earth. You might even feel that the worldwide Baptist family is your own family of faith, as I do. The meeting will change the way you hear news broadcasts, since behind the headlines you will see the faces of brothers and sisters in Christ who live in those places and whose lives are affected by what you're learning. You'll find that the daily news will begin to call you to prayer for fellow Baptists all over the earth."



<sup>1</sup> You can read it online at <http://content.yudu.com/A2xixi/BWorld61-3/resources/index.htm?referrerUrl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bwanet.org%2Fnews%2Fonline-publications>

What do you think? Would any of you who read this column (in Columbia or elsewhere) be interested in such a pilgrimage next summer? Since the BWA is CBF's primary global missional connection, since we have so many African connections, and since this will be the very first Congress in Africa, I wonder whether this might be "our time to go." You can find out more at <http://bwanet.org/congress>, and then I hope you'll let me know if you're interested. (Note that Early Bird registration ends in November.)

Dave



IMPORTANT DATES	
Closing Date for EARLY BIRD Registration	November 30 2014
Closing Date for ONLINE Registration	July 10 2015
Executive Committee/ General Council	July 21-22 2015
ONSITE Registration Opens	July 22 2015
21st Baptist World Congress	July 22-26 2015



## ***The Joshua Code: Fifty-Two Verses Every Believer Should Know*** **O.S. Hawkins (Thomas Nelson, 2012)**

### **Week thirty-one: Approved or Ashamed?**

*“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).*

One of the great temptations of the busy believer is to stop studying the Bible. Modern believers find themselves with so many resources that it becomes easy to spend most of our time reading about the Bible and less and less time actually studying God’s Word itself, systematically and consistently.

Paul admonished young Timothy—and us—at this point, saying, *“Be diligent [study] to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* In this single verse, there are four important truths to apply to our own study habits.

#### **THE BELIEVER’S MANDATE**

The King James Version translates this command *“to be diligent”* as the word *study*. We are to be diligent and zealous about the task of studying God’s Word. Since reference is made later in the verse to *“rightly dividing the word of truth,”* Paul was challenging all believers to take very seriously their personal study habits. Bible study is a lifetime endeavor for the committed believer. It is our assignment, our mandate from God.

#### **THE BELIEVER’S MOTIVATION**

What is it that should motivate believers to undertake a lifetime of studying the Scriptures? It is so that when we are presented before the Lord Jesus, we might be “approved” by Him, that we might hear Him say, *“Well done, good and faithful servant”* (Matthew 25:21).

#### **THE BELIEVER’S MANNER**

Study is hard work. Doing word studies is laborious. Getting out our work tools of commentaries, Bible dictionaries, and lexicons is labor intensive. We are reminded that we are to equip ourselves for *“the work of ministry,”* as Paul mentioned to the Ephesians (4:12).

#### **THE BELIEVER’S MESSAGE**

All of this is to be done in order that we might *“rightly [divide] the word of truth.”* We should approach the Bible with a deep reverence, even a fear that we might mishandle or misrepresent God’s truth. We should take caution against using every paraphrase we might find in order to twist the truth to match our own way of thinking about a matter. We are to be about the business of *“rightly dividing the word of truth.”* This is a serious assignment.

Think about it: we are God’s workers. We will either be approved or ashamed when we stand before Him. This is our high calling and awesome task: to *“be diligent to present [ourselves] approved to God, [workers] who [do] not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”* As you memorize this verse, lay aside all the resources and other study aids, and meditate on the Word alone.