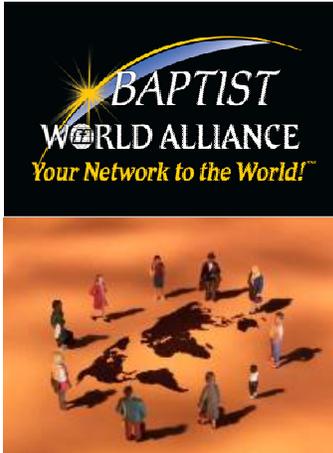


## SERMON SUMMARY

<b>Date:</b> May 6, 2007	11:00 am Worship Service
<b>Preacher:</b> Rev. Donald Lawrence	<b>Reference:</b> Acts 15:24-35
<b>Topic:</b> Glorifying The Father of All The Earth... Through Honoring Our Partnership with Other Baptists	



May 6 is being celebrated around the world as Baptist World Alliance (BWA) Day. This is a global fellowship of over 200 Baptist unions and conventions of more than 36 million baptized believers and a community of more than 110 million Baptists worldwide. While it is a day of celebration for Baptists it also brings some concern. The current leadership of

Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), which is a founding member of the BWA, has led the organization to sever formal ties with the BWA. However it is a decision that the Women's Missionary Union (WMU) has refused to go along with, as they remain a member of the BWA Women's Department. Then some State Conventions like Virginia Baptists have become members of the BWA on their own also refusing to

sever ties.

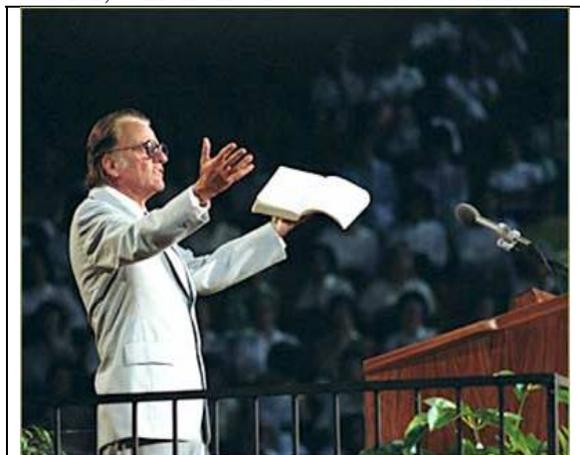
We know how big the lure is to stand on our own as individual denominations, churches and individual Christians, but we hear Jesus in St. John 13:34-35 saying, "*a new commandment I give to you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.*"

The focus passage comes at the end of Paul's First Missionary Journey in which they witnessed God at work in various places. This rejoicing was later challenged by those who had journeyed from Judea to Antioch to insist on the necessity of circumcision for salvation. We see how the:

- ◆ Out of Step Group was dealt with
- ◆ Outstanding men who were chosen to convey the resolution of the matter
- ◆ Obvious connection of the Jerusalem leaders with the movement of God in their time
- ◆ Outburst of joy at the goods news from Jerusalem

Verse 24 suggests those who had gone too far, which should cause us to consider if we are disturbing the work of God. We need to be very careful with self-promotion because the fact is that we must try to avoid countering the Purpose of God.

Verses 25-27 paints a picture of those who had gone the distance for God, which should cause us to ponder if we are distinguished in the work of God. We have such wonderful examples before us such as the distinguished servant of God Billy Graham, who endorses the BWA and is an in-law to outgoing General Secretary Lotz. We ought to be careful with the significance of our path and we must try to



**Evangelist Billy Graham**

achieve a record of commitment to the Purpose of God.

In verses 28-29, we get a picture of those who had grasped what God was doing, which ties in with verses 14-18. This is a call to consider if we are discerning the work of God. This demands of us to be careful with spiritual perception because the fact is that we must try to advance in comprehension of the Purpose of God.



**Pastor Neville Callam**

Finally in verses 30-35, we see those who greeted the acknowledgement of the work of God, which should lead us to consider if we are delighted at the work of God. We see great delight now for African Diaspora and Mother Africa in the example of Pastor Neville Callam, a son born in Jamaica, who has been nominated to be the next BWA General secretary. Such nomination represents an historic achievement. We also see the examples of Azariah McKenzie, former BWA Regional Secretary for the Caribbean and Frank Adams BWA Regional Secretary for Africa, who both died recently. Such men never settled and we need to be careful with settled position because we must try to advance in celebration of the Purpose of God.

We glorify the Father of all the earth far more when we are seeking ways to reach out to other Christians than when we are trying to find grounds to reject them. Let us embrace all who call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ even while prompting each other to love and good works.



**Azariah McKenzie**



**Frank Adams**