

# The GoodNews

Newsletter — January 2020

A Publication of University Baptist Church, Hattiesburg, MS

*The purpose of University Baptist Church is, through the 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)*

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## ***The Dog Pen Church Prayer***

Eternal God,

So often we doubt that You could ever use people like us, but we are so thankful and grateful that You sent Your only begotten Son to die for the very likes of us. We ask, O gracious and forgiving God, that You please forgive our doubts and help us to accept the many challenges You bring our way. Help us, O Lord, to remember that Your heart is for us and please guide us to find our true significance in You. Help us to trust in and follow Your light and love — even when the way gets dark. We thank you each day for Your Word and we pray that You teach us to hold fast to the wisdom, knowledge, and the instruction You offer. For we know that the only way to healing, to peace, and to the goodness of the Lord is to be one with Jesus.

God, thank You for the most precious gift of Your son who came to soothe every hurt, heal every wound, and wipe away every tear. Please continue to give us the strength and courage to rest in You that we may be renewed and transformed by Your Spirit. We ask all these things in the precious name of Jesus, Christ, Our Lord — Amen!

### ***The Blizzards of Life***

*(Exodus 13:17-22) 17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them by way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near. For God said, "Lest the people change their minds when they see war and return to Egypt." 18 But God led the people around by the way of the wilderness toward the Red Sea. And the people of Israel went up out of the land of Egypt equipped for battle. 19 Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for Joseph had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones with you from here." 20 And they moved on from Succoth and encamped at Etham, on the edge of the wilderness. 21 And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. 22 The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from before the people.*

*(Psalms 119:105) Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.*

Have any of you readers ever been in a blizzard? I'm not talking about a heavy snow storm, but a whiteout sound producing end of the world feeling blizzard. I've been through more than my share and during two of them I was caught out in the open. The first was as I was traveling to Idaho from Kansas. I was on the interstate driving through Wyoming when the storm of the year suddenly hit. I can't recall ever being that scared and feeling so small before. I was driving at a snail's pace because I couldn't tell where the edge of the highway ended and the ditch started. Pulling over wasn't an option for many reasons, so I white-knuckled along. The only car on the highway, and feeling like I was the only person left in the world. All of a sudden the interior of the car lit up, and from out of nowhere a giant snowplow sand truck eased by me with lights flashing yellow and leaving a path of safety. Which was filled in very quickly in its wake. I immediately fell in behind it, and the driver led me to an exit that I couldn't see into a motel parking lot that seemed to appear out of nowhere. I was close to death that day and had it not been for the light of the truck to guide me, I wouldn't have survived the blizzard.

The second time I was caught in a blizzard was strange in it's timing. I was parked in a field with my girlfriend enjoying a sunny winter day. There wasn't a bit of snow on the ground or a cloud in the sky. I was actually wearing shorts and a t-shirt that day. It was so nice out that we ended up taking a nap in the car. We awoke to the distinct voice of a blizzard. If you've ever been in one, you'll know the voice that I speak of, it is hallow, icy and scary all on it's own. After waking up we immediately put on more clothes and coats which were inadequate for the circumstance and crawled out of the already buried car. My companion began to walk toward the farmstead located about 200 yards away. The problem is the blizzard was so disorienting that she headed in the wrong direction. One way was to safety and the other was an endless walk toward certain death. Had I not grown up on this property and been familiar with every square foot of it, we would have been done for. As it was, I had to grab her and point her in the right direction, because she was certain her bearings and path to safety were correct. The incidents remind me of our walk with God. There are so many times that we can't see past the tip of our noses because of the storms of life. If we rely on our own understanding and compass reading we are headed for a crash in a ditch or bound to wonder till we perish from exposure. The Israelites were led through the wilderness to safety with God going before them, night and day.

Even in the midst of life's storms they never had to fear because their path forward was well lit. Nothing has changed. We know the way forward because God has given us His Son, the Word, as a lamp for our feet and a light for our path. We have nothing to fear from the blizzards and the storms in this life if we take it one step at a time and never take our eyes off of Jesus. May He guide you and keep you safe. Have a wonderful Christ-filled 2019.

Peace is only in Jesus,  
Roger Gillett

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### *Golden Nuggets from the Dog Pen Church*

- Man was not made to stand alone, but to be lost in a great purpose. For one who has come to Christ, there is an expression that rings true in heart — “In His service is perfect freedom!” —James 1:25
  - To be free, one must be under Him upon whose shoulders the government is — our Lord and savior Jesus Christ — Isaiah 9:6, Matthew 28:18-20
  - The Gospel of God’s salvation is the proclamation of Christ; for in Him, through Him, and for Him God purposes to sum up all things.
  - So then, to be saved means to be converted to the rule of Good in Jesus Christ — Col. 1:9-14. To be saved means that one’s heart’s consent is freely given to God sitting on the throne — wherein lies “wholeness.”
  - As ambassadors of Christ, we must preach and invite others to come with an open hand, but under God, we must preach that while our hands are open, our knees must also be bent.
  - We must preach that we are all most free when we are most His, and that we never stand so straight as when we first bow to Him.
  - We must preach that under His authority and nowhere else is a man free — Acts 2:38-47
  - In the words of the late and great Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, “Let freedom ring!” God Bless!
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Brothers and sisters,

I hope this finds you all well today! Prayed up and knowing you are loved by me and our Father above. Being raised up in a poor family, I was taught that “It's the thought that counts” and to this day that holds true. Sometimes just to know someone loves and cares means more than a needed material gift. I care for you all brothers and sisters even for all the lost souls, my heart goes out to them they are in my prayers daily because, I know that its difficult to be in their state of mind living the lost life that they live. I pray God has mercy upon their souls and do a work in there lives so they turn to Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior as well. As a Christian we are to realize that it does not mean we have a perfect life, being a Christian is a daily battle. In (2 Tim

3:10-15) Paul warns Timothy that standing for the truth and living for Christ comes with a price. Yet if we learn to live our lives build on the Holy Scripture rather than the shifting values of the day, suffering will only reveal our true faith. Let me assure you though that for those who do not build their lives according to the Holy Scripture, applying them to their lives daily, their faith is invalid and how they react to suffering reveals this. (Suffering refers to physical problems) T T

Therefore we should read the Word daily striving to apply it to our every move our every thought. Doing so will strengthen our faith and prepare us for what we face while here on earth. In (Luke 21:10-19) Jesus tells us that “nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be great earthquakes, famines, and pestilences in various places, and fearful events and great signs from heaven. But before all this, they will seize you and persecute you. They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison and you will be brought before Kings and governors and all on the account of my name. And so you will bear testimony to me. But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents, brothers, sisters, relatives, and friends, and they will put some of you to death. Everyone will hate you because of me. But not a hair on your head will perish. Stand firm, and you will win life.” Reading that passage of Scripture assures us that we are subject to be run though the wringer, so to speak. But we should stand firm in faith rooted in Scripture and look forward to all trials and tribulations with a smile on our face. Jesus gave His life for us to be obedient and prepare to endure all that comes at us. For us as Christians difficult times do not mean that God has deserted us but that He will fulfill all of His word, the difficult parts as well as the delightful ones (Rom 8:19-23) We should see these signs and smile, not quake with terror, because we know they are to take place but as they do our redemption is drawing near. Luke 22:42 shows us that even Jesus Himself prayed that He might escape the cross, but He also surrendered Himself completely knowing it was God's will. So when we face difficult times, praying to escape them is not wrong, but we should stand firm and endure them knowing that “everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.” (2 Tim 3:12) I urge you brothers and sisters to join me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs but rather tries to please his commanding officer.” (2 Tim 2:3-4) As Christians, God is our commanding officer, soldiers a war is underway, and we are meant to be involved as front line participants, not sideline spectators (Eph 6:10; 1 Tim 1:18) A soldier must leave behind the comforts of home and his personal affairs to fully devote himself to his duty. Anything less puts the mission in jeopardy. So let's all stand together in absolute faith and put on the armor provided for us to wear and be able to win this battle. Which is “the belt of truth” (Rom 6:14) “the breastplate of righteousness” (Rom 6:14) “Feet fitted with . . . the gospel of peace”(Rom 6:15) “the shield of faith” (Rom 6:16) “the helmet of salvation” (Rom 6:17) “and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (Rom 6:17) Brothers and sisters just as Jesus used the very Words of God (Scriptures) to claim victory over Satan in the wilderness (Matt 4:1-11) we may use to claim victory too. We need the full armor God has provided to defend Satan's attacks. (Eph 5:14-17) So please don't let life's hard times steal your joy or hope brothers and sisters breakout the only offensive weapon we have from the armor provided, the very Word of God. The Bible as a whole is an armory of

different swords we can select to fight any specific sufferings we battle. As I have stated, a war is under way so I urge you to stand firm in faith rooted in Scripture and fight a good fight. For “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us” (Rom 8:18) when Jesus Christ comes for us with great power and glory (Luke 21,27) and calls all His soldiers home that remained strong, faithfully carried on while waiting to one day be called home. (Eph 6:23-24) = Peace to the brothers and sisters, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love – AMEN.

—Blake Dempsey

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### *History Repeats Itself*

I recently had Bible Study in the book of Jeremiah chapter 2 with my brothers Devin and David, and it was a beautiful day to feed on the word. In Jeremiah chapter 2, Jeremiah was commissioned to deal with the apostasy and idolatry in the nation of Israel and his ministry began by revealing their sinful condition. It began with a reflection back on the wilderness experience of Israel— Numbers 14:26-35. Before Moses’ death, he reminded the people of the grave importance of putting their trust in the Lord and His promises and their responsibility to obey His commands. He strongly pleaded with them to choose life and blessing and he also knew that many would rebel — Deuteronomy 31:24-30

Disloyalty and unclean thoughts mar the very beauty of devotion. The nation had committed spiritual adultery against our faithful and loving God and His heart is crushed with grief and disappointment —Isaiah 57:1-13. Much like the world we live in today, history repeats itself and the kindness and the innocence of our youth becomes adulterated.

If you go into any fast-food restaurant, you’ll find toys from the latest children’s movie or most popular tv cartoon. If you walk into a department store, you’ll see the same characters decorating children’s clothing from the sleepwear to the swimwear. And then, if you go to a playground, you’ll hear children imitating the words and actions of their favorite characters.

In today’s society, everyone wants to fit in and be accepted by others, and so, from kids to adults, we began imitating others in their choice of clothes, music, and entertainment— trying to keep up with the Joneses!

False prophecy occurs in many shapes, forms, and fashions all in the attempt by the evil one to draw us away from the Holy One— 2 Peter 2:1-3, Jude 1:4-11. The word of God is not loved and studied as it should be — wholeheartedly. The ways of the world appear to be more intriguing than the ways of the good Lord.

Jeremiah was commissioned to bring a picture of the shameful and persistently sinful nature of the nation before them that they may see the error of their ways and faithfully return to God. We today have that same commission to shine light on this darkened world —Matthew 5:14-16.

Thank God for all those who love the world of God and delight to meet in holy fellowship to study His precious truths —Psalm 119:129-144; Isaiah 35:1-10. Keep on keeping on, my loving siblings in Christ!

***History Repeats Itself***

Why through the history of mankind does  
history repeat itself?  
Why doesn't the just just live by faith  
and leave the old man on  
the shelf?

The closer one gets to God, the more glorious He  
appears and the more one delights  
to do His will,

The thief doesn't come to give, but to destroy,  
steal, and kill.  
Only the truly regenerate will be thankful for  
the "good news" that causes them  
to mourn before God and cry,

God regards no man's coat, purse, or rank, but  
sees all men by the state of their  
souls with a just eye.

Before his death, Moses pleaded with the people  
to choose life and the good Lord's  
hand in blessedness,

Whom the Lord saves, He keep; whom He keeps,  
He assures repeatedly with His  
love and kindness.

Evil men understand not judgment, but they  
that seek the Lord understand  
all things.

As they walk obediently, the Holy Spirit fills them  
with the goodness of Christ— our  
Eternal King.

To live in God's world is to bring reason and  
order to your own,  
The ultimate goal for every believer should be  
to glorify God, to edify fellow believers,  
and to have a good reputation before  
the unknown.

So let your light so shine before the world and  
be thankful to God for His precious  
truths and spiritual wealth,

Let us lift up every soul in intercessory prayer s  
o that history doesn't repeat  
itself.

—Justin Underwood

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*Good News writers and readers,*

*We grieve with you this new year as we have watched and read stories of the violence in our prison system, as we continue to hear about unfit conditions, and understaffed, unsafe areas. We pray for all of you living under such conditions. We pray for the peace of Christ not only to infiltrate hearts, but the spaces you live and travel daily. We pray for the love of Christ to take over the hearts and minds of all those in power, and we pray for the strength of Christ to hold all of you up. And as we pray, we also commit to work for better conditions, safer environments, and more humane treatment. You are dearly loved.*

*UBC prison ministry team.*