

The Good News

Newsletter— May 2017

A Publication of University Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, MS

The purpose of University Baptist Church is, through guidance of the Holy Spirit, to assemble and worship God, to love and encourage one another, to proclaim the gospel of Christ, to minister to all people, and to live in peace.

In a world where difficult issues remain, University Baptist Church continues its commitment to be a church where “there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female, for (we) are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28)

Time

I can recall when I was out there in the world. If you can name it, I was doing it. I was so caught up into doing what I wanted— Drugs and alcohol led me down a path of unrighteousness (Ephesians 2:1-3). I was dead lost to what God wanted from me, and that left me in a place where I just wanted to end it all. I had thoughts of suicide (John 12:35; Prov. 18:14). I wanted off drugs and alcohol, but I didn't know how to get off of them. I felt I had nowhere to go. Time is what God granted me and patience is what He had with me. (Psalm 4:1; James 1:4-5). God put some mighty good people in my life and granted me time with His grace. (Proverbs 18:24; I Peter 5:5-7). God knew I needed to be worked on, knew my head was hard and that I did not trust people to last. (Titus 3:3). Time, He allowed me to come to Him (Heb 4:16)...Time, He allowed me to trust others who knew Him... Time, He allowed me to know and to love others (I John 4:6-7)...Time, He brought Ms. Palmer into my life and allowed me to realize her Love as my birth mother's love. That is how I have come to know of His undying love (Ephesians 3:19). God knew that I didn't understand. I don't have time but that He has all the time (Isa 57:15)

Stay Prayed Up
Frederick Singleton, Flora, MS.

1 Samuel 17:4; 51 “Then a champion came out from the armies of the Philistines named Goliath, from Gath, whose height was six cubits and a span. Then David ran and stood over the Philistine and drew it out of its sheath and killed him, and cut off his head with it. When the Philistines saw that their champion was dead, they fled.”

As believers in the Most High God and His Son Jesus Christ, we, like David, have victory over the enemy by faith. In Psalm 23 we read David's words, “I fear no evil for Thou art with me.” David had victory over Goliath because David had faith in God. It wasn't David, like it isn't you or I that took down the great giant that day. It was God. David's responsibility, like ours, was standing firm in the faith and allowing God to use him. It is important to note to David's being able to stand didn't happen overnight. His being able to stand against the giant was because he spent time walking with God, strengthening his faith-legs. Because David sought God daily, yielding to Him, learning from Him, and growing in Him, he was then able to stand firm against the enemy. When was the last time you were able to stand firm against the enemy? Were you, are you, ready to stand firm in Christ Jesus and allow Him to keep you and deliver you? I encourage you to spend time daily training in godliness so that when your Goliath comes you will be able to stand firm like David. 1 Timothy 4:8, 1 Corinthians 16:13. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen and Amen.

(The above piece was inspired by the Word of God through Stephen Powers and written by a fellow Brother in Christ. Stephen Powers has suffered 2 strokes and currently has a bleeding aneurysm in his brain).

Brother in Christ,
Stephen Elliot Powers
DPC

A Prayer

Last year a dear friend sent me a book by Dietrich Bonhoeffer titled Life Together. Bonhoeffer had gathered together a group of Christians that hadn't capitulated to the Nazis and compromised their values. I believe it was a glimpse into what the 1st century church looked like. One of the things that really stuck out to me was the way each of these men were included in prayer for the group. In order to teach each person how to pray with confidence in a group setting, a clever program was instituted. We here at the Dog Pen Church have taken the idea and used it to great effect. What we do is have a single person pray for our church. That is their job for the month—they write down and pray prayers that begin and end our services each week. This allows each of us to become comfortable with praying in a group setting. More importantly, this exercise teaches us how to be thoughtful and deliberate as it pertains to pray for a specific group or issue. While a single person prays for the church, the rest of the members pray for that person in his capacity as prayer leader. Everyone learns skills that are crucial to the health and wellbeing of any Christian gathering. Prayer is always the key. We at the DPC have been doing this for quite some time now and have been sharing some of our prayers and sermons/lessons with you readers. We also take turns giving the sermons. These have allowed the Holy Spirit to really use each of us to enrich the group—by bringing messages the individual is interested in already. The freshness every week is captivating. Anyway, you can all follow along with us as we grow—seeing how we are learning to pray and teach on another. It happens to be the end of my month for praying for the church in this capacity so I submit my prayer from our meeting on March 06, '17 I encourage everyone to write out your prayers and be thankful about what it is you are praying about. Have a great month in Jesus.

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come to you in the perfect Name of your Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus, through the power of your promised Holy Spirit, to praise you with our lives. I speak to you now on behalf of this congregation asking that you find glory in our unity of shared love and trials. May your name be blessed forever; I ask that you give us the strength to bear the burdens of others and the humility to bring those burdens to you. I pray for the people around us right now that persecute us and ask that you give them goodness through us. Heavenly Father, guard our lives and help us to be the example and true reflection of your Son and confirm the truth of your words by walking before us on this narrow path. Hear our prayers and forgive our sins, Open our hearts, open our ears, and give us clarity of mind this morning as our brother leads us toward your message today. I do not present this prayer to you on the ground of our righteousness but on the ground of your great mercy in Christ Jesus. O Lord forgive; O Lord listen and act without delay. For your glory we gather and we pray in Jesus Name. Let the church say—Amen.

Benediction

Thank you heavenly Father, Thank you Lord Jesus, thank you Holy Spirit for that wonderful message. As we leave this gathering of souls today I want to collectively lift up our loved ones who are facing challenges and physical ailments which are making their lives harder than they need to be. We ask for your grace, comfort and healing touch to be upon them. We pray for our captors and the prisoners under their control. Please Father, let there be mercy, compassion and understanding in our midst today. We pray for the lost souls, the sick, lonely, homeless, hungry and all children. Draw them near to you Lord Jesus. We ask that you keep us innocent among the hypocrites, evildoers, wicked, and the liars around us. Prove us today by trying and testing our hearts and minds for your glory and the strengthening of our faith and dependence on you. Hear our private prayers today and respond to the yearning of our broken hearts. Finally Lord, we ask that you fit us in your armor and put a guard over our hearts, minds and our mouths so that we will be able to boldly fight the battles ahead through the resurrection power of Jesus Christ, In the name of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords Jesus Christ, we pray—Amen.

Roger Gillett

Dog Pen Church—Parchman

Praying For and Loving the Lost
Read Matthew 5:43-48, Luke 6:27-38

You have to expect in a world where everyone is independent and entitled to their own thoughts and opinions that not everyone believes in the way of God. Some believe there is a God, but they choose not to participate or practice any religious doctrines for whatever reason. To believe in God you have to understand that He has given all of mankind a right to choose either to go left or right whether we agree or not. Is it then foolish or selfish to be angered at the choices men and women make?

Ask yourself, how long did it take you to kneel before God and ask that He save your soul? Since God's love dwells in all of us, we are to be kind and understanding to others as God has been to us. Knowing God's great love, we have to intercede with prayer effectively with an unblemished heart for all those whom are lost. Being somewhat insistent and pressuring is not the way and will only cause friction. It will push others away from God when they should be moving closer to Him. Everybody has their own pace and we have to respect and understand that. Just like your prayers, God may not answer them when you want, but He will on His time... He's an on-time God.

Do you remember yourself as a child? Our parents were always telling us to do this or to do that and some of us did, but many of us were rebellious. I'd be the first to admit that I was rebellious most of the time. I'm not saying that parents are wrong, but I am saying that sometimes there are better ways to reach people and we have to respectfully do that.

In Revelations 3:8 God has set before us all an open door that no man can shut. I pray that we'll all meet together hand in hand to walk through that door. In the meantime I'll continue to lift *every* soul in prayer in the hopes that we'll all find our way into the warmth and comfort of Almighty God.

God bless you!

“Praying For and Loving the Lost”

I said a prayer for you. . .
Yesterday and today.

I asked God to answer in
His own special way—

With the whistle of the wind,
With the creaking of a door's hinge,

With the pitter-patter of the rain,
With the elongated horn of a train,

With the sweet melodies of a choir,
With the chiming of a clock upon every hour.

I said a prayer for you. . .
With kindness in mind,

I asked God to follow you and comfort
You all the time—

To touch you,
To spear you with his love through and through, To open your eyes,

To help you see the heavenly skies,
To melt your ice,

That his warmth may suffice.
I'm keeping you in my prayers!

Justin H. Underwood

How You Living

No passage in the Bible draws a clearer contrast between the lifestyles of spirit-filled believer and that of a person controlled by the sinful human nature than Galatians 5:16-26. Paul not only discusses general lifestyle differences by emphasizing that the Spirit and the sinful nature are at war with one another, but he includes a specific list of both the acts of the sinful nature and the fruit of the Spirit. Why do you think Paul gave us this list?

Being “in the flesh” or “carnally minded” are terms for the sinful human nature with its corrupt desires. The sinful nature remains within us Christians even after conversion, and it is our daily enemy (Romans 8:6-8, 13; Galatians 5:17, 21). Those who practice the acts of the sinful nature cannot inherit God’s kingdom (Galatians 5:21). What does practice mean? To perform repeatedly or habitually. Therefore, this sinful nature must be resisted and put to death continually through the power for the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:4-14; Galatians 5:17).

Now let’s look at the acts of the sinful nature and as we go through this list in Galatians 5:19-21, ask yourself: *do I practice any of these?*

1. Adultery: sexual activity or intercourse outside the marriage union
2. Fornication: sexual sins, evil deeds and vices – including thoughts and desires of the heart
3. Uncleaness and lasciviousness sensuality; following one’s passions and desires to the point of having no shame or public decency.
4. Idolatry: worship of spirits, persons or graven images; trust in any person, institution or thing as having equal or greater authority than God and His word
5. Witchcraft: sorcery, Spiritism, black magic, worship of demons and use of drugs to produce “spiritual” experiences
6. Hatred: intense, hostile intentions and acts; extreme dislike or enmity
7. Variance: quarreling, antagonism, a struggle for superiority
8. Emulations: resentfulness, envy of another’s success
9. Wrath: explosive anger that flames into violent words or deeds
10. Strife: un-righteously seeking power or position
11. Seditions: introducing divisive teachings not supported by God’s word
12. Heresies: division within the congregation into exclusive groups or cliques that destroy the unity of the church
13. Envyings: resentful dislike of another person who has something that one desires
14. Drunkenness: impairing one’s mental or physical control by alcoholic drink
15. Revellings: excessive feasting and revelry; a party spirit involving alcohol, drugs, sex or the like
16. Murders: a murderer (always of criminal – or at least intentional – homicide)

Paul’s final comment on these sinful natures is clear, any so-called Christian who engages in such activities shuts themselves out of the kingdom of God. They don’t possess eternal salvation.

Contrast to the sinful nature is the Spirit-minded lifestyle called “the fruit of the Spirit.” This is produced in God’s children as we allow the Holy Spirit to direct and influence our lives – and destroy sin’s power, especially our sinful nature. Ask yourselves, do these fruits abound in me?

1. Love: charity, a caring for and seeking of the highest good of another person without motive of personal gain.
2. Joy: the feeling of gladness based on the love, grace, blessings, promises, and nearness of God that belong to those who believe in Jesus.
3. Peace: the rest of heart and mind based on the knowledge that all is well between the believer and his or her Heavenly Father – resulting in freedom from the turmoil of anxiety.
4. Long-suffering: endurance, patience, being slow to anger or despair
5. Gentleness: kindness, not wanting to hurt anyone or cause them pain
6. Goodness: zeal for truth and righteousness and a hatred of evil. It can be expressed in acts of kindness or in rebuking and correcting evil
7. Faith: firm and unswerving loyalty to a person to whom one is united by promise, commitment, trust, and honesty.
8. Meekness: gentleness, restraint coupled with strength and courage; it describes a person who can be angry when anger is needed and humbly submissive when submission is needed
9. Temperance: self-control, mastering one’s own desires and passions, including faithfulness to one’s marriage vow; also, purity

Paul’s conclusion on the fruit of the Spirit is, “there is no law against such.” Guess what brothers, we can practice these virtues until the wheels fall off. Amen.

Eric D. Moffett

(Preached at Dog Pen Church March 2017)