

The Higginbothams

Missionary/Evangelists to Native Americans
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1 Timothy 2:5 KJV

For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;

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Halito! Hello!

As I write this letter, we are taking a few days breather in Yaak, MT, after being in services Saturday and Daniel preaching Sunday. This place is very special to us as we have been coming here for many years. Many of you have heard us talk about it and the church here. There aren't many places you go where you see moose playing outside your door! We love the Yaakers!

When we finished our spring meetings back East (where the Lord met with us and His people) we began the summer work in OK. The summer work is a time of focus on children. The Choctaws do their VBS a little different in that they have adult classes and also close the VBS every night with a preaching service. We started June off helping at Grace Indian Baptist at Talihina, OK. The membership of the church is a blessing because they have stepped up and do their own VBS now. We hang out with them and I teach the mission story, Daniel helps in preaching, and Mrs. Shirley with music, but for the most part they are self-sufficient and I mean that in the best of ways! They rely on God, but have taken off the training wheels so to speak and are following the great commission like "white" churches! It's like a family atmosphere and we saw four young people come to Christ!

We moved on to Indian Baptist Missions Camp the second week of June. We helped with the teaching, music, and preaching. The crowd was small this year, but we did have some Navajo come from NM. We pray the Lord will restore the ministry the camp has had to many tribes for 30+ years.

The 3rd week of June found us at Keota, OK and New Hope Indian Baptist Church. This church is among the oldest in OK and was most likely started by Choctaw Missionary Peter Folsom. In fact, he is buried here on the church property. It is around 140 years old, with no pastor and the decimation of Covid, the church has only a handful coming, but they are faithful. We were privileged to work with Grace Indian Baptist and help them with a VBS. The members from Grace worked their jobs and then drove the hour and a half one way to hold the VBS every day. The Word was shared and the people of New Hope encouraged. They are not alone and not forgotten by a Heavenly Father who loves them!

The last week of July was spent at Spring Hill Church in Honubia, OK. This week is more like a family camp. Day classes for all ages till noon, followed by lunch and then mandatory singing school learning Choctaw and English hymns. We have nightly services for all enrolled at the VBS, and those that live nearby come also. Mrs. Shirley had to teach the 2-5 year-old class for a couple of days when Mrs. Josephine had to work, and little did she know the young man helping her was one she had taught 30 or more years ago! God is so good! Some that have attended the camp for years have chosen to walk away from truth and the Lord. It's an answer to prayer when they come back and also to see the Lord still save souls along and along like He did young Peyton, this week. This brings us to July and we had one more VBS to work in at Zion Missionary Baptist in McAlester, OK. Once again, we teamed up with Grace Indian Baptist.

Again, we had classes and a service after. We taught on the book of Daniel for four of the five weeks, so we were all familiar with our lessons and it all worked smoothly. The Higginbothams have been going to Zion for about 37 years or so.

Like most Native churches they were in need of a pastor, but they have had Bro. Ron Burning fill in for them in the winter months and now Bro. Ross is helping with preaching on Sundays. Because of this they have had more people coming. Zion has a Godly heritage and I know they were being cheered on by a great cloud of witnesses. Unfortunately, as you leave OK and began to head west this is not the case.

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The Choctaws have had the gospel before leaving MS on their trail of tears. Whereas, most reservations have no church of any kind, and especially not a Bible preaching, fundamental church.

We went home to rest a bit before heading to Fort Hall, ID and the Shoshone Bannock tribe. We merged with Missionaries to the Sho-Ban Joe and Lela Copley, Hoopers Creek Baptist from Fletcher, NC, Missionaries Gerry and Sherril Locklear and us! Whew! We have worked with this team several years and it's a joy as all hands are on deck. Faith Baptist Church has grown in number since last year! How wonderful! The tribe will not allow us to door knock so it's up to the parents to bring the children, which some did! Or Mrs. Lela and Bro Joe to run their normal bus routes. The church was full to capacity every day, with people standing around the walls! We finished the week with four young people coming to know Christ and left some wanting to know more. We believe that God will continue the work started in these young and old hearts. **Psalm 119:130 KJV. "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple".**

When we got to Fort Hall, ID we found out that the next two VBS with the Kalispel and Spokane tribes in WA state had been canceled. The church that was going to be working with us locally were unable to work this year and unfortunately neither tribe was responding, leading us to believe that they were not interested in a VBS with their children. Paul said in **1 Corinthians 16:9 KJV. "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries"**. The Adversary does not want us to labor in these fields and there are times God shuts the door. We pray this is not the case. Does not Christ love these people? Is His arm too short to reach them? Is the Light of His Love grown too dim to shine in these dark places? Or is it that the churches of America have no burden for the lost? My mind goes to the pictures in the old days when a fire broke out on a building and the people would line up and pass a bucket single file, person to person, until the last person poured the water on the fire. That's how it is when we partner with you, our supporting churches, and then those churches like, Hoopers Creek, and Grace Indian, and then connect with Missionary Copley, arm in arm until finally we drop the seed of God's Word. And one, or two, or four people come to Christ. Praise the Lord for salvation that reaches to the uttermost!

As we rest a few days before heading to the west coast of WA and then all the way back to NM with the Navajo people, we are rejoicing in what our eyes have seen; people coming to Christ, tribes reaching other tribes, and, the Word of God being planted in new and old places. Pray for us that our strength and faith fail not. We have more miles to go before hitting Oklahoma again and we want to be faithful to Him and give our best for Him. We are thankful for your love and support and prayer for us and the Native people.

In Him, the Higginbothams,

Mrs. Shirley, Elena, and Daniel