

August 2023

The
HOLY
BIBLE

ENGLISH
STANDARD
VERSION

IN MY
FATHER'S
HOUSE

A Supplement to SMITHVILLE REVIEW

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615 529-2674
www.alexfbcc.org
Bro. Billie Friel, pastor

Alexandria United Methodist Church

204 Church Street
Alexandria, TN 37012
Lucinda Sharp, pastor

Allens Chapel Church

1037 Coconut Ridge Road
Smithville, TN 37166
615-597-8476
Phillip Tollett, pastor

Bank's Cumberland Presbyterian Church

2933 Banks Pisgah Road
Smithville, TN 37166
Kim Slickmeyer, pastor

The Baptist Tabernacle Church

105 Braswell Lane
Smithville, TN 37166

Buckner's Chapel Methodist Church

4030 Cookeville Highway
Smithville, TN 37166

Calvary Baptist Church

830 Foster Road
Smithville, TN 37166
Abram Edwards, pastor

Carmel Center of Spirituality

610 Bluff Road
Liberty, TN 37095

Center Hill Brethren in Christ

849 Forrest Avenue,
Smithville, TN 37166
www.centerhillbic.org
Larry R. Steffee, pastor

Christ Point Church

614 Murphy Street
Smithville, TN 37166
931-837-1762

Cooper's Chapel Baptist Church

2683 Henley Hollow Rd.
Liberty, TN 37095
615-536-5102
Gary Caplinger, pastor

Covenant Baptist Church

930 Short Mountain Street
Smithville, TN 37166
www.covenantchurch.com
Bro. Bobby Thomason, pastor

Dowelltown Baptist Church

West Main Street
Dowelltown, TN 37059

Dowelltown Methodist Church

West Main Street
Dowelltown, TN 37059
931-273-6037
Johnathan McHann

Dry Creek Baptist Church

5521 Dry Creek Road
Dowelltown, TN 37059
615-536-5075
Donald Owens, pastor

Elizabeth Chapel Baptist Church

1850 Allen Ferry Road
Smithville, TN 37166
www.elizabethchapel.org

Emmanuel Bread of Life

322 New Home Road
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Faith Baptist Church

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Smithville, TN 37166
www.faithbaptistsmithville.com

First Assembly of God

Cookeville Highway
Smithville, TN 37166
<https://www.smithvilleag.com>
Iain Swisher, pastor

Indian Creek Baptist Church

1327 Hurricane Ridge Road
Smithville, TN 37166
615-597-7299

www.indiancreekbaptistchurch.org

Bro. Ric Lee, pastor

Keltonburg Church of Christ

5526 Keltonburg Road
Smithville, TN 37166
615-597-1866
Bobby Cloyd, minister

Laurel Hill Baptist Church

7551 Sparta Highway
Smithville, TN 37166

Liberty Hill Presbyterian Church

25 Roundtop Rd.
Alexandria, TN 37012
615-408-2929

Liberty United Methodist Church

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Liberty, TN 37095

Lower Helton Baptist Church

Lower Helton Road
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Bro. Gary Glover

Malone's Chapel Baptist Church

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Alexandria, TN 37012
615-548-4069

Memorial Baptist Church

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Dowelltown, TN 37059



Mt. Herman Baptist Church
1381 Dry Creek Rd.
Smithville, TN 37166
Mike Gay, pastor

Mt. Pisgah Freewill Baptist Church
7516 Short Mountain Highway
Smithville, TN 37166
615-597-7964

Mt. View Primitive Baptist Church
219 Old Blue Springs Road
Smithville, TN 37166
Elder Ricky Arnold, pastor

New Bildad Primitive Baptist Church
239 New Bildad Road
Smithville, TN 37166
931-808-5627

New Home Missionary Baptist Church
New Home Road
Smithville, TN 37166
615-489-9370
www.nhmbctn.com
Bobby Lee Hale, pastor

New Life United Pentecostal Church
860 South Congress Boulevard
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615-597-8979
www.newlifsmithville.com
Dwayne Cornelius, pastor

New Union the Baptist Church
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Smithville, TN 37166

Northside Church of Christ
512 North Congress Boulevard
Smithville, TN 37166
615-597-7794
Minister Burnes Lyons

Outreach Baptist Church
1300 So. Congress Boulevard
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615-318-1069
www.obcsmithville.com
Nathan Thomason, pastor

People's Independent Missionary Baptist Church
Highway 70 Dismal Road
Liberty, TN 37095

Salem Baptist Church
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Liberty, TN 37166
615-536-5340
www.sbcliberty.com
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Smithville, TN 37166

Smithville Church of Christ
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Smithville, TN 37166
615-597-4197
www.smithvillecpc.com
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615-597-4275
www.fbcsmithville.com
Chad Ramsey, Lead Pastor
Jordan Atnip, Student & Worship Pastor

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www.libertyfreewill.org/smithville
Bro. Andy Patterson, pastor

Smithville First United Methodist Church
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615-597-4961
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119 Dearman Street
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Todd Pack, pastor

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618-541-9936
www.saintgregorycatholicchurch.com
Father John Patrick Day, CP
7165 Sycamore Creek
Liberty, TN 37095

Temperance Hall Pentecostal Church
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Lancaster, TN 38567


Upper Helton Baptist Church
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Alexandria, TN 37012
615-529-2880
www.upperhelton.com
Jimmy Arms, pastor

Webb's Chapel United Methodist Church
6509 McMinnville Highway
Smithville, TN 37166

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Whorton Springs Baptist Church
2979 McMinnville Highway
Smithville, TN 37166
615-597-6100
www.whortonspringsbaptist.com
Bro. Mike Carpenter, pastor





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Sexuality: God's Design And Why It Matters

Sexuality has become a broad term in today's society and includes the cultural, psychological, social, biological, and spiritual aspects of one's identity. Though each of these are necessary, I would argue that one of these should be given preeminence over the others.

Though all of these areas of sexual identity are important, how we view ourselves spiritually will determine how we sexually define ourselves, define others, and how we interact with them.

I read an article once that was written by an archaeologist (I wish I could remember his name). He had been involved in several important digs around the world involving the unearthing of entire civilizations. He had much to say about these uncovered cities, but one thing stood out to me above the rest. He said that out of all the cities they had found, they all had one thing in common. Every one of them had some type of structure specifically designated for the worship of their deity.

Some of them worshipped animals, some spirits, some statues, and some worshipped other things, but they all worshipped something. From the beginning of time, every culture has understood that there is something out there bigger, greater, and far more superior than we are. They have understood that there is a God.

If God exists and He is all-knowing, all-powerful, and ever-present, then the only logical reasoning to follow would be to get to know Him. I believe in the God of the Bible, and the Bible teaches us that every single person who has lived on this Earth will one day stand before Him and give account for the life they have lived. If this is so, I need to know His heart, His expectations, and His thoughts. If I am going to be faithful to Him, I must first know what being faithful looks like.

When it comes to sexuality, God has spoken to us through His Word so that we might not be confused on the topic, at least when it comes to how He defines it. If we start with the spiritual aspect of our sexual identity (if we start with God), then we allow what He has said concerning the issue to be the foundation from which we build and on which we stand. When we do this, it takes personal preference out of the picture. If we view God as God, then His Word will be the final Word of any matter.

[Genesis 1-2](#) tells us the creation story. It says that God, over the span of seven days, created

this world and everything in it. He created all of life. A part of that created life was mankind. [Genesis 1:26-28](#) says: "26 Then God said, "Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, according to **Our** likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 **So God created man** in His own image; **in the image of God He created him; male and female** He created them. 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "**Be fruitful and multiply**; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.""

Verse 27 says that, "God created man". This is the most important detail for us to understand. The author of a book decides the name of the book. An inventor decides the name of his invention. The Creator decides the name and purpose of His creation.

I currently work as a Service Supervisor for Thompson Machinery Caterpillar. Anyone in the construction industry knows that we are not the cheapest. Our labor rates for service repair are higher than many of the independent repair shops out there, but people still opt to bring their machines to our shop regardless. They do this because it is a CAT machine. CAT designed it. CAT has all of the information regarding that machine, including what it was designed to do. Sometimes people say that there is a problem with their machine when there really is no problem at all. They say this because they are trying to use that machine in ways it was not intended to be used. They are trying to lift too much, drive too fast, or operate on too steep of a hill. When you try to operate a machine outside of how it was designed to operate, it will seem as if there is a problem with it.

Verse 27 goes on to say that God created man "male and female". That was how God designed us. He didn't create any other models, just male and female. There is no in between model or completely different model. There is only male and female, because that is how the Creator deemed it to be. We can try to operate outside of the parameters we were given by God to operate in, but in doing so there will be problems.

In verse 28, God gave man a commandment: "Be fruitful and multiply". Now we begin to understand one of the reasons why God created

two different human models. Have you ever wondered that? Why didn't God just create another man, a friend for Adam? Now we know why. God wanted Adam and Eve to come together sexually and reproduce. Reproduction can only take place between a man and a woman. Again, this is how God designed it to be. There are medical and scientific ways to attempt bypassing this now, though we will not attempt to dive into that here, simply know at the end of the day, nothing has changed. It still takes a man and a woman to reproduce another human, and when that little human is created, it will be male or female. Why? That is the way God designed it to be.

Verse 27 goes on to say that God created man "in the image of God". Two very important details from verse 26 help to shed light on this statement:

First, notice the plural pronouns used in reference to God: Us and Our. God is trinitarian in nature. He is three in one. There is only one God, but that God has manifested Himself unto us through three distinct persons. These are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Many struggle with this concept of God, because 1+1+1 does not equal three. Though I would have to agree with them, I would also like to point out that 1x1x1 equals 1. Though God exists in three distinct persons, each one of these persons have exactly the same mindset, the same heart, the same feelings, and the same desires. This allows all three of these three distinct persons to operate as one. It allows them to operate in complete unity.

Secondly, as the three persons of the trinitarian Godhead spoke to one another concerning the design of man, they said that man would be created in their "likeness". When verse 27 says that man was created "in the image of God", it does not mean that we look like God. Rather, it refers to our design. We were created in the likeness of God. We too have a trinitarian design: body, soul, and Spirit. We are three in one. Though distinctly different, these three different parts of ourselves operate together as one.

The idea of having a multiplicity in one is not uncommon with God, and this goes for the marriage as well. Speaking of marriage, God said in [Genesis 2:24](#), "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh." Though



two distinct people, they were to operate as one.

[Ephesians 5:22-33](#) teaches us that God designed the marriage of a man and woman with a spiritual purpose. The husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the Church. The wife is to submit to her husband as the Church submits to Christ, the head of the Church. When the husband and wife operate as God intended them to, they represent the beautiful relationship that exists between Christ and His Church.

After God created Adam and Eve, His work was finished. He surveyed all of His creation and said “it was very good.” Everything he created was perfect. A perfect God could not create imperfect things.

Defining our sexuality should start and finish with God. Why? Because His design for human sexuality was perfect. To operate any other way is to lessen ourselves. To operate within His design brings peace to the relationship and glory to His name!

**Defining our
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By Thomas Hale



He Is Alive!

Have you ever noticed the importance of the spoken word? Words that are spoken, statements that are made by human beings are critically important. Over the years you and I have uttered some very important statements, we have proclaimed great things, we have repeated vows that have weight to them, we have truly said some things that are noteworthy.

If you are married, you have uttered wedding vows out loud that sealed your marriage in the sight of God and perhaps some assembled witnesses. When you said, “I do” God was listening.

If you have had children, you have heard a doctor say, “you are pregnant” and then 9 months later you heard “it’s a boy or it’s a girl”! Life changing statements were made on those days.

Perhaps as you graduated high school, when the school superintendent called your name as you walked across the stage, you recognized in the calling of your name, this life changing statement turned a very important page in your life.

In the life of our country, we have heard some very important statements over the years....

President FDR made an incredible statement in his first inaugural address, with the great depression well underway, in the midst of the hardest of times, he said, “the only thing we have to fear, is fear itself”.

President John F. Kennedy in his inaugural address made another incredible statement he said, “ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.”

Astronaut Neil Armstrong made a statement as he stepped off of the lunar module he said, “one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind”.

President Ronald Reagan at the Brandenburg Gate West Berlin, Germany on June 12, 1987....President Reagan said, “Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall.”

Incredible statements, some of which you and I have uttered. Great leaders have uttered amazing words over the course of time. Many of these statements changed our lives, while some of these words by government leaders, changed our countries direction.

But today, I will share three statements that changed the world. Statements that were backed up with action and statements that were made as the result of action.

And while some of the statements that we have already heard changed our lives personally and some of the statements changed the world....the three statements you will read in this article from the Bible can change your personal life and the world as a whole.

Statement #1 – Crucify Him

We find this first statement in the Gospel of John chapter 19.

First, a little background. In John 19 Jesus has already been betrayed by Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve. Jesus has been scourged, the soldiers have already twisted a crown of thorns and placed it on His head. The guards have already mocked Jesus and placed a purple robe on Him. Pilate then took Jesus back before the chief priests and said that he finds not fault in him. The chief priests wanted Jesus put to death because he claimed to be the Son of God, and they viewed that statement as blasphemy. Pilate then wanting to release Jesus brings him before the people.

John 19:14-18 (NKJV)

14 Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Behold your King!”

15 But they cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!”

Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?”

The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar!”

16 Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took

Jesus and led Him away.

17 And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, 18 where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center.

As Pilate, the Roman Governor, stands before the Jewish people, the gospel of Luke shares with us that Pilate had a custom of releasing one prisoner to the people as a courtesy during this time of year. Pilate gives the people a choice to either release Barabbas (a well-known/dangerous criminal) or release Jesus, the King of Jews. The people respond in John 19:15 with this unbelievable statement concerning Jesus, they cried out “Crucify Him”.

So, Pilate releases Barabbas and delivered Jesus to the people to be crucified.

A guilty man was set free...and an innocent man was condemned.

Before we criticize the Jews for saying “crucify Him”, we need to understand that this was part of Gods plan. Jesus was not sent here to simply live a spotless and perfect life; He was sent from heaven to earth to die for all of mankind as the one and only sacrifice for our sin.

This statement “Crucify Him”, although it sounds tragic, these were also words that moved Jesus toward the cross. This rejection of Jesus in Jerusalem was necessary for our salvation. Jesus, being crucified at the place of the skull, Golgotha, was necessary.

And v16 says that they led him away, the prophet Isaiah said, as a sheep to the slaughter. All of it necessary for our sin payment. All of it necessary for God’s wrath to be satisfied. We needed a perfect sacrifice for our sins to be forgiven, and God sent Jesus to not only live, but He sent Him to die for us.

So, this great statement of Crucify Him, called out by the people was a statement orchestrated by God, allowed by the permissive will of God and was all part of God’s plan of redemption.

Statement #2 – It Is Finished

John 19:25-30 (NKJV)

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold your son!” 27 Then He said to the disciple, “Behold your mother!” And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, “I thirst!” 29 Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. 30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

The “It” in this statement is – atonement, the payment for our sin, the redemptive act of shedding blood for the sins of another.

The word “finished” in the original text means: to complete in every detail.

Jesus in this incredible statement where He said, “it is finished” was saying “redemption is complete”, “our sin, paid for in full”.

All details completed, meaning that the law was satisfied. God’s wrath was satisfied. And our sin payment had been paid in full. The statement crucify Him was very important because it set the stage for Jesus to shed his blood and die for all of mankind, so that then, Jesus could say, “it is finished”.

After making this statement, the bible says that Jesus bowed his head and gave up His spirit. He laid down his life, they did not take it from him. Jesus then died on the cross. Why not? If you are Jesus and you’ve made the payment, why suffer any longer? Not only that, but Jesus also knew that it was only Friday and that Sunday was coming....He knew this was not

the end.

Statements that changed the world....

1- crucify Him 2- It Is finished

Statement #3 – He Is Risen

Mark 16:1–6 (NKJV)

Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. 2 Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. 3 And they said among themselves, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?” 4 But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large. 5 And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed.

6 But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him.

Here we see three heavy hearted women come to the tomb. They had seen Jesus die on the cross on Friday, but it was Sunday and a whole new truth was awaiting them.

Their desire was to anoint the body of Jesus, they were coming to pay tribute and serve a body that they watched die on Friday. But now, two days had passed. Our text tells us, it was now Sunday morning, it is early, the sun had just risen. And while people love to see the sun rise, on this particular Sunday morning the sun that rose in the East would have to take a backseat to the Son of God that rose from the tomb. These women as they walk to the tomb are wondering how they are going to roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb, only to discover that God had already taken care of the stone.

This was Sunday morning and a whole new truth was about to be revealed.

They walk inside the tomb and see a man clothed in white, sitting on the right side of the room. The stone was rolled away, and now a man clothed in white is sitting inside, they hit the panic button and are alarmed. Then, the man in white spoke and the greatest statement that could ever change the world was uttered.

***“He is risen! He is not here.
See the place where they laid Him.”***

The statement Crucify Him, although it was tragic, was necessary.

The statement It Is Finished, although it was sad to see Jesus die on the cross, it was necessary.

This statement He is Risen, is exciting and re-assuring, why? Because it was necessary!

For us to have eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord, He would have to rise from the dead first....and He did! Jesus was and is alive!

This Jesus who was born of the virgin Mary....

This Jesus who grew in favor with men and God....

This Jesus who healed the sick and taught the multitude....

This Jesus who was beaten, whipped and crucified all because he said he was Gods Son....

This Jesus who was then laid in a borrowed tomb....rose from the dead on the third day....

Friday had come and Jesus had been crucified....

But now Sunday had come, and Jesus rose from the dead! He is alive!

This is the great truth that was awaiting these three women as they walked to the tomb that Sunday morning so long ago. This great truth that Jesus has risen from the dead, is the great truth that we share every Sunday morning, not just on Easter.

While many statements have changed the world over time, the greatest statement that has ever been spoken are the words “He is risen”!

Today, if a person will confess with their mouth that Jesus has died for them and rose from the dead, they too can be saved from the penalty of their sin as they repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. When a person confesses Jesus Christ as Lord they are raised to a new life and become born again. Jesus is not only alive, it's not His will that any should perish. He desires to raise all men, women, boys and girls to new life!



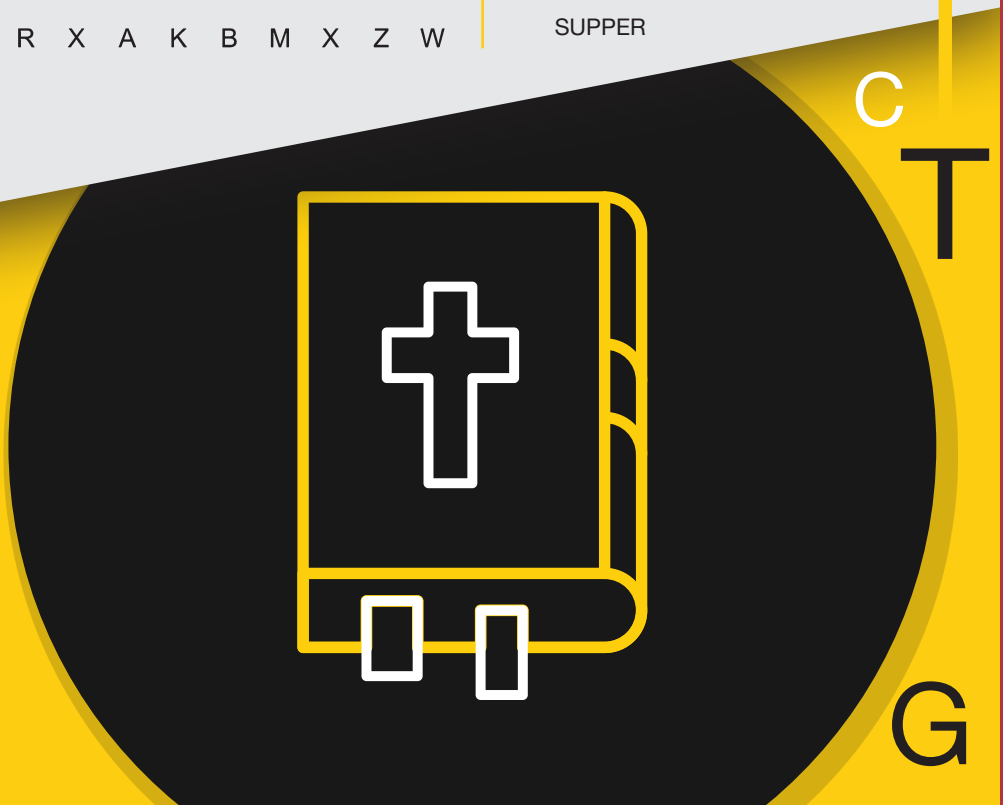
By Pastor Jason Lohorn
Salem Baptist Church

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CREATION	FORGIVEN
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In my Father's HOUSE

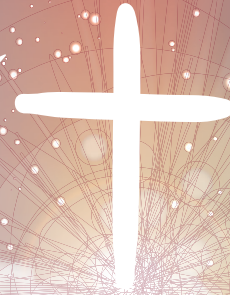
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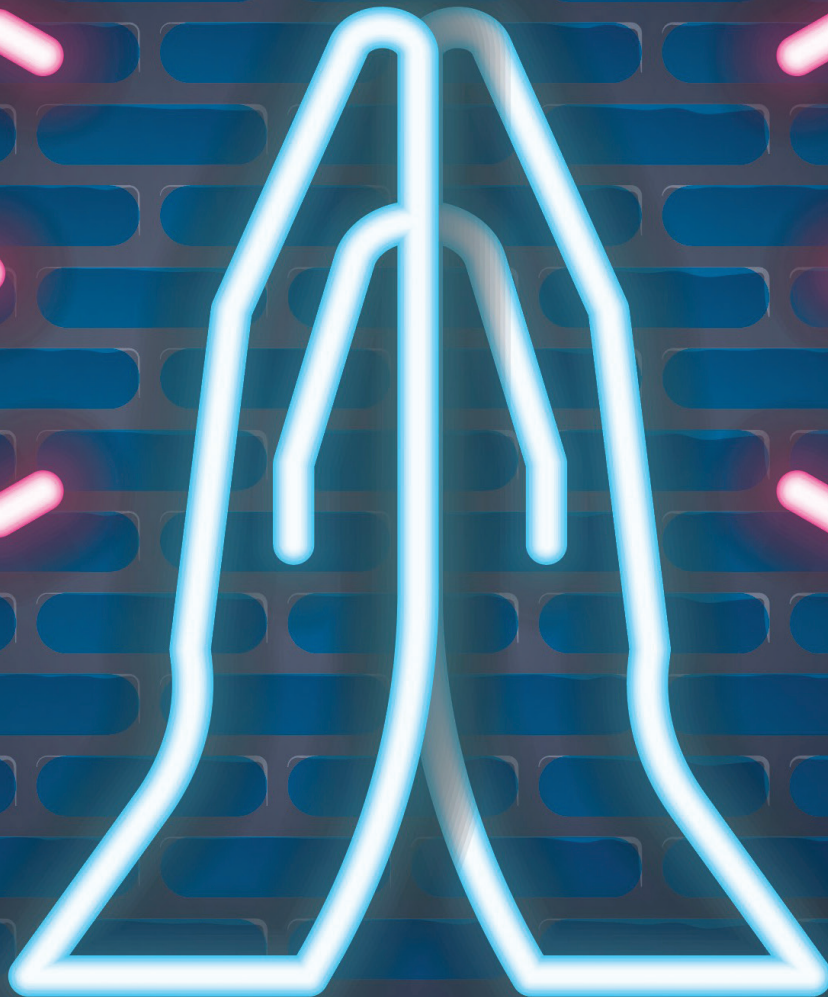
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Faith



By Larry Steffee

IF PEOPLE KNOW THAT WE ARE A BELIEVER, THEY
WILL OFTEN REACH OUT TO US IN A TIME OF NEED
FOR ADVICE AND COUNSELING.

One of the most important decisions for people to make in their lives, one that affects the eternity of their soul, is to put their faith in the Son of God. This leads to the salvation of their soul from what the Bible calls spiritual death, the death of the human soul. The Bible tells us that man was created from the dust of the ground, and that after God formed this man, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life so that the man became a living soul. God placed this man in the Garden of Eden, and then he also made him what He called a soulmate, taken from one of the ribs of the man. God then gave them one simple commandment to not eat the fruit of a tree in the middle of the garden, and warned them that doing so would bring them death, which was the death of their soul.

God punished them for their sin of disobedience, and that punishment included driving them from the garden forever, never ever being allowed to return. But God also made them a great promise, and that is that one of their descendants would one day crush the head of the serpent who was the one responsible for enticing them to disobey. It was the form of a serpent that was taken by Satan, and he was likewise punished for his involvement in the disobedience of the first couple Adam and Eve. Satan continues to deceive the human race even today, but one day he will be sentenced to an eternal existence in a bottomless pit.

The crushing of the head of the serpent would be done by none other than Jesus, the Son of God, who would pay the penalty for the sins of all the people of the world. The sin of Adam and Eve infected the entire human race, but Jesus would deliver all people from spiritual death by dying Himself on a Roman cross by crucifixion. This deliverance was an act of God's grace, and it results in the eternal salvation of the human soul, and the promise of a home in heaven forever. All people who accept God's offer of salvation are greatly blessed, and are under obligation to share their new-found faith with those who have not yet found that faith. Jesus specifically commissioned His followers to go into all the world and teach all people His commandments, as well as to reach out to them for the purpose of inviting them to also put their faith in Jesus.

All people are not always comfortable sharing their faith with people in their lives, like coworkers, neighbors, or others, but the very same Jesus who died on the cross for us can give us the ability to also share their faith in Him. Normally, when people experience some special event in their lives, the natural tendency is to tell other about it by various means, like telling them in person, reaching out to them by telephone, or posting it on different social media sites. Sharing the news that we have accepted God's offer of salvation should be just as normal, but just like people have their individual preferences about sharing other news, there are many different ways to share our faith in Jesus. So, the best thing to do as far as sharing our faith is to allow God's Holy Spirit to give us guidance in how to use the abilities we already have.

One of the most effective people who ever shared his faith in Jesus is a man known as the apostle Paul, whose name was originally Saul before he was converted to the faith. He's known as one of the most prolific preachers of all time, traveling to many different places to preach the gospel of Jesus. In Romans 1:16, he very clearly said that he was not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, because he believed that it was the power of salvation to all who believed. What he meant by this is that it was his belief that preaching the gospel represented a special power, in that it had the ability to penetrate even the hardest of human souls with the truth. So, Paul's main method of sharing his faith was through the preaching of the gospel, which he took the opportunity to do every chance he got.

The apostle also made an important statement in I Corinthians 9, where he said that he sought to be all things to all people, that by all means he might save some. He is by no means saying that he is two-faced or that he is wishy-washy, or anything like that. What he was saying was that he made every effort to identify with people as he sought to share the gospel with them. When I was a pastor in Orlando, Florida, our church operated a childcare center on the church grounds, where my home was also located. Our mail carrier had my permission to use the restrooms as he dropped off the mail each day, and this gave me an opportunity to also have casual conversations with him on a regular basis. One of first conversations we had related to the garden I raised on the church property, which impressed

him as being better than the one he raised. I jokingly suggested to him that perhaps this might have been the case because I did not work in the garden on the Lord's Day, which he admitted he did instead of going to church services.

One day, as this mail carrier was delivering mail, his supervisor caught up to him to give him the news that his wife had been admitted to the local hospital in critical condition. Unfortunately, his wife passed away before he arrived, and he was naturally very distraught over it. He came to my office to tell me the story about his wife, and made the statement that at least he knew that his wife was ready to meet her maker. Then he said that he was not able to say the same thing about himself, which obviously gave me a perfect opportunity to lead him in putting his faith in Jesus for salvation. I may have never had such an opportunity if I had not first established with him a personal relationship. He went on to become a vibrant Christian who in turn shared his faith at every opportunity.

When I became a pastor of a church in Smithville in 1980, I began to teach in the local school system and continued to do so for thirty years. In 1990, I also began to teach for Motlow State Community College, which I did until 2020, and which I am going back to doing this Fall. It's understandable that I learned to know many students over these past forty-three years, and often I meet them out in public on a regular basis. When they see me, they often approach me and ask if I remember them, which sometimes I do and sometimes I don't. After having normally a brief conversation with them, if I don't already know otherwise, I ask them if they attend church services in the area. If they tell me they do not, I take the opportunity to invite them to the church I pastor. I realize this is not necessarily sharing the story of my faith with them, but it is sowing the seed in their mind about attending church services, where they can hear the story of the gospel.

Recently, two young Christian ladies in the Smithville area began a new ministry of distributing clothing, household items, hygiene items, and other items to people in need of such items. This outreach effort is called God's Grace Ministry, and is located in a building in the downtown area of Smithville. There are at least two individuals who operate the ministry on a daily basis in a store setting, and who also speak to people who come about being a part of a church community. The ministry has also made deliveries of items to private homes, and at the time of the delivery an available pastor is invited to pray for the family when the delivery is made.

There is really no limit to the number of ways that people can share their faith with others, and God can use the individual abilities and talents of believers to reach out to unbelievers. For many years, there have been any number of radio and television programs that have aired, with the purpose of sharing the Christian faith. Organizations still to this day publish Christian tracts or brochures that can be handed out to people in various and different places and settings.

A very effective way of sharing our faith is related to simply giving a Christian witness, especially in the workplace or to neighbors and friends. If people know that we are a believer, they will often reach out to us in a time of need for advice and counseling. They may have witnessed how we have personally handled a difficult situation in a satisfactory way, and when they face a difficult situation in their own lives, they will often reach out to us. So, let's all find a way to share our faith, and let the Lord help us to do it.



S.O.A.P.

A unique way to study
your Bible



There are multiple ways to study the Bible. You do not have to start at the beginning, but you do have to begin somewhere. That's the key – sitting down and getting started.

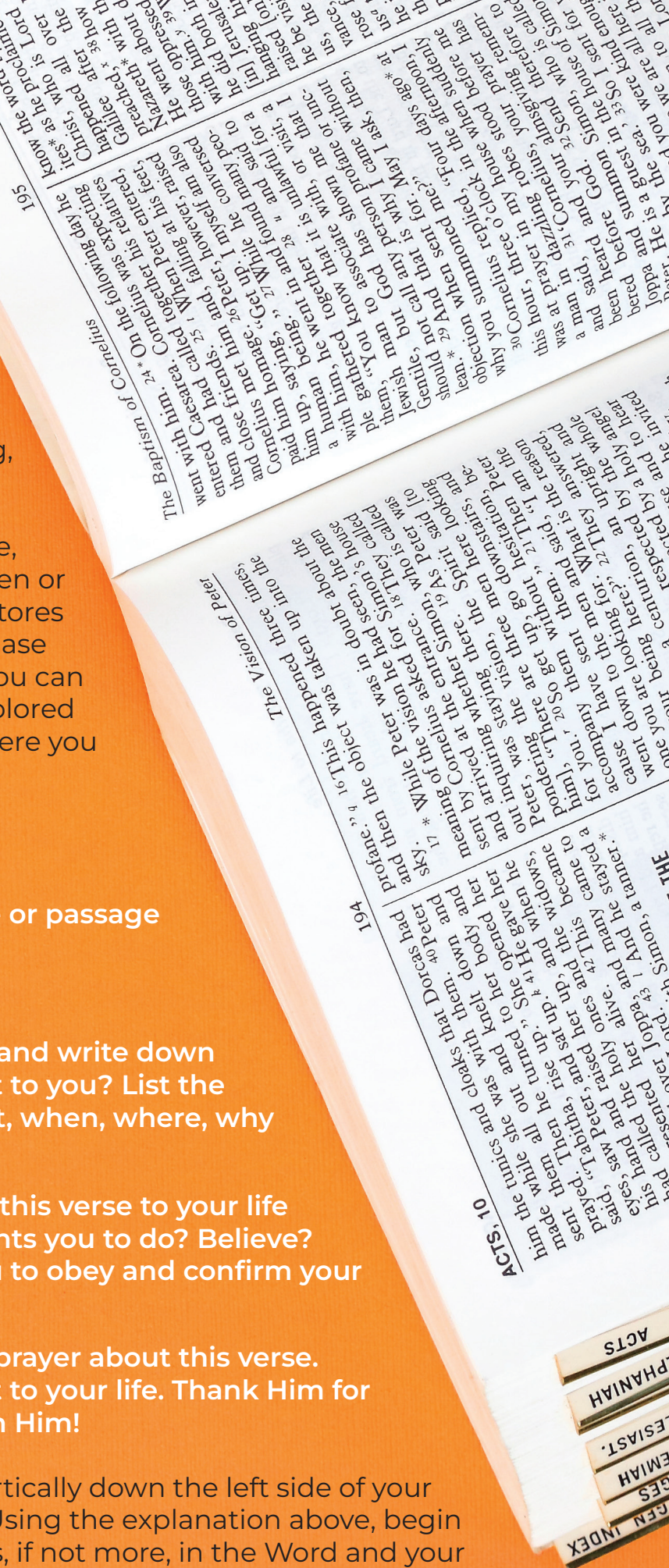
A simple and popular way is using the S.O.A.P. Method. You can choose a verse that stands out to you in your daily reading, or you can use a daily verse chart.

All you need for this method is your Bible, an inexpensive notebook or paper and a pen or pencil. Yes, there are journals available in stores and online, but it is not necessary to purchase anything other than what's listed above. You can easily decorate it by with highlighters or colored pencils. There are also several websites where you can print free S.O.A.P. pages if you'd like.

S.O.A.P. stands for:

- S** – Scripture: Write down the verse or passage you will be studying.
- O** – Observations: Examine the text and write down what you notice. What stands out to you? List the facts stated such as who did what, when, where, why and how.
- A** – Application: How can you apply this verse to your life today? Is there something He wants you to do? Believe? Confess? How does God want you to obey and confirm your life to this passage?
- P** – Prayer: Spend time with God in prayer about this verse. Ask Him to help you in applying it to your life. Thank Him for what He revealed. Commune with Him!

To get started, write the letters SOAP vertically down the left side of your page, leaving space between each letter. Using the explanation above, begin on your journey. Spend at least 30 minutes, if not more, in the Word and your daily journaling.



the bride **OF** **CHRIST**



By Pastor
Abram Edwards
Calvary Baptist Church

Jesus has already got on one knee for you, with His death on the cross, and He is humbly and simply asking you, "Will you marry Me?" What is your response? Are you eagerly waiting for your wedding day in heaven? Are you a part of the Bride of Christ?



Will you marry me?

The question that demands time stand still. Only a response from her can jump start his heart to beat again. Only a response to him can release the air inside her lungs, if only she could breathe to speak, YES! As modern, contemporary, and relevant as we like to think of ourselves, in one way or another, we always come back to the image of the man on one knee in humble surrender to the answer of the woman. Automatically, we now have other images of flowers, suits, dresses, decorations, and banquet fellowship which may lead to further images of a home, family and children, and a rocking-chair front porch. Obviously, there are many emotions and feelings attached to the concept of marriage, both positive and negative. But did you realize that as a believer in Jesus Christ as Savior, you are also His bride? And He is eagerly waiting for His wedding day (**Isaiah 62:5**).

I want to encourage you as a believer, a Christian, to look forward to your wedding day to Jesus Christ with as much gleeful anticipation as a young bride does her own wedding day. Sometimes it is hard for us to understand this concept of us, the church, being joined in marriage to Christ. It can also be challenging to grasp as a man because we never picture ourselves as the bride. It is a mystery, but our earthly marriages are a living testimony of the relationship between Jesus Christ and His church.

³¹ “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. **Ephesians 5:31-32**

We see in Scripture that Jesus is clearly portrayed as the groom. In the Gospels, John the Baptist refers to Jesus as the groom (**John 3:29**) and Jesus Himself refers to Himself as the groom (**Matthew 9:15, 22:1-14, Mark 2:9-10, and Luke 5:34-35**). Jesus is the husband of the church and the way He treats her is an example of how an earthly husband should treat his wife. Paul uses His example in his letter to the Ephesians:

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ²⁶ that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, ²⁷ that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish. **Ephesians 5:25-27**

Paul encourages the Ephesian husbands to love their wives, but not just in emotion or feeling. Husbands are to love their wives in action because Jesus loves his wife in action. The image of the man on one knee before the woman is the picture of Jesus on the cross. He was humbly submitting Himself before His future bride, the church, and asking her if she would say yes to Him. He gave Himself for her. He gave up His life in heaven for her and His own desires He declined for her. He did this so that she could be sanctified, or set apart, from all the other wives and presented glorious and pure, just like a bride walking down the aisle in her beautiful, white gown. If you are a husband like me, this presents a great opportunity to self-analyze my relationship with my wife and how I treat and love her.

But Paul also uses the church as an example for wives:

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. ²⁴ Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. **Ephesians 5:22-24**

We often think of the word submission as a bad word, but it is a wonderful word that describes a humble succession of power and authority. When a wife submits to her husband, she is not admitting any inadequacy or depreciation in her value. The fact is, that if the husband is giving himself for his wife, as we previously mentioned, he is selflessly lifting his wife up and trying to meet her needs and doing the best he can for her so that she will be sanctified.

This is an encouraging reminder as the church of how we are to submit to Jesus as the head of the church. We should be mindful that the head of the church is not the pastor, not the chairman of the deacons, or the elder who has been on the board for over 50 years. The head of the church is Jesus Christ. So, when we read about Jesus’ teachings and promises, we should respect them and honor them in humble submission because of how He gave Himself for us. Jesus suffered an embarrassing death for us on the cross for our salvation so that we could even be a part of His church! And then He conquered death to prove that we have eternal life by trusting in Him! After all He did, we must be careful not to replace His actions with great children’s programs, recovery ministries, music that sounds good, or even preaching that makes us feel good and so on and so forth. As the bride of Christ, we are His trophy, but we cannot think we are merely trophy wives. We are not just for show, but a living testimony of just how much Jesus loves us.

I want to encourage you to cast your imagination into the near future. Our wedding day with Jesus will be a glorious day with nice clothes, decorations, and a fellowship banquet meal with all our closest friends and family. God gives the Apostle John a glimpse of our special day in the book of the Revelation:

⁶ And I (*John*) heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! ⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” ⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. ⁹ Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” **Revelation 19:7-9**

We are not yet officially married to Jesus. And you may be wondering how we can be considered His bride or wife already, and that is a fair question.

We must understand that in ancient Jewish culture there was something called the betrothal period. This is much like our culture’s engagement period, but it was legally binding like marriage. If you wanted out of the betrothal, or engagement, you would have to apply for a certificate of divorce, and the marriage was not consummated until the night of the wedding ceremony. When Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph were betrothed. So, they were married but they had not yet consummated the marriage or started living together yet. This is how we get the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

For us this means we are indeed the bride of the Christ, we are legally married to Jesus, but we are not officially His wife until we are joined together with Him in heaven. This is the wedding ceremony the Apostle John was referring to in Revelation.

What a glorious day that will be! Can you imagine it? The best choir and band will be playing, everyone will be decked out to the max in the best clothing, the food will be amazing, our dearest friends and closest family will be there, and best of all, our groom will be eagerly waiting our walk to Him. I hope you are imagining the home He has prepared for us, the family that will be there, the life we will have, and even that rocking-chair front porch, sitting with Jesus as we watch and soak in all that glory that will be heaven.

Jesus has already got on one knee for you, with His death on the cross, and He is humbly and simply asking you, “Will you marry Me?” What is your response? Are you eagerly waiting for your wedding day in heaven? Are you a part of the Bride of Christ?



Be prepared to By Angie Meadows BLESS SOMEONE

Everyone deserves to be blessed. Sometimes a kind word or just a smile can lift someone's spirit just when they need it the most. Always be prepared to bless someone with a little kindness. Creating blessing bags to carry in your vehicle may be just what someone needs when you least expect it.

Bigger cities have a much larger homeless population, but that certainly does not rule out smaller towns. With every day common needs such as housing, food, and fuel sky-rocketing at a continuous pace the affects are

devastating to many. Also, many unfortunate rehabilitation participants have nowhere to go once released from facilities and end up on the street homeless. Regardless of the reason, it's real and so are the homeless.

We can help the homeless with just a small container filled items that we take so easily to for granted. A pair of socks, a bottle of water, some snacks and other small items would mean a lot to someone who had nothing. Why not put together a few of the blessing bags, or bottles, store them in your car and give one to those in need?

“ Why not put together a few of the blessing bags, or bottles, store them in your car and give one to those in need? ”

Along with the items placed in the container, be sure to include a small bible or piece of paper with your favorite bible verse.

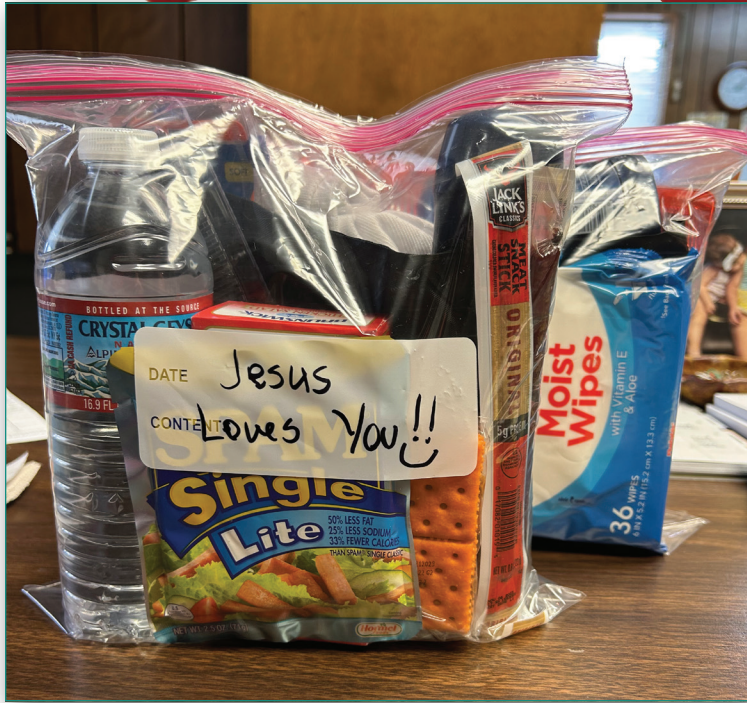
Possible items you might include in your container: hand warmers, quarters, bottle of water, band-aids, baby wipes, sanitizer, travel size first aid kit, granola bars, tuna/cracker packs, raisins, trail mix, peanuts,

fruit/applesauce cups with plastic spoon, beef jerky, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, comb, deodorant, chapstick, sun block, shampoo, socks, or gloves depending on season.





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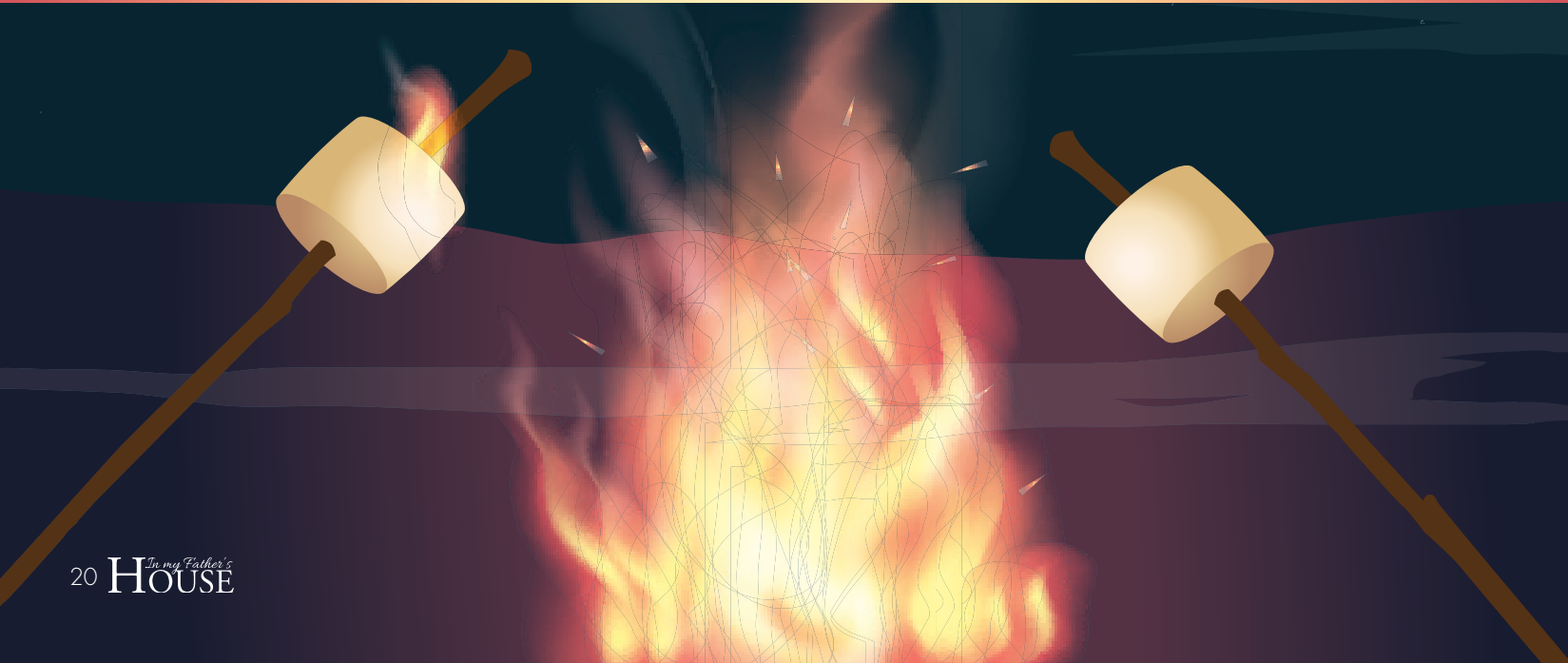
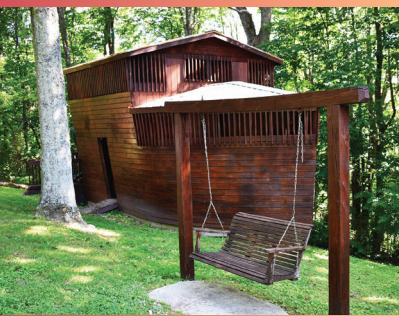
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LIGHTHOUSE

CHRISTIAN CAMP

Helping Those In Need



There is a place in DeKalb County where the lost can be found, and children can be children. It's a place where adventures are discovered and the old can find purpose. It may sound like Neverland from Barrie's novel and play, found "second to the right, and straight on till morning," but Lighthouse Christian Camp is very real and has a noble purpose.

Founded by Bro. Ben and Ermeda Chapman, Lighthouse Christian Camp provides a place where the needy can experience the great outdoors and comradery and friendship.

"It was in 1982 when we had our first summer of summer camp," said Lighthouse Christian Camp Executive Director Michael Kilgore. "As Brother Ben would say, it is a miracle work of God, born out of the heart of God for the poor and the needy."

"It started out as a church camp," Kilgore explained. "God spoke to Brother Ben and said, 'What about those kids that nobody else is helping? What about the unloved, under resourced and needy ... those that could never come to camp if they had to pay for it?' We are now in our 42nd year."

In late 1981 Ben and his wife, Ermeda, donated their land, home, barns, cattle, horses, and equipment to establish Lighthouse Christian Camp, Inc. The camp is a non-profit, 501(c)3, corporation ruled by a board of directors and a faith ministry dependent primarily upon donations from individuals who have a heart for fatherless, helpless, abused and neglected children.

The following year, the camp began converting two barns into sleeping cabins and setting out tables under the trees. Restrooms consisted of two outhouses that were constructed of rough sawed timber obtained from the property. Activities consisted of horseback riding, field games, hiking, boating, and swimming on the shore of Center Hill Lake. There were two chapels where the Gospel was preached. The campers were church kids.

In 1983, the Chapman's organized a camp for the needy children. They brought over 50 disadvantaged, abused, and neglected children to that first camp. Over the years the camp expanded and made room for more campers. An expansion to the main house included additional bedrooms. Showers, vanities and flush toilets were added for the campers, and covered screened dining area were built for meals.

A staff cabin and swimming pool was built, along with seven full RV hook-ups for those with RV's to serve in missions. Log homes were fully furnished for guests and the construction of a gym and multi-purpose building began, with sleeping quarters, a dining room and kitchen, recreation room.

"Instead of bringing kids from just one or two counties, we have kids from 15 counties throughout Middle Tennessee," Kilgore said. "They come from as far as Nashville, Clay County, Macon County, to Cumberland County. Just all over Middle Tennessee."

"As for Lighthouse Christian Ministries, there are several parts to that. Our whole outlook and purpose is to minister to the under resourced or needy, widows, and orphans in foster care," Kilgore continued.

"We also have a home here for pastors who can't afford to get away. We have a home that overlooks the lake where we let them come and stay up to a week at a time. Him and his wife and family can come and get away."

"The camp provides free weeks of summer camp for the children. They will stay from Monday to Friday, with all kinds of activities including horseback riding, swimming pools, hiking, kayaking, canoeing, and we even have a pontoon boat that we take out and let them drive."

"Those are just activities. Our true reason for getting these kids here is to introduce them to Jesus Christ. There are so many families affected by drugs, or they don't have both parents at home, or maybe even being raised by their grandparents. Some are so hopeless. Teen suicide is such a problem now, and the sexual exploitation of children is getting worse and worse."

On top of the summer camp, the ministry also hosts after school clubs for kids in DeKalb County. "When school is going, we pick the kids up every Tuesday with our bus or van," Kilgore explained. "We pick up between 40 and 60 kids, all who have been campers before, we feed them a hot meal, help them with their homework, and participate in activities."

"We also host mini-camps every other Friday and Saturday. We can only have about 60 at a time, for those, but last year we had 752 children for free weeks of summer camp."

Irene Wright of Nashville serves as one of the councilors at the camp, and said it has long been part of her life. Irene has been involved with Lighthouse Christian Camp since she was eight years old.

"I was able to come early because my siblings were here," Irene said. I came every year since up until I was 16 or 17. I love it so much. As a kid that came from an unstable home, coming here provided some consistency for me. It help me learn about my self-worth, and made me feel special and loved every time I was on campus." This is Irene's second year being on staff at the camp.

But the camp is not only helping kids. The ministry also works to help older people find purpose in their lives.

"The Widow's Home we started in 2006," Kilgore explained. "We look at 60 years old or older, for those who want to serve and have a purpose. It's for women who have lost their husbands, and may now find themselves alone and without purpose. They can come here, work with the kids and other widows. They can sit out on a porch swing and help a kid with homework or talk with them. Some of these kids don't have grandparents who can ask them what they are dealing with. 'Let me give you some 80-year-old advice.'"

Lighthouse Christian Camp is more than just a summer retreat. It has things going on all year around.

"We need people to help with maintenance of the homes, buildings, and the widow's cars. There is always something that is needed to be done here," said Kilgore. "We have two children's homes, where we bring in siblings groups that are in crisis in foster care. We want to keep siblings together, and with our houses being five bedrooms and five baths, they are large enough that we can do that."

"The homes are for short-term and long-term care. We have a group of four here right now that have been here almost two years that we are praying is going to do what it takes to get them back."

"One of our girls here that is now a staff member, she is aging out of foster care this year. What happens after that? If they don't have a support system, a lot of times they fall through the cracks. That's when you end up with drug addiction or teen pregnancy," said Kilgore.

"We have transition homes here. When they move out of foster care, we have these little one-bedroom apartments that they live in. They are efficiency apartments and they live there while they start work or attend college, to allow them to experience being independent and transition into adulthood."

Kilgore said that the camp has been around so many years that today they are welcoming generational campers. "We've been blessed over the years and have been here long enough where we see children of previous campers coming to our camp, and even grandchildren of previous campers. When I look at what Lighthouse Christian Camp has done, it's all the glory to God. It's a budget of close to a million dollars a year to keep this running and God provides every penny of it. The churches are our core support, and we are a faith-based ministry where every dime comes in the mail."

"Lighthouse Christian Camp, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, totally dependent on donations of financial gifts and volunteer services. Whether you are a church, business, organization or an individual, we hope that you will prayerfully consider how God would have you get involved. The widows and the children who come to Lighthouse Christian Camp, as well as those who live in our Ranch Homes, desperately need your help. We are a "non-profit organization, a faith ministry dedicated to sharing God's love and His Word with needy children."

To make donations to the camp or to help volunteer, you can visit their website at lighthousechristiancamp.com.



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READ THE
BIBLE
IN A YEAR



Week	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	Rom 1-2	Gen 1-3	Josh 1-5	Ps 1-2	Job 1-2	Isa 1-6	Matt 1-2
2	Rom 3-4	Gen 4-7	Josh 6-10	Ps 3-5	Job 3-4	Isa 7-11	Matt 3-4
3	Rom 5-6	Gen 8-11	Joah 11-15	Ps 6-8	Job 5-6	Isa 12-17	Matt 5-7
4	Rom 7-8	Gen 12-15	Josh 16-20	Ps 9-11	Job 7-8	Isa 18-22	Matt 8-10
5	Rom 9-10	Gen 16-19	Josh 21-24	Ps 12-14	Job 9-10	Isa 23-28	Matt 11-13
6	Rom 11-12	Gen 20-23	Jude 1-6	Ps 15-17	Job 11-12	Isa 29-33	Matt 14-16
7	Rom 13-14	Gen 24-27	Jude 7-11	Ps 18-20	Job 13-14	Isa 34-39	Matt 17-19
8	Rom 15-16	Gen 28-31	Jude 12-16	Ps 21-23	Job 15-16	Isa 40-44	Matt 20-22
9	I Cor 1-2	Gen 32-35	Jude 17-21	Ps 24-26	Job 17-18	Isa 45-50	Matt 23-25
10	I Cor 3-4	Gen 36-39	Ruth	Ps 27-29	Job 19-20	Isa 51-55	Matt 26-28
11	I Cor 5-6	Gen 40-43	I Sam 1-5	Ps 30-32	Job 21-22	Isa 56-61	Mark 1-2
12	I Cor 7-8	Gen 44-47	I Sam 6-10	Ps 33-35	Job 23-24	Isa 62-66	Mark 3-4
13	I Cor 9-10	Gen 48-50	I Sam 11-15	Ps 36-38	Job 25-26	Jer 1-6	Mark 5-6
14	I Cor 11-12	Ex 1-4	I Sam 16-20	Ps 39-41	Job 27-28	Jer 7-11	Mark 7-8
15	I Cor 13-14	Ex 5-8	I Sam 21-25	Ps 42-44	Job 29-30	Jer 12-16	Mark 9-10
16	I Cor 15-16	Ex 9-12	I Sam 26-31	Ps 45-47	Job 31-32	Jer 17-21	Mark 11-12
17	2 Cor 1-3	Ex 13-16	2 Sam 1-4	Ps 48-50	Job 33-34	Jer 22-26	Mark 13-14
18	2 Cor 4-5	Ex 17-20	2 Sam 5-9	Ps 51-53	Job 35-36	Jer 27-31	Mark 15-16
19	2 Cor 6-8	Ex 21-24	2 Sam 10-14	Ps 54-56	Job 37-38	Jer 32-36	Luke 1-2
20	2 Cor 9-10	Ex 25-28	2 Sam 15-19	Ps 57-59	Job 39-40	Jer 37-41	Luke 3-4
21	2 Cor 11-13	Ex 29-32	2 Sam 20-24	Ps 60-62	Job 41-42	Jer 42-46	Luke 5-6
22	Gal 1-3	Ex 33-36	I Ki 1-4	Ps 63-65	Prov 1	Jer 47-52	Luke 7-8
23	Gal 4-6	Ex 37-40	I Ki 5-9	Ps 66-68	Prov 2-3	Lamentations	Luke 9-10
24	Eph 1-3	Lev 1-3	I Ki 10-13	Ps 69-71	Prov 4	Ezek 1-6	Luke 11-12
25	Eph 4-6	Lev 4-6	I Ki 14-18	Ps 72-74	Prov 5-6	Ezek 7-12	Luke 13-14
26	Phil 1-2	Lev 7-9	I Ki 19-22	Ps 75-77	Prov 7	Ezek 13-18	Luke 15-16

Week	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	Phil 3-4	Lev 10-12	2 Ki 1-5	Ps 78-80	Prov 8-9	Ezek 19-24	Luke 17-18
28	Co 1-2	Lev 13-15	2 Ki 6-10	Ps 81-83	Prov 10	Ezek 25-30	Luke 19-20
29	Co 3-4	Lev 16-18	2 Ki 11-15	Ps 84-86	Prov 11-12	Ezek 31-36	Luke 21-22
30	I Thes 1-3	Lev 19-21	2 Ki 16-20	Ps 87-89	Prov 13	Ezek 37-42	Luke 23-24
31	I Thes 4-5	Lev 22-24	2 Ki 21-25	Ps 90-92	Prov 14-15	Ezek 43-48	John 1-2
32	2 Thes	Lev 25-27	I Chr 1-4	Ps 93-95	Prov 16	Dan 1-6	John 3-4
33	I Tim 1-3	Num 1-4	I Chr 5-9	Ps 96-98	Prov 17-18	Dan 7-12	John 5-6
34	I Tim 4-6	Num 5-8	I Chr 10-14	Ps 99-101	Prov 19	Hosea 1-7	John 7-9
35	2 Tim 1-2	Num 9-12	I Chr 15-19	Ps 102-104	Prov 20-21	Hosea 8-14	John 10-12
36	2 Tim 3-4	Num 13-16	I Chr 20-24	Ps 105-107	Prov 22	Joel	John 13-15
37	Titus	Num 17-20	I Chr 25-29	Ps 108-110	Prov 23-24	Amos 1-4	John 16-18
38	Philemon	Num 21-24	2 Chr 1-5	Ps 111-113	Prov 25	Amos 5-9	John 19-21
39	Heb 1-4	Num 25-28	2 Chr 6-10	Ps 114-116	Prov 26-27	Obadiah	Acts 1-2
40	Heb 5-7	Num 29-32	2 Chr 11-15	Ps 117-118	Prov 28	Jonah	Acts 3-4
41	Heb 8-10	Num 33-36	2 Chr 16-20	Ps 119	Prov 29-30	Micah	Acts 5-6
42	Heb 11-13	Deut 1-3	2 Chr 21-24	Ps 120-121	Prov 31	Nahum	Acts 7-8
43	James 1-3	Deut 4-6	2 Chr 25-28	Ps 122-124	Eccl 1-2	Habakkuk	Acts 9-10
44	James 4-5	Deut 7-9	2 Chr 29-32	Ps 125-127	Eccl 3-4	Zephaniah	Acts 11-12
45	I Pet 1-3	Deut 10-12	2 Chr 33-36	Ps 128-130	Eccl 5-6	Haggai	Acts 13-14
46	I Pet 4-5	Deut 13-15	Ezra 1-5	Ps 131-133	Eccl 7-8	Zech 1-7	Acts 15-16
47	2 Pet	Deut 16-19	Ezra 6-10	Ps 134-136	Eccl 9-10	Zech 8-14	Acts 17-18
48	I John 1-3	Deut 20-22	Neh 1-4	Ps 137-139	Eccl 11-12	Malachi	Acts 19-20
49	I John 4-5	Deut 23-25	Neh 5-9	Ps 140-142	Song 1-2	Rev 1-6	Acts 21-22
50	2 John	Deut 26-28	Neh 10-13	Ps 143-145	Song 3-4	Rev 7-11	Acts 23-24

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REVIEW