

# The Good News

Newsletter— Novemberber 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)**

Dear Good News contributors,

We are so grateful for the writings you send into us each month. Reading your articles, we get a sense of who you are. It is a good thing for all of us to share pieces of ourselves through writing and other arts.

We know many of you do not only write articles, but you draw, write poetry, and design prayers. We would like to shine a light on some of these talents and devotional practices. You will find a list of the sermon texts for next year (through May 20) on pages seven and eight of this newsletter. We hope to see how you all might take and interpret some of these texts into pieces of art, poetry, and prayer that we might share with the people at University Baptist Church.

If you are interested, send your work our way. Let us know if your work is for the Good News, the church, or both.

With gratitude for the ways God is at work in us all,

Kat Kimmel

## Opening Prayer:

Heavenly Father we come before you in the spirit of adoption, through the redeeming power of the blood of Jesus Christ, in which we now, as Your Beloved Children, call out Abba Father; Holy Spirit if there is anyone here today who is anxious, distracted, and burdened by the cares and worries of the world, we ask that you, Jehovah Jireh, remove these things and replace them with your peace, patience, and understanding, in which we can allow the Holy Spirit to search and convict our hearts with the word you have given Brother Underwood. Holy Spirit, we ask you to continue to guide your faithful bondservant, giving him the utterances of your wisdom and instruction; so that in him and through him, your grace, love and truth may manifest and bless the hearts and lives of each brother here.

Almighty God, we willingly place ourselves your altar of righteousness, asking you, Jehovah Mekadesh to consume us, that we may share your Holiness and reflect the glory and good work of Jesus Christ to those around us.

Holy Spirit we ask you to humble the hearts of lost men living in rebellion; we ask You to prick their hearts today Lord, that upon hearing your word from afar they may desire to come home to you Father God. We make ourselves available to receive the lost souls You send, receiving them we the love, grace and mercy, which You have given to all of us here for this very purpose .

Heavenly Father, we thank You for this day of opportunity to learn and better serve and glorify You. We give you all the praise Jesus. Amen

## Benediction:

Holy Spirit, as we leave this place of fellowship, continue to unite and strengthen us as we enter back into the world; for we know this is where the mission truly begins.

Holy Spirit, keep us with a renewed and steadfast hunger for Your Word and give us more confidence Jehovah Elyan, that we may behold defenders of the faith, shining light in darkness and allowing the lost to see the Way, the Truth and the Life living in each one here before you.

Father God, we ask you to grant us favor with this administration so that we may more effectively serve you in ministry.

Jesus, we know that our success depends on our relationship with You: the more work you do inside of us, the more work you are able to do through us. We are but vessels purchased by the blood of you, Jesus Christ. Set us apart to do your will, Lord. Father, we ask that you comfort the families of those affected by what happened in Las Vegas and that this act of hate and violence not be allowed to continue to do harm.

We ask for your peace Father God and we thank you this wonderful time of worship. May you continue to be mindful of us, in Jesus Name we pray, Amen

Brother Devin Bennett  
October 2017 prayer  
The Dog Pen Church in Christ  
[dogpenchurch.com](http://dogpenchurch.com)

## *Are We Standing*

Ephesians 6:13; "Therefore take up the full armor of God that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything to stand firm"

As believers and servants of our Heavenly father and his son Jesus Christ "we are to stand firm in God so that we may be able to resist in the evil day". In the evil day probably refers to when the enemy comes upon us like a flood. If we wait until the enemy attacks to try and stand firm we will certainly stumble and fall. As believers we must stand on the Word of God every single day. The devil doesn't want us to spend time in the Word of God but we must rebuke the flesh in its rebellion and humble ourselves in God's Word every single day. Ephesians 5:16 tells us making the most of your time, because the days are evil. We as believers are to seize every opportunity to live lives noted for holiness, deeds of mercy and Words of help. Beloved Children of God every day brings its open doors of opportunity. Whether these opportunities serve God or Satan depends on how and where we are standing. Are we standing on the Word of God as mighty men of light? Matthew 5:14-16, or as men in the dark giving opportunity to Satan. Romans 13:12-14 As for me, I am going to stand firm on the Word of God in Jesus Christ everyday as He blesses me to live. And in Jesus name we pray. Amen and Amen Brother in Christ Stephen Elliot Powers

D.P.C.

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

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## *Your Opinion Does Not Matter*

Did you notice the reaction you had when your brain processed the above statement? That is your pride and it has no place in the life of a disciple-making child of God.

Everything we believe must be based on the Words of God. Since God's Word is indisputable fact we must never form an opinion that is contrary to his Word. Search your heart and mind to realize just how often it happens that you share your opinion without first considering how it aligns with the words of our Creator. Do you know better than He does? I certainly don't.

We can get so caught up in the changing times and issues that we often find ourselves in where we are asked to share our opinions. "If you know what to say then answer your neighbor, but if not put a hand over your mouth," says the proverb. Put another way, "If you know what God says about an issue, then feel free to speak, if not remain silent." Better yet, say that you don't have an opinion yet because you are not sure what God has said about it. Then find out.

I know this approach can cause us to become fearful and our pride pushes us to answer in our own way, even when we don't really know what God's Word is on the subject. We can also become fearful when we don't know God's Word, but it is contrary to the opinions of the majority and unpopular with the world. Do not be afraid to speak the truth in love and never allow your pride to guide your speech. When you know what God has said on an issue it makes no difference if it is popular or not. It makes no difference because you have no opinion and if someone wants to argue or call you intolerant, it is not you they will be railing against, but God. However, when you give your own opinion on an issue or topic, then you have taken yourself out of God's Word and must argue your point and defend your pride alone.

So we must know what God says to us in His Word and through our prayers so that we can speak with His authority to a lost world struggling for truthful answers.

Please spend some time with our Lord and cultivate the relationship He desires so that you will know Him and what He has to say.

Have a great month in Jesus.

Roger Gillett  
Parchman DR

*From Disobedient to Obedient*

I heard the prison guard calling my name, making me aware to get ready for visitation. My family has made it a tradition to come up to Parchman prison each year (God-willing) on the week of my birthday. Not many people are blessed with such occasions as time spent in prison or the actions that cause us to be put in prison can burn the bridge between family and friends. I thank God everyday for my family and the friends that I have standing at my side. I also pray for those who feel alone behind these concrete walls and steel doors. It can be very tough and I've seen with my own two eyes some of the toughest grown men break down. Even when you have that supportive presence out there, you still have days when you feel all alone and down trodden.

Today though (10/3/2017), I feel special and ecstatic as I don my prison uniform and chains on my way to see a host of smiling faces: my mother Mary, my sister Shefronia, my uncle David, my aunt Stella, and my aunt Rosie. They are always very glad to see my just as I am elated to see them.

The significance of this story is that my mother and I were having a conversation about when I was younger and we'd gone to New Orleans to visit my aunt Annielsteen. While we were there, someone stole all of mine and my brother's toy cars and trucks. My mother had told both of us to put our toys away before we left and neither of us did as we were told. We left them in the dirt pile in the front of our house—our designated play area. Because we were disobedient, we lost out on the joy and fulfillment of playing with the gifts that our hard-working parents gave us.

What is so remarkably peculiar about this story is that I was studying earlier that morning in the book of Leviticus 26 about the blessings for obedience and the punishments for disobedience. One of the commandments that God gave for man to keep (Exodus 20:12) was to honor your father and mother. This commandment teaches obedience and respect for authority.

We, as humankind, always desire the blessings that God provides us, but we don't want to do what God says to do to receive them (John 15:7-16). When we decide to do things our own way, then we must suffer the consequences of our choices/actions. My mother always used to tell me that if you make your bed, you must lie in it (Isaiah 1:19-20). Too often we blame everyone else for our mistakes instead of taking responsibility for our own poor choices/actions. On top of that, we get mad at God and blame God for our own stupidity and ignorance (Genesis 3:12-13; Proverbs 19 & 28).

Adversity, the promised fruit of disobedience, is a tool which God uses, not to inflict revenge, but to lead God's people to repentance (Leviticus 26:40-42 & 1 John 1:9). Just the same, my brother and I admitted our wrongs to our parents as they explained to us that they work too hard for us to waste their money by leaving our toys out for others to take them. After we promised to listen to them and do what they say, they eventually bought us more toy cars and trucks. But we had to suffer for a while without them as our parents were trying to teach us a valuable lesson.

There's a lesson in all that we do—right and wrong. We should learn from these lessons. Obedience is something that we must learn in order to be excellent followers and righteous teachers (Romans 5:19; Hebrews 5:8-14). As I reflected back then, I looked at my mother and we both enjoyed a good laugh at the knuckle-headed kid that I was.

Now grown, I can't take back all the mistakes that I've made, or the headaches I've caused my family. But I can say that I'm sorry, and I thank you for never giving up on me. I can truly appreciate the steps in my life that I've taken using some good, moral decision along the way. I thank God for His hand on this day. I thank God that He continues to open my eyes to behold His beauty and glory. Amen.

By: Justin Underwood

*From Disobedient to Obedient*

*My parents taught me at a young age  
To listen and to obey  
But I became a real knuckle-head  
If I must say  
I wanted to do things my way; I  
Was only obedient to the flesh  
I acted like I couldn't hear His  
Voice calling me unless—*

*He was providing me with something  
That I really, really wanted  
Then I'd boot Him away like a  
Football being punted  
But there came a time when I had  
To crawl like a beggar  
Ashamed of the way that I locked  
Him away in a cellar*

*Only to realize that it was Him that  
I needed to survive  
I was so hocked up and high off of  
The devil's many lies  
Now, I'm being nursed back to health  
And recovering in rehab  
He cleaned me up inside when once I  
Was filthy and drab*

*I've been through the storm only to be  
Soaked from head to toe  
At His beck and call, I hear His voice  
And I know—  
I'm an obedient soldier ready to do His  
Divine will*

*For the day of redemption, by Him I  
Am sealed.*

## *What do you Treasure?*

Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be. Matthew 7:21

Treasure: a noun, 1. a highly valued object 2. a beloved or highly valued person

A tough question to ask yourself is, “What do you treasure?” An even tougher question is, “What do those around you say that you treasure? The answer you give and the response of your peers may not match up. And that is where we have a problem. There are many treasures that people seek—some good and some bad. There are worldly treasures, such as money, fame, pleasure, and possessions. And there are godly treasures, including God Himself, a relationship with Jesus, love, wisdom, and righteousness. The type of treasure someone seeks is a spotlight into who they are and a clear indication of what they consider important.

One way to discern what someone treasures is to simply listen to them. What do they talk about more than anything else? What do their conversations tend to revolve around or circle back to? Suppose somebody wins the lottery. They would be talking about it non-stop: what they will do with the money, how fortunate they were to win all that money, and more. They would share the news with everybody because it is important to them. As it is, they would talk about the lottery the way Christians should talk about Jesus. We have won the lottery with Jesus! He is everything to us. He is our Counselor, our Helper, our Healer, our Savior, and our Friend. Jesus is our liason to the Father, interceding for us at the Father’s right hand. We have struck infinitely more than gold when we allowed Jesus into our lives, and He needs to be the topic of many of our conversations. We may not see where Jesus fits into our daily discussions, but if He found us important enough to die for, we should make Him important enough to talk about.

“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God...don’t be hearers of the Word only, but be doers, otherwise you are only fooling yourself” (James 1:5, 22). Another, more obvious identifier of one’s treasure is their actions. It’s easy for someone to say anything that anyone else wants to hear, or whatever may be the most beneficial sentiment at the time, but actions speak louder than words and therefore reveal the heart at its core. Focus more on what people do, because you can’t always count on what they say: “But what do you think about this? A man with two sons told the older boy, ‘Son go out and work in the vineyard today.’ The son answered, ‘No, I won’t go.’ But later he changed his mind and went anyway. Then the father told the other son, ‘You go,’ and he said, ‘Yes sir, I will.’ But he didn’t go” (Matthew 21:28-30).

By simply listening and observing, we are able to discover what a person treasures. More importantly, by reflecting on our own words and actions, we ascertain what we truly treasure. This self-observation is paramount to personal growth. What all have you said and done today? Did you lift anybody up or did you tear somebody down? Did you bring God glory or did you glorify yourself? What is the difference between what you claim to treasure and what your actions actually indicate you treasure? The more honest we are with our answers, the more we are able to mature in truth and grow in faith. We need to accurately identify what we treasure, and then actively seek it. Don’t just live life on auto pilot, but engage in the time you have on earth.

Let God control your heart...let God be your treasure. Seek Him, please Him, speak to Him, speak of Him, obey Him, let Him fill your soul, your energy. Let God permeate your thoughts and pierce your heart, opening up to His love. Let God become your treasure; what you live for; what you die for. Do this, and He will direct your steps. He will guide your feet down paths of righteousness and toward eternal glory. God will be the most worthy and rewarding treasure you have ever sought. And He alone will bring you fulfillment. Wealth and possessions will never be good enough: “Everything is wearisome beyond description. No matter how much we hear, we are not content” (Ecc 1:8).

“There is another serious problem I have seen under the sun. Hoarding riches harms the saver... We all come to the end of our lives as naked and empty-handed as on the day we were born. We can’t take our riches with us” (Ecc. 5:13,15). Sensual pleasure is sure to disappoint us, too. All of these treasures of the world have no lasting value. They are a “chasing after the wind.” But God is eternal, and God has no equal. The fruit in His treasure chest is very sweet to the taste: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Gal. 5:22). “These pleasures come from the hand of God” (Ecc. 2:24).

At the end of the day, what would someone say was your treasure? If you were indicted today for being a Christian, with only the testimony of others, observing your actions and hearing your words, would there be enough evidence to convict you? What is your treasure? Who is your treasure? If you claim to belong to God, live like it.

God bless and enjoy the hunt!

Matt Wilbanks

Philippians 3:14

“I press towards the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

“The ultimate goal for Christians is to spend eternity with Jesus Christ the Son and God the Father.”

I believe that goals give a sense of achievement when we meet them. On the other hand, even when we fall short of a goal, if we were seeking God’s glory in our efforts, we really didn’t fail. God’s glory should be incorporated in every goal we plan for. As people, we see that every choice we make has a positive and negative side. With such a great God we serve, we can always pull a positive from a negative if we so desire. It’s totally up to us. Jesus died on the cross for our salvation and brought an unbelievable amount of grace into the picture. Though I as a man fail daily at being perfect like Christ, I am so grateful that I can try again tomorrow when I fall short today. Grace intercedes where I fall short and covers my sins when I repent and ask forgiveness. Although my salvation has already been bought by the blood of Jesus, I still make an attempt to work it out daily with fear and trembling. To be loving, caring, unselfish, and a servant to others. That is the true race in which we, as Christians, should run daily. To be a reflection of Christ in a dark world filled with sin. Even though this world is not my home, I hope others will choose to follow Christ, so I will see them when I finally make it to the place which is prepared for me. To pave the way by spreading the Gospel and leaving behind a trail of Christlike behavior, speech, and conduct. I hope and pray that we can reach the goal of eternal life with the One who bought my life with His precious blood. That, my friends, is the true prize in which we all strive for.

By Josh Massengill

January 7 **Jesus Says Come and See**  
Baptism of Our Lord  
**John 1:35-51**

January 14 **Wedding at Cana**  
Second Sunday after  
Epiphany  
**John 2:1-11**

January 21 **Jesus Cleanses the Temple**  
Third Sunday after Epiphany  
**John 2:13-25**

January 28 **Nicodemus**  
Fourth Sunday after  
Epiphany  
**John 3:1-21**

February 4 **The Woman at the Well**  
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany  
**John 4:1-42**

February 11 **The Man Born Blind**  
Transfiguration of Our Lord  
**John 9:1-41**

Revised 4/24/17 <http://www.narrativelectionary.org> 5  
February 14 **The Good Shepherd**  
Ash Wednesday  
**John 10:1-18**

February 18 **Jesus Raises Lazarus**  
First Sunday in Lent  
**John 11:1-44**

February 25 **Jesus Washes Feet**  
Second Sunday in Lent  
**John 13:1-17**

March 4 **Peter's Denial**  
Third Sunday in Lent  
**John 18:12-27**

March 11 **Jesus and Pilate**  
Fourth Sunday in Lent  
**John 18:28-40**

March 18 **Jesus Condemned**  
Fifth Sunday in Lent  
**John 19:1-16a**  
Jesus is condemned, they have no king

March 29 **Jesus' Last Words**

Maundy Thursday

**John 19:23-30**

March 30 **Jesus the Passover Lamb**

Good Friday

**John 19:31-42**

April 1 **Resurrection**

Resurrection of Our Lord

**John 20:1-18**

April 8 **Thomas**

Second Sunday of Easter

**John 20:19-31**

April 15 **Paul's Conversion**

Third Sunday of Easter

**Acts 9:1-19a**

April 22 **Paul and Silas**

Fourth Sunday of Easter

**Acts 16:16-34**

April 29 **Paul's Sermon at Athens**

Fifth Sunday of Easter

**Acts 17:16-31**

May 6 **Partnership in the Gospel**

Sixth Sunday of Easter

**Philippians 1:1-18a**

May 13 **The Christ Hymn**

Seventh Sunday of Easter

**Philippians 2:1-13**

May 20 **Pentecost; Rejoice in the Lord**

Day of Pentecost

**Acts 2:1-21; Philippians 4:4-7**