

The Greater Fellowship Baptist Association of Rhode Island & Vicinity  
5<sup>th</sup> Annual Session At Ebenezer Baptist Church (Host Church)  
June 3-5, 2011

Notes: By Deacon H. Metts, Congdon Street Baptist Church

Theme: **“Embracing Spiritual Leadership”**  
Scripture: **Colossians 1: 25-29**

I was able to attend the mid morning and afternoon sessions on Saturday, June 4, 2011. I heard that the Friday “Youth Night” was powerful and a great spiritual event. I missed the early Saturday morning workshop, given by The Rev. Dr. James J. Fuller, Pastor, New Hope Baptist Church, in Baltimore, Maryland. His presentation was geared towards church leaders, and based on the theme. Someone gave me his 3 main points: (1) Only serve if called by God; (2) Answer God’s Call; (3) Be Accountable to God for what you have been called to do (after hearing him preach later I was sorry I missed this part).

There were classes for Sunday school teachers, Ushers, the Music Ministry and Laity (other ministries). Presentations were given about high school requirements and college, and domestic violence prevention (a needed ministry in our churches, as many church members have or are being abused). Healing is needed and all the presentations were powerful.

There was a worship service at 3:00 p.m. to conclude the activities for the day. Rev. Fuller also preached and expanded on the theme using Matthew 6: 26 (KJ) ***“Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?”*** (He also read it from the New Living Translation Bible).

The sermon was, **“Spiritual Leaders Look at the Birds”**. (Note: Following the example of Elizabeth Taylor, he told us that, “I won’t keep you long.)

**Points Made:**

- God is concerned about each one of us, so don’t be overly concerned about your needs for tomorrow.
- Put your ultimate faith and trust in God. We are to rely exclusively on the graciousness of God (not people, things, or even ourselves). We are to put our trust fully in God (not our education or skills, not our wealth and material possessions, etc.).
- Trust God! Listen to Jesus who told his disciples not to be overly concerned about needs, but to stay focused and do the ministry that God called them/us to do.
- **Look at the birds**---is what Jesus told his disciples, where they needed to focus less time on themselves, and more time on their ministry. Look at the birds, they don’t sow (plant crops) or reap (harvest crops), but our heavenly Father feeds them (Rev. Fuller contrasted people today who are working 2 jobs, living above their means trying to keep up with the Jones’s, stressed out from debt because of their desire for things, etc., etc.).

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- **Listen to the birds** who don't complain about what they don't have, but praise God with their chirping and singing for feeding and taking care of them. They sing because they are alive by the grace of God. **We are not only to look at the birds, but must also listen**, because when nothing is left, God is all they have, and if you think about it God is all that they/we really need.
- He also admonished us to **Live Like the Birds**; and these are the habits that spiritual leaders need.
- Because the birds don't have to sow or reap and God feeds and takes care of them, we must remember that **we are better than the birds.**
- Trust God! Have Faith! Why worry or be overly concerned about anything, so enjoy life and live! Live! Live!
- Birds live in harmony and fellowship with each other. They have peace with each other and with God. They don't fight among themselves and come together to praise God. They are singing before the break of day and during the night when it's dark, before the sun comes up. They trust God.
- If our heavenly Father takes care of the birds he will take care of us.
- In God's eyes, Spiritual Leaders are more important than the birds, so remember to **look** at the birds, **listen** to the birds, and **live** like the birds.
- Live like the birds (without worry or being overly concerned and praising God).
- Have faith and trust God! "Spiritual Leaders Look at the Birds".

Brother Toliver spontaneously began singing and led the congregation in a hymn, "God Will Take Care of You".

What a powerful message (I wish I could fully capture the sermon message presented by the preacher, as he was led by the Holy Spirit)!

I plan on being faithful to my calling and trusting God in all areas. I will enjoy life without being overly concerned about anything. God has already blessed and taken care of me and my family through thick and thin; and I know that He will continue to do so.

To God be the glory, great things he has done!