



Newsletter— June 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)

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

2 Corinthians 12: 7-10; “And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me – to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I”...

This is something I can personally relate to, as I’m sure many of us can to some extent. For me it was the two massive strokes several years ago, and the deeply embedded bleeding brain aneurysm present in my brain today –which the doctors and specialists can do nothing about. Daily I deal with physical pain, not to mention the fear that the aneurysm may pop. I’m sure you are wondering how on earth I am not only able to deal with this, but how I’m still alive. I will be the first one to tell you I’m not supposed to be here. It is only by the grace of God that I’m alive. Which is why I made a promise to God that I would seek His face in prayer every-day!

When I first began praying to God, full healing was at the top of my list. But as I continued to seek him, continued to rest in his grace, I learned that His grace is sufficient. Does this mean I don’t still want to be healed? Of course not. Does it mean I don’t still have pain every day? No. But it does mean that in spite of these things, I am content. I am still able to count it all joy! I know now that his strength is made perfect in weakness and I’m thankful that I am proof of that truth. It is my constant prayer that the grace of God seen through me is a source of encouragement to everyone. May you seek His face today.

In Jesus Christ name we pray. Amen and Amen.

Brother in Christ,
Stephen Elliot
D. P. C.

In the Cool of the Day

By: Roger Gillett

Bushman, Death Row

One day a man was walking through the forest after a long, soft rain. He was enjoying the smell of the air and the feel of the spongy forest floor as it gave way under his steps. It was truly a beautiful day. The man's head was in the clouds and his heart full of the peaceful love God gives to His children, particularly on days spent in a lush forest after an easy spring rain. The birds were singing and the squirrels barking and playing on the trees.

Deep into the forest there was reflection of light that caught the man's eye and was gone in a blink. The light was bright and direct as if a signal was being sent using the sun and a mirror. The sudden strangeness of the flash of sunlight was in stark contrast to the sights, sounds, and diffused light coming through the canopy of leaves. Intrigued, he decided to investigate.

Wading into the forest he dodged and ducked low hanging branches, but it was no use trying to stay dry. The man yelped with delight the first time he brushed a branch and was rewarded with a small shower as the leaves above dropped their store of raindrops. He weaved around giant ferns and climbed over an ancient fallen tree. "What a great day," he said to the world around him.

At last he finally made it to the "mirror" and was oddly disappointed to discover that it was only a very still puddle of water. Still curious about the reflective properties of this tiny pool and not in any hurry to continue his adventure, he sat down next to the water and leaned over it for a look. He was delighted to see that the water was indeed mirror-like in its stillness. He smiled at his reflection, made funny faces, and fell back onto the grass giggling like a child.

Shortly after he had turned his face to the sunshine, or not so shortly since time in the forest is reckoned differently than in other places, he became aware of the tickle of thirst at the back of his throat. "I must get moving and find some water to drink. Everyone knows that a person cannot drink out of a nonmoving pool of water," he reasoned with himself and spoke to no one but the animals around him.

So he got up and went in search of a stream he could hear, but not see. It wasn't very long before he found what he was looking for; a small stream bubbling over some naturally stacked rocks. "Perfect," he thought as he bent over and cupped his hand into the icy, crystal clear water. "Ahhhh! God is so good," the man exclaimed as the pure water cooled his dry throat.

While slaking his thirst and warming his hands between drinks he noticed that it was impossible for his reflection to be seen in the moving water. Of course he knew as much, but a revelation on a meaning of life caused him to lay down on the bank of the stream, warm his face in the sun, and contemplate the message God had just revealed.

While he could see his reflection clearly in the pool of water, he realized that it

was a distorted representation of life. When water does not move it becomes stagnant and the only life it contains is dangerous and foul. The stream on the other hand is always moving, always changing, and is always being refreshed. It harbors life and of itself can give life to any who drink from it.

The man realized that human life is governed by the same principle. If we stay stuck in our thoughts, patterns, and beliefs we will stagnate like the pool and become poison to ourselves and the people we come into contact with. If we keep ourselves open to new ideas, new challenges, and allow God to move and guide us forward we will always be refreshed and full of life like the stream; able to share life with the people around us.

As the man slowly walked out of the forest his mind returned to the clouds, his ears to the bird songs and squirrel barks, but his spirit... well, his spirit walked with the Word that is God.

(Ps 19:1-4; Rom. 1:20; John 4:7-15; Rev. 22:1-5)

The End.

Dear Mother.....You Are Appreciated!

Deut. 5:16. Honor ...thy mother, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

One day I was playing basketball at Crestview Apartments in Flora, MS, and it was a beautiful summer-day. During one of our water breaks, I heard someone calling my name and realized it was my high school classmate, Christopher Lewis. I hadn't seen him for a while, but I remembered him quite well. He told me he had been in the hospital with a cast on, and he wanted me to know he was very grateful for my mother. She worked as a nurse at the University Medical Center. He told me she always checked on him and made sure he stayed comfortable. A lot of people would constantly tell me how wonderful of a person my mother is. I once heard someone say that everything you touch touches you. When my mother was carrying me in her womb, she was holding God's hand and he was holding mine. She has always been a God-fearing woman and I am very thankful. She has been a blessing to me. For nine months she carried me. To this day she continues to carry me with her unconditional love and undying devotion as a mother. I know that I haven't always been the best son that I could be or even close. Sometimes I wonder if I'm even worthy of her love. I want every son and daughter to appreciate their mother this Mother's Day 2017—and everyday. I had a few opportunities to hug my mother while at a court hearing in 2016, and I dreaded not doing that more often while I'm in this world. They say you never miss your water until your well runs dry. That is true. I love you Mom and I pray that Almighty God has His hands on you. I pray that He continues to shine His light through you. Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers of the world and God bless you always!

Dear Mom...You Are Appreciated

For nine months, I live as a precious heartbeat
inside of you
When Almighty God held your hand, He gently
held mine too
And then I came into this world just
kicking and screaming
You comforted and nurtured me all the
while beaming—
With a smile of pure joy that could light up
the Heavenly skies
I saw his glorious tears in each tear that
fell from your eyes
I know that I caused you pain and for
that I still grieve
But I'm grateful for the lessons learned and
His Word I now heed—
To honor and respect all mothers (women) so
very precious and dear
Not just on Mother's day but throughout
each day of the year.
I thank you all and to you this very
poem is dedicated.
I love you mom and you are always
appreciated

-Justin Underwood