

CEDAR GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH

NEWSLETTER — DECEMBER 2014



We believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ plus nothing. His precious blood was shed on Calvary for the forgiveness of our sins. The salvation of the ill-deserving sinner is based on the finished work of Jesus Christ, who became the sinner's substitute before God and died a provisionary sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

THE PASTOR'S CORNER

As we come down toward Christmas and the speed of life seems to pick up to past the sound barrier it is easy to forget several things. First of all we need to be mindful of the reason for the season and that is to celebrate the birth of Jesus whom the Father sent. Isa 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. This may seem obvious but it is so easy to get caught up in everywhere we need to go and all the food we need to cook and presents that need to be bought, cards that need to be sent, we can forget it is all about Jesus.

Second we need to be very mindful to spend time in God's word and in prayer each day. PS.119:115-117, "I will keep the commandments of my God. Uphold me according unto thy word, that I may live: and let me not be ashamed of my hope. Hold thou me up, and I

shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually." This will help us to have the strength and focus to meet the challenges of each day.

Third, this may seem like a no brainer, but I believe a lot of times I personally forget this, we need to have fun. Life should be exciting and we should enjoy life even with its challenges. Remember church, God has equipped us to meet the challenges He has placed before us. These challenges have people watching us that as the old timers would say, "we may be the only Bible they ever read", we need to show Christ in our actions. Let me give one piece of advice that comes from one of my former pastors, in everything you do, every gift you give away, every can of food you buy and every card you send, ask God to use it to bring glory unto Himself. Have fun over the holidays and remember it is about Him.

Pastor Marty

A new group of Gideons had been meeting each Monday morning for prayer in Pasadena, Texas, a suburb of Houston. One of them confided to the group that he had been praying that God's Word would be aboard the sophisticated craft on its historic mission. Bass Redd, chief of the flight technical branch of the Manned Spacecraft Center, heard the remark and said, "Let me see what I can do. I know Commander Borman. He is a fine Christian. You claim Jeremiah 33:3."

In early December the Gideon representative was able to reach Borman and asked, "Do you have a

copy of God's Word aboard?" Borman allegedly replied, "No, and I'm glad you reminded me of it."

The Gideons presented all three astronauts with New Testaments which they took on the journey to the moon. Commander Borman also took along his personal copy of the Bible. Each edition was covered with noncombustible material. The first 10 verses of Genesis 1 were read by the three astronauts on Christmas Eve from Commander Borman's own Bible, passed—or floated—from man to man

Paul Tan, *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations*, 196.

SEND THE LIGHT

Charles Gabriel, an Iowan, began working at Grace Methodist Episcopal Church in San Francisco in 1890. One of his first tasks was to compose a hymn for the church's Missionary Day. His "Send the Light" was sung on March 6, 1890, and its popularity propelled Gabriel to national prominence as a songwriter. Today we remember him as the author of such favorites as "I Stand Amazed in the Presence" and "O That Will Be Glory for Me." He was also the composer of the music for "His Eye Is on the Sparrow" and "Since Jesus Came into My Heart." A contemporary of his said, "Mr. Gabriel's music is nothing if not melodious. Even a comparatively commonplace theme under his pen receives some touch that gives it a perennial freshness." It's always a fresh, melodious heart that sends the light.

There's a call comes ringing over the restless wave,
"Send the light! Send the light!"

There are souls to rescue there are souls to save,
Send the light! Send the light!

We have heard the Macedonian call today,
"Send the light! Send the light!"

And a golden offering at the cross we lay,
Send the light! Send the light!

Let us not grow weary in the work of love,
"Send the light! Send the light!"

Let us gather jewels for a crown above,
Send the light! Send the light!

*Send the light, the blessed Gospel light;
Let it shine from shore to shore!
Send the light, the blessed Gospel light;
Let it shine forevermore!*

In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

— John 1:4 ¹

Acts 1:8 is a key verse. To begin with, it explains that the power of the church comes from the Holy Spirit and not from man (see Zech. 4:6). God's people experienced repeated fillings of the Spirit as they faced new opportunities and obstacles (Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9). Ordinary people were able to do extraordinary things because the Spirit of God was at work in their lives. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is not a luxury; it is an absolute necessity.

"Witness" is a key word in the Book of Acts and is used twenty-nine times as either a verb or a noun. A witness is somebody who tells what he has seen and heard (Acts 4:19–20). When you are on the witness stand in court, the judge is not interested in your ideas or opinions; he only wants to hear what you know. Our English word *martyr* comes from the Greek word translated "witness," and many of God's people have sealed their witness by laying down their lives.

We hear a great deal these days about "soul winning," and the emphasis is a good one. However, while *some* of God's people have a calling to evangelism (Eph. 4:11), *all* of God's people are expected to be witnesses and tell the lost about the Saviour. Not every Christian can bring a sinner to the place of faith and decision (though most of us could do better), but every Christian can bear faithful witness to the Saviour. "A true witness delivereth souls" (Prov. 14:25).

Acts 1:8 also gives us a general outline of the Book of Acts as it describes the geographical spread of the Gospel: from Jerusalem (Acts 1–7) to Judea and Samaria (Acts 8–9), and then to the Gentiles and to the ends of the earth (Acts 10–28). No matter where we live, as Christians we should begin our witness at home and then extend it "into all the world." As Dr. Oswald J. Smith used to say, "The light that shines the farthest will shine the brightest at home."²

¹ Robert J. Morgan, *Near to the Heart of God: Meditations on 366 Best-Loved Hymns* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 2010).

² Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 403.

LOTTIE MOON

Lottie Moon was born Charlotte (Lottie) Diggs Moon on December 12, 1840, in Albemarle County, Virginia. She entered the world as a part of Southern aristocracy prior to the Civil War, a war that would devastate her family's fortunes. Her family's wealth was 1/40 of its pre-war value after the war ended. She would die on December 24, 1912, aboard a ship in the Japanese harbor of Kōbe. She was frail, weak, and nearly starved having just passed her seventy-second birthday. She weighed no more than fifty pounds.

Lottie served our Lord for thirty-nine years on the mission field, mostly in China. "Best estimates" say that this mighty, little woman towered all of four feet, three inches. It was never said that she was beautiful, but this little lady had a certain attractiveness about her and a powerful personality that would be essential in her service on the mission field. She taught in schools for girls and made many evangelist trips into China's interior to share the gospel with women and girls. She would even preach, against her wishes, to men, because then as now there were not enough men on the mission field.¹

Although these two paragraphs do much to describe the greatness that was Lottie Moon, Dr Akin has given misleading information when he

says that "She would even preach..." This gives a false impression of the ministry of this giant of the faith. Gregory A Wills, professor of Church History at Southern Seminary, wrote

She did not often refer to her own activities as involving preaching, but on at least one occasion Moon described her activity as "preaching," and on another occasion described the personal evangelistic activity of Chinese lay men and women as preaching.... Moon explained that "when I say preach, I include in it talking by the wayside to one or more."

It seems that the Chinese has a single word that was used for both pulpit ministry and for personal evangelism.² Lottie Moon was indeed a remarkable woman, and she did much to advance the cause of missions among Southern Baptists. We do not need to enhance the record in order to demonstrate that greatness.

¹Daniel L Akin, "The Power of a Consecrated Life Lived out in the Ministry of Miss Lottie Moon", *Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* 13, no. 2 (2008): 66.

²Gregory A. Wills, "Review of Lottie Moon: A Southern Baptist Missionary to China in History and Legend By Regina D. Sullivan," ed. R. Albert Mohler Jr., *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology Volume 15* 15,



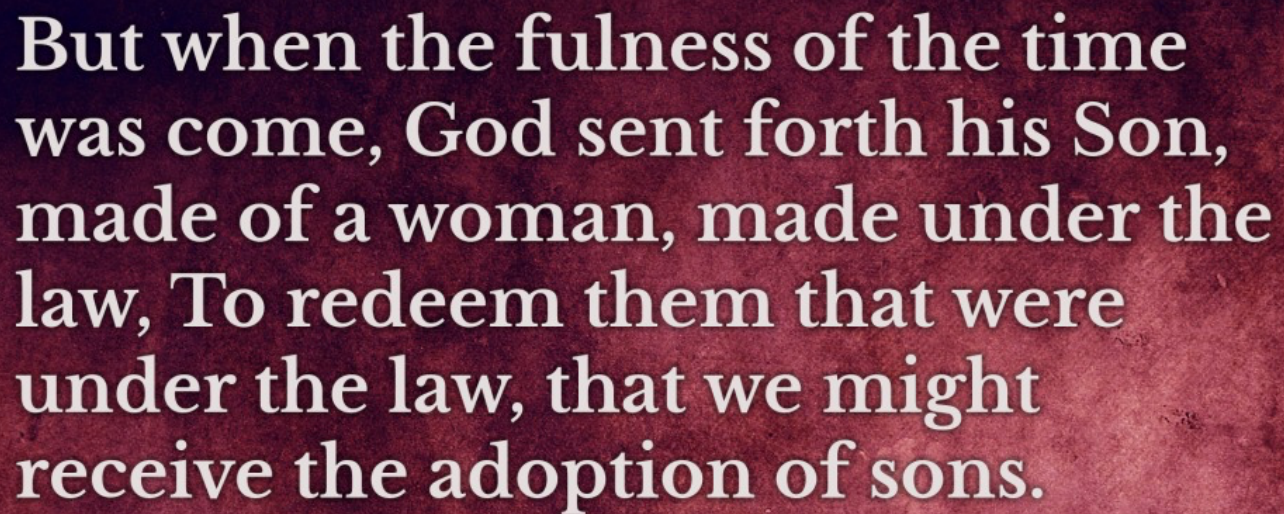
ANNIVERSARIES

Bobby & Barbara Jones	12 December
Darrell & Brenda Johnson	17 December
Jacob & Kristy Whitehead	28 December
Mike & Donna Auman	29 December
Jack & Lynn Caviness	30 December



BIRTHDAYS

Matthew Leonard	13 December
Ryan Owens	15 December
Tanner Franklin	16 December
David Coble	20 December
Huel Kinney	24 December
Lynn Caviness	26 December
Mike Auman	29 December
Marlene Albright	31 December
Al Rose	31 December
Leland Bingham	01 January
Denise Brewer	04 January
Lori Owens	04 January



But when the fulness of the time
was come, God sent forth his Son,
made of a woman, made under the
law, To redeem them that were
under the law, that we might
receive the adoption of sons.

GALATIANS 4:4-5

1. He came as a ransom for many.

Mark 10:45—"The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."

The reason we need a ransom to be paid for us is that we have sold ourselves into sin and have been alienated from a holy God. When Jesus gave his life as a ransom, our slavemasters, sin and death and the devil, had to give up their claim on us. And the result was that we could be adopted into the family of God.

Paul put it like this in Galatians 4:4-5, "When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons." In other words the redemption or the ransom frees us to be a part of God's family. We had run away and sold ourselves into slavery. But God pays a ransom and redeems us out of slavery into the Father's house.

To do that, God's Son had to become a human being so that he could suffer and die in our place to pay the ransom. That is the meaning of Christmas. Hebrews 2:14 puts it like this, "Since the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death." In other words, the reason Christ took on human flesh was so that he could die and in dying pay a ransom and free us from the power of death....

2. He came to call sinners to repentance.

Luke 5:31-32, "Jesus said to them, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.' "

Jesus came to call sinners to repentance. First, there needed to be a ransom to be paid for sinners. Then, there could be a successful call to sinners. The call is based on the ransom. And Jesus says he came for both of these things.

He does not leave the ransoming or the calling to others. He ransoms and he calls. Even today he is calling through the Bible and through the preaching of the Bible. He is calling this morning.

That is the meaning of Christmas. He came to call sinners.

6. He came to give us eternal life.

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes on him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Christmas means that God sent his Son so that we could believe and have eternal life.

Believe in Jesus and Receive the Gift of Life

John Piper, *Sermons from John Piper (1990-1999)* (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2007).

Unfortunately, there was not room to include all that Piper said here, but this should show you what Christmas is really all about.