



The Lumpkin County 4-H Club delivered Hero Packs to family members of deployed military members as a part of Operation Military Kids. Pictured here, Senior 4-H'er Dylan Bollinger (right) presents Hero Packs to Will and Ben Mayfield. Their father, Bobby Mayfield, a Lumpkin County High School teacher, is currently stationed in Iraq. (Submitted Photo)

Hero Packs delivered to soldiers' kids

Operation Military Kids (OMK), a partnership including Georgia 4-H, the Boys' & Girls' Club, Army Child and Youth Services and the Military Child Education Coalition, builds a network of support in Georgia to educate citizens on the impact of deployments on communities, families and youth as well as provides educational and support programs for children and youth of soldiers in our own backyard.

When the Defense Department mobilized the National Guard and Reserves the youth in these families often appear the same as non-military families. However, these young people deal with new pressures and stresses often unnoticed by teachers, 4-H agents and staff, friends and other community members, causing them to need additional support and contact with others in similar situations. OMK also raises awareness for supporting these youths and families among business leaders, teachers, 4-H staff and other community members.

One way OMK provides this support is through the packing and distributing of Hero Packs. Since June, 4-H'ers at state-wide events have packed over nine-hun-

dred Hero Packs for youth in deployed families. These Packs include a backpack with items to deal with the stresses of missing a loved one and to communicate with that loved one such as a disposable camera, an ink well pen, a 4-H Liberty Bear, a 4-H bandana, a journal and a Georgia Friendship Bracelet. The Hero Packs also contain handwritten letters to the youth thanking them for their service and a 'Parent's Pouch' with information about support for spouses of deployed soldiers and opportunities available locally through 4-H and the other OMK partners.

Ben Mayfield of Dahlongega, whose father Bobby Mayfield is currently serving in Iraq, was part of this effort. He serves this year as Vice President on the Northeast District 4-H Junior Board of Directors and attended 4-H Junior Leadership Conference in December at Rock Eagle 4-H Center.

Families of deployed military members may still request Hero Packs by visiting the Georgia 4-H website at <http://www.georgia4h.org>. For questions regarding local distribution, please contact the Lumpkin County Extension Office at 864-2275.

Explaining the

If an atheist, agnostic, skeptic, or sincere seeker of truth were to ask you what is the foundation or basis of your faith as a believer, how would you respond? It is a legitimate question that demands an intelligent and legitimate answer.

To find the answer to that necessary question we turn to the pages of Holy Scripture. Upon an honest and systematic analysis of the Biblical text, we discover that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of the Christian faith.

Before I continue any further, I must explain what I mean by an honest and systematic analysis of Scripture. Keep in mind what the Scriptures are — the infallible, inspired, inerrant Word of God. Everything in them including every word is entirely true and accurate and therefore reliable and authoritative (binding upon our lives).

An honest analysis of the Biblical text is to study and interpret the Scriptures literally, grammatically, contextually, and historically. That approach will safeguard against any preconceived ideas of what we believe or think concerning a matter of theology or personal preference in respect to life issues and concerns.

After we have looked at the text honestly, a systematic understanding of the Scriptures is then derived. This is simply looking at the Biblical record and reaching various conclusions of theology in a systematized format. With that as a backdrop, we now can turn our attention to the question before us.

What is the foundation or the basis of our faith? To that