

The Good News

Newsletter - October 2017

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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)

Don't Be Alone

Stanford University psychologist, Philip Zimbardo, wrote in a piece for *Psychology Today* titled, “The Age of Indifference”: “I know of no more potent killer than isolationism. There is no more destructive influence on physical and mental health than the isolation of you from me and us from them. It has been shown to be a central agent in the etiology of depression, paranoia, murder, schizophrenia, rape, suicide, and a mass and wide variety of disease states.”

When I read Zimbardo's article, I was in the process of preparing a sermon on the necessity of shared discipleship. We are not sent out or even expected to fulfill the Great Commission (Acts 28:18-20) by ourselves. Jesus sent his disciples out in pairs (Mark 6:7). Paul worked alongside Barnabas (Acts 13: 1-3), and they worked alongside and taught to maturity several men and women throughout their ministries. The great Protestant reformer Martin Luther had Philip Melancthon; D.C. Moody had Ira Sankey; and Billy Graham couldn't have done the work he was called to do had he not had Cliff Barrows and George Beverly Shaw to share the load.

You may be wondering what the Zimbardo quote has to do with shared discipleship. I believe its truth is just another reason we are instructed not to do things alone and/or in our own power. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 tells us that “Two are better than one...if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!” King Solomon emphasized the advantages of companionship. It is a terrible thing to face adversity alone, and there are definite advantages of working together. While we often think of adversity coming against us from outside of ourselves or our groups, I have been challenged and beat up more from within than from without.

Isolationism is a mind-wrecking foe that can be conquered with each other's help. Just imagine the mental health and well-being we can help people achieve by simply reaching out and showing them that they are not in this world alone. Jesus sets the example in the ways He interacted with the most isolated people in society. He physically touched lepers (Matt. 8: 1-3) and was touched by the unclean (Matt. 9:20-22), healing them all and allowing them to be brought back into society. He healed the deaf, speechless, blind, paralytic, demon possessed, and the list goes on and on (Matt. 8:14-17; Mark 2:1-12, 7:32-35). Jesus brought peace to all who called upon Him. We can bring this same peace to others by introducing them to Jesus. We must emulate our Lord and allow Him to be present in people's lives by ourselves being present too.

We are not alone. Jesus lives inside each of us. He sent His disciples out in pairs and instructed Solomon on the value of companionship. He sends us out too with the same instruction. Missionary work and disciple making take time and a love for God and mankind. We have a mandate and examples to follow, so join with me in ending the pointless, destructive influence of isolationism to the glory of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Have a good month and reach out to someone.

Peace is only in Jesus,
Roger G.

A Righteous Dictator

Psalm 116:10: I believe, therefore have I spoken...

I enjoy listening to Christian radio programs on Sunday mornings because there's a variety of pastors that come on to preach the word, and they give different sermons to nourish the body of all believers in Christ – 1 Timothy 4:6-11.

One time while listening, I heard a pastor speak about being a dictator and how it was our duty to do so. My ears immediately peeked up; I was definitely tuned into the conversation. He said that you have to dictate the conversations that you have rather than letting them dictate you. He went on to give some examples, and I noticed that his examples happen often. He spoke about a conversation starting out neutral and quickly turning into a dialogue about the lust of a woman (or man), gossip about someone, reminiscing about a past life, lying, or some other wayward subject.

We can't, as believers, allow the wiles of the devil to interrupt our intimacy with God – Ephesians 4:22-25, 29 & 1 Peter 5:8-9. We have to stay on point and dictate the conversation back to our focal point – God – Philippians 3:20-21.

I recognize these same things the pastor was talking about happening around me. Most of the conversations among the guys in this prison are nonsense, ignorance, profane, degrading, or just pure gossip. We live in a world that loves drama, and some people love to be seen and heard. Honestly, anyone that knows me can tell you that I'm not one to sit and talk idly. I'm more of an observer, and there are very few people that I do talk to.

Of course, I understand the need for communing, especially here in prison, as some of these guys need fellowship with others to maintain some sort of sanity. It's not an easy task waking up every day in a cell all by yourself looking at the same face every day and looking at the same eggshell walls. I thank God that I'm a handsome guy! J. As a Christian, trying to spiritually grow/mature each day, I have to take a step back from such conversations in order to set apart my mind from the world and be one with the spirit of God – 1 Peter 1:13-16.

To walk with God means to be mindful of the things you say, the conversations you have, the things you do, and the impression you make on others. Despite who you are, someone is always looking up to you, and it's on you as to whether you lead that person in a negative or positive way. The truth is, I've done a lot of bad things that I'm not proud of, and I know that I was going down the wrong path of life. I separated myself from my own brother when we were youngsters because he used to follow me around all the time. I didn't want him to be like me. We were best friends as well as brothers, but I wanted him to grow up to be a better man than me.

I look all around me now, and I see a bunch of weak men in prison, including myself, that let the devil beat us for our minds. Here we all sit, whether innocent or guilty of the crimes we've been convicted of, most of the guys here stay stuck on stupid. So we have a choice. We can become dictators of a righteous life, or we can let the devil dictate our path. Ask yourself this question: How has my life gone without God's leading? I believe living on His terms makes a difference. I assure you that life with God is more peaceful, a blessing, and abundantly rich in spiritual treasures – Colossians 1:9-14.

I have been low, and that was no joke. Now, I'm a dictator through Christ, and I sit high upon the clouds enjoying a front seat to heavenly places. I urge you to do the same – God bless everyone!

Justin H. Underwood

A Righteous Dictator

I dialed 911 to Heaven to seek assistance for
An emergency
The devil is my staler and he just won't
Let me be
Even though I have a restraining order, I'm
Still being harassed.
He desperately wants me to reminisce with him
About my past
Pissed that I've set myself apart from him
And now I cling to my Savior
I'm thankful to the Lord for His strength and
Guidance in being a righteous dictator –
Dictating the very path that allows me to
Be Christ-like
Get thee behind me ol' conniving Satan and
Take a hike
I'm aware of the devil's henchmen because
I used to be one
Those neutral conversations are ploys in the attempt
To shoot me with an unrighteous gun
Yeah, the devil is always trying to take me out; He's
God's biggest hater
Armed with the whole armor of God, I'm destined
To be a righteous dictator –
Destined to be a truly obedient son doing my
Heavenly Father's will
A mere sacrifice compared to the ultimate sacrifice
on Calvary's hill
It's my prayer that we all walk in His divine
Love and light
Put your trust and faith in Him to help you
Put up a good fight
Because the devil is persistent and he continues
to be an irritant agitator
So we all have to be strong and determined as
Deputized, righteous dictators.

A Taste of Heaven

Walking down the street one day
With the sun against my back,
I heard a roar of thunder and the sound of lightning clash.
Seeing just beyond me a mountain standing tall,
I ran to it full speed praying not to fall.
When I reached the mountain, I climbed to the very top.
And there I saw a city without a dirty spot,
I entered into the city carrying nothing but disgust
And met a man, a different man, by the name of Jesus.’
He took me to His Father’s house and there they fed me well
And told me that the fire I saw was for people going to hell.
That night as I fell asleep on what seemed to be a cloud,
I heard the angels singing and rejoicing loud, the next morning when I awoke I was taken to the chief,
He said, “Yes my child you are in heaven. May your soul rest in peace.”

By Abdur Rahim Ambrose Sr.
D.P.C.

Eclipse

The skies darkened.
And the moon shaded the sun
Many people decided
It was time for some fun.
What so many of them
never came to realize.
Is that our Lord on high
Is the master of those skies.
He provides us wonders
That we'll never understand.
Those marvelous displays
Are the work of his hand.
Praise him forever

Richard G Jordan
D.R. Mississippi

Where's the Love?

Our country is in disarray-white America is in as bad a place as black America and we are all suffering. There should only be one America yet we still stand as a nation divided rather than united.

In many walks of life, we separate from one another and that's even speaking of the church. I know that God expects more out of us than what's going on. We all have to take a long look at ourselves and tell the truth....

Am I loving others like I should? Are we loving each other like God commands us to do?-
Matt. 22:39; Rom. 13:8-9; 1 Thess. 3:12-13; and James 2:8.

What are we taking with us from church on Sunday and the other days of the week we have Bible study? Is there any of God's work being done in the vineyard?- Mark 12:1-11.

If there is no love for people who don't look like me, act like me, or walk like me, then how can there be God's work out in the vineyard?

His Word says that we must abide in faith, hope, charity (love), but the greatest of the three is love.- 1 Cor. 13:13.

I am working on Fred and I'm honest enough to know that I can do a lot better. I know this. I know God is real...I know in my heart that He is real. I have experienced His great love and I know I have to pass His love on to others.

Where is the love in this world today? A man can get shot with his hands up in surrender. A little boy can get killed just trying to go home. There are senseless killings going on around the world every day.

Knowledge—Where is it? If I have knowledge, I should know better. Without love, what good is knowledge?- 1 Cor. 13:4-7; Eph. 3:19.

I know God loves us and His love is powerful. When are we going to love each other? I pray that love conquers all the hate in the world and brings us together instead of continuing to tear us apart.- 1 Pet. 4:8; Prov. 10:12.

Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.-2 Pet. 1:2. Amen!

p.s. Quote of the day: In my AA meetings, we say: "Keep it simple!" So, I say to all of you: "Keep it simple and learn to love and respect one another!"—God bless.

Frederick Singleton

Expect results and glory

JAMES 4: 2-3: Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and desire to have, yet ye have not because ye ask not. Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

ROMANS 6: 4: Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in the newness of life.

As believers and servants of our heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ according to the word of God, are we praying prayers without expecting results? As believers and servants, if we're praying prayers without expecting results, our attitude should change and we should be getting serious about our prayers and His words. As believers and servants of our heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ, we should be praying in the name of Jesus, according to the Word of God, and we should expect to receive the results of our prayers.

In Mark 4:35, we see that our Lord Jesus Christ calms a violent storm by speaking the desired end results by saying the words, "Peace be still". In Mark 11: 13-14, 20-21, we see that our Lord Jesus Christ, speaks the desired end results to the fig tree by saying, "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter forever. In Luke 12, we see that our Lord Jesus Christ, speaks the desired end results. In Leviticus 14-15, that our heavenly Father, speaks the desired end results to Moses for the children of Israel. As believers and servants of our Heavenly Father and His son Jesus Christ, expecting the Glory as we read about the Glory in Ezekiel 8: 1-4, when Ezekiel saw God in his Glory, he said He was afire from the loins up and from the loins down. That the fire of God is called the Glory and the wind of God is called the Glory and the smoke of God is called the Glory and the fullness of God is called the Glory. Psalms 8:5, tells us that in the beginning man was crowned with that Glory, and according to the Word of God we are supposed to be walking in the Glory.

We are anointed with the Glory of God, and everything we need is in the Glory, and we seek the knowledge of His Glory. It is our responsibility to press on in Jesus until we come to understand and experience the Glory. We can't separate Jesus the Anointed One and His Anointing from the Glory, and nothing can't separate the Holy Spirit from the Glory, and nothing can't separate the Father from the Glory, and the devil and his demons, and sin, can't separate us from the Glory of God, and hell itself can't separate us from the Glory of God. And we shall see the Glory of God that there is coming a time when the Glory of God won't just radiate out from God, it will radiate from us.

It is almost unthinkable to unbelievers that such Glory and power could reside in, and flow through, the flesh-and-blood bodies of men and women. And we need the images of God's Glory seen in our lives every day. We need to go through the Word of God and think about his blazing fire of Glory. It is God's plan for us to walk in the light as He is in the light, to walk in the Glory as He is in the Glory.

As we repent and receive the Glory, and we see that God's goodness overwhelms evil. God's goodness and Glory are one and the same, that's why God made all His goodness pass in front of Moses in Exodus 33: 18-19, and in Exodus 33. God told Moses that He would have to hide him from that Glory, because if he saw God's face, he would die. And that's the reason God and man had to be separated after the fall. God had to protect man from the power of His Glory. And God can bring His children unto the Glory; and in Romans 3: 23, says for all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God.

And in Jesus Christ name we pray Amen and Amen.

Are We Standing?

Ephesians 6:13: "Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm."

As believers and servants of the Heavenly Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, we are entitled to all the benefits and promises of sonship. One of those benefits is the armor of God, and power of God to stand firm during our battles in the evil day. Every day has its evils and challenges so we, as believers in the Righteous God, must stand on His Words in every situation, trusting Him to keep us safe.

There are times we must even stand firm against our own brothers and sisters. I was recently told not to forgive a person that had wronged me. I couldn't believe that this brother, a Christian, was advising me contrary to God's word. I'm not sure if he was caught without his armor on and the evil one put such nonsense into his mind, but I have mine on and I am prayed up and armed for battle.

I share the above paragraph to point out that these are evil days and we must be prepared to stand firm on God's word even against the people that stand with us. The devil and his demons are telling us that we can't trust God's word, but together we can correct each other and unite against him and the demons seeking to destroy us.

Are you a child of light or are you in the dark? It is your choice. On what and on whom do you stand firm? Is it not the Bible and Jesus, the Light of the World? I encourage you to stand with me today, covered in armor and bathed in Light with the Sword of the Spirit in hand and prayers of praise for our victory on our lips. May you be blessed even as I am blessed with life in Christ. In Jesus' Holy name we pray. Amen and Amen.

Brother in Christ,
Stephen E. P.

(Note- the above pieces were inspired by the Word of God through Stephen. It was written by fellow brother in Christ. Stephen Powers has suffered two strokes and currently has a bleeding aneurysm in his brain.)

Why does she Cry?

Can you see her? Tears streaming down her face. Huddled and sobbing. The world moving on around her. Morning sun shining down, and she still weeps. Gasping sobs, silent screams reaching out, longing. People pass, laughing, dreaming, and never seeing. Passing so fast, but never a backward glance. Why does she cry? Who does she cry for? Pain boiling so deep inside, rivers of tears flow from her eyes. Who will stop? Who will see? One moment, one touch, please let it be. Open your mind, open your heart and see. Just a touch. A kind word, bringing her back, bringing her home. Another lost soul left in the ashes. No one cares, no one sees, feel the chill as she passes. No one cares why she cries, just another lost soul that slowly dies.

Gayle Hopkins

