



# CONNECTED

April—June, 2025

## In this issue

A Great Boss	1
Rick Michalinos Ordination!	1
Heartbreaking	2
12 Lies in Plain Sight	2
Mike Singletary	2
Book Review: <i>The Church in Babylon</i>	3
Miscellaneous	3
My Boss Keeps Me Pretty Busy	4
Least Likely	4



**Rick Michalinos giving his salvation testimony and call to preach!**

## I'M WORKING FOR A GREAT BOSS

As I near fourscore and four and this ole earthly house continues its demise, people sometimes ask me what I do with my time. After all, I don't have a standard 8:00 - 5:00 job, a mortal "boss" or a regular job description.

In reality, I work directly for the Lord. He is my boss. Even better He's my "Master," my owner; He bought me with His own blood. I've been working for Him for a long time. As long as I was a "pastor," I had a fairly structured job; and was directly accountable to a "church." When I resigned

from that role with the hope of extending the welfare and longevity of the church where I served, the standard structure I had known for over 65 years went away.

I committed myself to serve with Dr. David Gibbs, Jr. and the Christian Law Association long enough to give my replacement pastor adequate time to establish his leadership. My chief longtime pursuit was (and still is) to write materials intended to help fellow-travelers (especially young preachers) who will face some of the giants, climb some of the mountains and pass through some of the valleys where I've been. My heart was (and is) to help people. I want to be an honest and humble mentor, a counselor, a comforter and a true friend. When I left the pastorate, I hoped to preach here and there as God might open doors, conduct comforting and uplifting funerals for some of my hurting friends, and spend quality time with Margaret and my family.

Most of these things continue to happen, but I am keenly aware that I'm not in control. Oh yes! I plan! Constantly! I carry a pocket-calendar everywhere, and call it "*my second Bible*"; however, the Lord is bringing

so many things into my life. Every day, I talk to God; and spend serious time in His Word and in meditation; but unplanned needs and opportunities to help people flood my life. I can honestly say that I don't have empty moments. There is always something I need to do; something or someone waiting. I can't remember ever being caught up.

I'm so thankful. I write as much as I can, and have a long waiting-list of materials which I hope to complete; however, I must let the Lord direct my path. I know He knows far more about how I should use the time He gives me than I do. Friends, I do not have the ability to explain the deep peace and satisfaction I know in my heart. Leaning on Him and doing what He orchestrates is extremely liberating. I don't have to worry about whether or not I please anyone but Him. If I get through, it's okay; but if I don't, it's still okay. I'm His, and He is mine. He will leave me here until He's finished with me, and I'm perfectly content with that. My best may not be very much, but it's all He expects. Oh, what a peace and joy it is to serve Him every day. I have the greatest boss there is.

### God Is Still Raising up Men to Lead His Work

March 7-9 in Devine, Texas, Rick Michalinos II was ordained into the gospel ministry by Community Baptist Church, Bro. Michalinos and his wife Sabrina will soon complete 20 years of active duty in the United States Air Force. God saved him and called him to preach. He has shown tremendous spiritual growth, and is eager to spend the rest of his life in the gospel ministry. I am very grateful to those men who assisted me in leading the doctrinal exam, and with the ordination service. We did so at the request of Bro. Michalinos and Community Baptist Church.

## HEARTBREAKING

I have many precious friends who are not sure there's a God. Some deny His existence, but others just aren't sure. Of course, in neither case do they trust Him as their Savior.

Just like believers, all doubters and unbelievers must ultimately face the great equalizer, death. People may differ about God, politics and a host of other things; but there's no getting around death. King Solomon observed the undeniable: **"All things come alike to all: there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an oath. This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead," Ecclesiastes 9:2-3.**

Those who deny or are uncertain about God lose loved ones too. Like everybody else, they have feelings, deep emotions. They too feel the pain. Last month, I conducted my 481st funeral. Some of them have been people who didn't believe in God; a great percentage of them had family and friends who either denied His existence or weren't sure.

What I have seen so often breaks my heart. I watch my friends (as well as people I don't know) grieve without hope. They have nothing, absolutely nothing: no hope moving forward; none. It's done; all over. They came from nowhere, and they're going nowhere. All they ever were was freaks; pointless accidents. Life without God is meaningless. They and their loved ones never had purpose. There'll be no reunion, no future. Other than what society thought, there was no right or wrong. Everything was relative and pointless. The best they or their loved ones could do was eat, drink and be merry; live-it-up. The best they can say to the survivors is, *"I'm sorry,"* and talk about how good their dead loved-one was. Of course, without God there really is no "good" or "bad." Without Him, who's to say? It's not hard to see why all that hype about what a great person he/she was is never very comforting. It's no wonder why people who don't believe in God and who have no Savior dread death. Every day, they live without hope and abiding peace. It's all right here, and there is no meaning to it. No point or purpose. Nothing fills the void, the emptiness; not money or power or liquor or sex! Nothing!

Yes. To me it has been and is heartbreaking. People are there by choice. Every one of them could have peace and hope beyond the grave. Evidence for God is everywhere and overwhelming. God puts purpose and meaning into life. He established right and wrong. He sent His Son to give forgiveness and eternal life; and to bring hope beyond the grave to people. He pleads with people to come to Him. Yet, intelligent people many of whom are personally precious to me continue to wander aimlessly without hope, just waiting to die. I find it heartbreaking.

### 12 LIES IN PLAIN SIGHT

1. **God is dead.**
2. **There are more than two genders.**
3. **Disapproval is the same as hatred.**
4. **Changing the language changes the facts.**
5. **Solvency can continue indefinitely even when expenses exceed income.**
6. **It's okay to lie.**
7. **The end justifies the means.**
8. **Murder is okay.**
9. **Truth is not absolute.**
10. **Origins by evolution is a proven scientific fact.**
11. **As long as you're sincere, it doesn't matter what you believe.**
12. **A house divided against itself can stand forever.**

Mike Singletary was one of the greatest football players ever. Mike grew up in the ghetto of Houston. He was one of ten children and times were tough, especially after his father abandoned the family. Six months later, the oldest child was hit and killed by a drunk driver. Everyone wondered how Mike's mother could ever support such a large family by herself. How could a poor single mother possibly provide for so many children? Mike answered that question when he was inducted into the Football Hall of Fame. He said, *"She responded the only way true champions respond: on the knees."* Dear friend, that's the only way any of us can make it!

Used by permission: *Morning Manna* by Pastor David Stone May 12, 2014

## THIS IS A VERY GOOD BOOK

### ***The Church in Babylon***

By Erwin W. Lutzer

Moody Press 2018

Chicago, Illinois

ISBN: 9781545969614

Erwin Lutzer is a powerful writer who articulates truth in a clear, concise way. He is able to show and tie together the relationships of great concepts and movements.

***The Church in Babylon*** draws a strong parallel between Christianity (churches in a corporate sense) and the Jewish Nation and its captivity during its fall to ancient Babylon and the captivity which followed.

The book begins with the state of current Christianity which is very poor: hard, cold and troubled within. The sins of Rome are now here. The media serves moral filth and perversion to us. Rank evil has become the norm. Attitudes have become negative. There is widespread and growing hostility toward Christianity. Freedom of speech is hated on multiple fronts, and Christians are being forced into silence.

In his usual custom, Lutzer often interjects admonitions. He stresses the fact that for churches and Christians to have a pulpit, they must maintain distinction from the world of compromise around us.

***The Church in Babylon*** has 11 outstanding chapters. The first chapter shows what faithfulness looks like in darkness. We're the remnant in the midst of a wicked world; the minority in a majority of pagans. Our God is to be honored even in the darkest of times; and the more we honor Him, the greater the opposition will be by false prophets. What instructions does Christ give us as we face growing darkness. Lutzer keys off the seven churches of Revelation 2-3.

Chapter 2 deals with the danger of compromise. As Dr. Lutzer says, "When the ocean gets into the ship, there's trouble." He makes the strong case that today the world is in the church. The trip from Jerusalem was a time of horrible losses and trials. Babylon's approach with the conquered people of God was (1) isolation, (2) assimilation and (3) infiltration without contamination. False teachers said Israel wouldn't be in Babylon very long; the fact was they would be there for a very long time. God's message to them was to invest where they were. Make the most of their situation, and change it for the better.

Chapter 3 is a great chapter on where to draw the line. Dr. Lutzer deals with the power of the media and technology. This section of his book is loaded with how-to information in a pagan world, particularly in dealing with children.

Chapter 6 is about transgenderism and sexuality, and how it is being handled by churches. God's people must admit, face and address these issues. Treating them as if they do not exist and in silence is producing devastating consequences, loss of credibility and a mass exodus from Christianity. Holiness before God is key, and churches must take a stand. Minds must be challenged. Christianity desperately needs a new generation of Daniels.

Chapter 7 is a good look at Islamic immigration, and the global intentions of Islam. Their goal is the elimination of Christianity. Chapter 8 systematically presents "five false gospels" within evangelical Christianity. On the surface, they look and sound good, but they are Satanic and anti-biblical.

Chapter 9 is a good discussion of the Cross and its central position in Christianity and the hope of humanity. This is a really good and powerful chapter.

Chapter 10 is Jesus at the Church Door. The chapter deals with weak, compromised, powerless churches which have lost their way; and how to get Christ back inside and in control. He is willing to restore churches which repent. Dr. Lutzer closes the book with Prevailing in a Hostile Environment. It's an excellent treatise on how vital it is to invest in people. There is no quick-fix to having a viable pulpit in a pagan world. I particularly like Dr. Lutzer's summary on a successful church in Babylon.

I found ***The Church in Babylon*** to be a very worthy read. It should be a wakeup call to all who name the name of Christ. It has my high recommendation.

**Contact us at:**

[lesterhutson@gmail.com](mailto:lesterhutson@gmail.com)



My books are [available on Amazon](#). Go to Amazon, select "Books" and type in my name. My publications will pop right up. Most (not all) are available in both paperback and digital formats. My main focus (and as much of my time as possible) is devoted to making all of my existing books (and a few new titles) available in both formats. Thanks to each of you who read my books. I'm blessed, humbled and encouraged by your kind feedback. My latest book is [When Trouble Comes](#).

**"Try to be a rainbow in somebody's cloud."**

**Humor from another era: What's black, white, and read all over? A newspaper!**

## MY BOSS KEEPS ME PRETTY BUSY

Increasingly, the time between quarterly Connected Newsletters seems to be shorter. I'm so grateful to the many of you who have encouraged me to continue this little publication.

Mrs. H started 2025 recovering from hip replacement surgery. She has done well, but not without considerable pain and slow healing. The years do take their toll even on healing. She's up and going, and I am no longer the chief cook and bottle washer around here. Talk about loving and appreciating someone, more than ever I have been reminded of what a gift from God Margaret is to me.

With the years comes more time in the medical world: doctor appointment, blood work, therapy and medicines. Thank God, they're available! So far this year, these great people have not forgotten us. I'm still preaching about one funeral a month, teach a regular Wednesday night Bible class and keeping at least one Basic Bible Truths course on-going at all times. In February, I was privileged to attend the annual Preaching Workshop at [Lake Worth Baptist Church](#) in Fort Worth. I especially enjoyed the privilege of preaching to my [home church](#) on March 16.

One of the most fulfilling experiences I can imagine is the ordination of a young preacher into the gospel ministry. On Thursday and Friday, March 7-8 I was joined by a group of preachers. We spent right at eight hours administering a thorough doctrinal exam of Rick Michalinos II. In a special 5:30 service, at our recommendation the [Community Baptist Church](#) of Devine, Texas ordained Bro. Michalinos. Bro. Rick's grandfather was Pastor Nick Michalinos of Austin Avenue Baptist Church in Pasadena, Texas. His father was Pastor Rick Michalinos I, pastor of Glennwood Baptist Church in Deer Park, Texas.

On Monday, three godly men from the [Highland Baptist Church](#) in El Reno, Oklahoma. The came here to make a video of me teaching the Basic Bible Truths course directly into the camera. The hope is that this video series will be used of God in two fruitful ways. (1) May it be used of God to reach many souls! It will be posted on the [Highland Baptist Church YouTube](#) channel (and hopefully many other channels). (2) May it also prove to be helpful in equipping all who wish to use this proven soul-winning tool to bring others to Christ! From my home, I taught the six one-hour lessons directly into the camera as if I was speaking personally to someone just on the other side of the camera. If you are interested in using this video on a YouTube channel or on some other media, contact Pastor Travis Jones at Highland Baptist Church. (pastor@highlandfamily.org). I plead with you to pray for the success of this endeavor.

I am also happy to announce that in the afternoon of Thursday, February 27, I finished Chapter 52 of my soon-coming book: *What We Believe and Why 3*. There's still a ton of editing to do, but the composition is done. Hopefully, within the next few months, this book will be available on Amazon.

**The pastor and guest speaker are greeting people as they leave the service. One of the church ladies says to the guest, "That's the worst message I ever heard." Pastor: "Don't pay any attention to her." The lady gets back in line and says, "You're a really bad preacher." The pastor: "Don't let her get to you. She's known for speaking her mind." She mixes with lots of the people, and is back in line again. "Mister, I hope you never come back again." Pastor to visibly shaken guest: "Pay no attention to what she says. She just repeats what she hears."**

*I am most grateful to each of you who prays for me, and encourages me in this work our great God has chosen for me.*

### Least Likely

God said to Gideon, *"Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?"* **Judges 6:14**. I can identify with Gideon's response, *"Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house,"* **Judges 6:15-16**. I was born in 1941, six months before Pearl Harbor, in East Texas where there's an accent known all over the world. I was born at home, in a *shot-gun house*. Really! No electricity, or inside toilet, or natural gas. I know what a wood heater and a wood stove are. And, an *"ice box"* is not a *refrigerator*. Though I didn't know it back then, we were *"poor folks"*: really poor. Mom made my shirts out of Purina feed sacks. (Back in those days, Purina chicken-feed came in cloth sacks with a variety of prints. Mom would save up enough sacks with the same print to make shirts or dresses.)

I wasn't handsome, gifted or smart. My first seven school years (there was no kindergarten) were spent in a two-room country school. I failed the first grade. Yes! I really did. Miss LaRue Frost told mom, *"Lester failed. I'm going to promote him to the second grade to keep him with his group. If he doesn't snap out of this, I'll have to put him back a year."* No high IQ here. Athletic? Never! Even my brother who was 14 years older marveled and laughed at how clumsy and uncoordinated I was. Other than for a hay-loft in a barn, I never saw a stairwell until I promoted to a city school in the 8th grade. I stuttered. Big-time! Especially around strangers. I never wanted to make eye contact with someone I didn't know. Self-image? Even after Margaret and I had children, I was highly intimidated in the presence of any educated person, especially a doctor, attorney or famous person.

Why God would put me into His gospel ministry especially, at 13, defies my understanding. Even this day I stand amazed. I truly brought nothing to the table; had nothing to offer. I knew it then, and I know it now! Everything to His glory that He's ever used me to accomplish is all to His credit, only by His awesome grace! Every sermon, every book, every soul that has been won, every life that has been touched for the better! All along the trail, I have known better than anybody that I was *in over my head*, that I could only do what He called me to do by His enabling grace. It seems that from the start, our great God wanted to get the *big-head, pat-yourself-on-the-back* thing out of the way. I know the truth about me, and I know that I'm here and have made this trip solely and wholly by the goodness and grace of God. Don't ever try to tell me that He can't take a nobody, and use that person to His glory.