

Cedar Grove Baptist Church

Newsletter — March 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

You know we make many decisions everyday of our life. The things that we choose to place in our life illustrate what we value. It kind of reminds me of James words, James 2:15-16 "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?". We can talk a lot of our love and commitment to our Lord but if we do not follow His word, obey His commands, or gather with the people whom He has redeemed, does our life really demonstrate we value the privilege of being a Christian? I will remind you He chose you so that makes being a Christian a privilege. As someone asked one time, "could you be convicted of being a Christian if someone watched your life?" Many of us, me included, would have to say that we would be set free for lack of evidence most of the time.

I start out this month this way because as a pastor it bothers me that in America and especially here in the Bible belt it seems that most people have a take it or leave it attitude toward Christianity. It is much like the proverbial spare tire, it is there if it is needed but if we don't have a flat we don't put much thought or care into the tire. When I

speak of this I am not pointing to the world and the multitude of people who do not attend church or talk about church I am thinking of those who claim a church as their place of worship. You know if no one shows up to worship there is nothing or no one receiving worship. If no one serves then no one is being served. So I ask myself what is wrong. A.W. Tozer wrote,

"One characteristic that marks the average church today is a lack of anticipation. When Christians meet, they do not expect anything unusual to happen; consequently only the usual happens, and that unusual is predictable as the setting of the sun... We need today a fresh spirit of anticipation that springs out of the promises of God as we come together with child-like faith."

So I ask myself again, Is this the problem, we have become so familiar with going to church if we miss a service nothing is missed, We can make it up some other time? Are we looking for any and every excuse to do something else because there is no expectance for God to visit in an unusual way? No one will come to visit today, I will not be missed today, no one will be saved today, no one will be delivered from their

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chains today, and by the way I am good and don't need anything this week.

I have committed to try my best from here on out to have messages that will inform people, that will challenge people to make a decision and or give instruction on how to live life so at least from my part I am making your time here valuable. I trust that this will give some anticipation so people will not want to miss service because it has value to their life.

I think back to all the times when people have visited and our pews have been virtually empty I cannot help but to think if everyone would have been here today would our church have put on some new people. Again I reflect on Tozer's quote could it be that we don't expect anything because there is not scores of new people coming into our church? I don't say this to hurt anyone but I want us all to reflect on what we are doing to see God's work progress here at Cedar Grove but not just here but in all the world. When you are not here you are missed because you are part of the body at this local church. So what is the answer? I believe Paul tells us in Colossians 4:2, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanks-

giving;". If we get a burden and pray that is the first step. But we need to go beyond that we need to watch. If we are going to watch we need to first be present at the place where we are expecting God to answer and second we come with anxious spirits expecting God to go beyond the usual. The last part of this is giving thanks to the one and only one who can make these thing happen, that is the Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Barber told the story of a church where he pastored and the first Missions Conference they had took place 2 months after he was called there. He said he was embarrassed at the poor attendance. Instead of getting mad he and his family thanked God for the poor attendance. At the next deacons meeting instead of blowing his top he shared with his deacons that God showed them there is a spiritual problem in the church by the poor attendance and he thanked God for showing them. In years to come the Missions Conference became the highlight of the year at that church because God's people became faithful by their faithfulness they found value in attending by attending they became informed. Let's be faithful if nothing else.

Lighter Moments

Found in a science student's test

You can listen to thunder after lightening and tell how close you came to getting hit. If you don't hear it, you got hit, so never mind.

Water freezes at 32 degrees and boils at 212 degrees. There are 180 degrees between freezing and boiling because there are 180 degrees between north and south.

A vibration is a motion that cannot make up its mind which way it wants to go.

A Russian, a Cuban, an American and his lawyer are on a train. The Russian takes a bottle of the best vodka out of his pack, pours some into a glass, drinks it, and says: "In Russia, we have best vodka in world. Nowhere in world you can find vodka as good as in Russia. And we have so much of

it that we can just throw it away." Saying that, he opens the window and throws the rest of the bottle through it. The others are quite impressed. The Cuban takes a box of Havana cigars, lights one of them, and begins to smoke it. He says, "In Cuba, we have the best cigars of the world—Havanas. Nowhere in the world are there such good cigars and we have so many of them, that we can just throw them away." Saying that, he opens the window and throws the box of Havanas on through. Again everyone is quite impressed. Then without saying a word the American stands up, opens the

window and throws the lawyer through,
too.¹

¹ Lowell D. Streiker, *Nelson's Big Book of Laughter: Thousands of Smiles from A to Z*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000).

After the Storm

Mark 4:41

We see a strange pattern unfolding here. That the storm and raging sea frightened the disciples is not surprising. But once the danger passed and the sea was calm, it would seem that their fear would vanish as suddenly as the storm. It didn't happen that way. Now that the sea was calm, the fear of the disciples *increased*. How do we account for that?

It was the father of modern psychiatry, Sigmund Freud, who once espoused the theory that men invent religion out of a fear of nature. Man feels helpless before an earthquake, a flood, or a ravaging disease. So, said Freud, men invent a God who has power over the earthquake, flood, and disease. God is personal. We can talk to Him. We can try to bargain with Him. We can plead with Him to save us from the destructive forces of nature. We are not able to plead with earthquakes, negotiate with floods, or bargain with cancer. So, the theory goes, we invent God to help us deal with these scary things.

What is significant about this story in Scripture is that the disciples' fear increased after the threat of the storm was removed. The storm made them afraid. Jesus' action to still the tempest made them more afraid. In the power of Christ they met something more frightening than they ever met in nature. They were in the presence of the holy. We wonder what Freud would have said about that. Why would men invent a God whose holiness was more terrifying than the forces of nature that provoked them to invent a god in the first place? We can understand men inventing an unholy god, a god who brought only comfort. But why a god more scary than the earthquake, flood, or disease? It is one thing to fall victim to the

Anniversaries

NONE

Scheduled Events

March 2 @ 6:00PM	Business Meeting
March 9 @ 12:15PM	Soup Sunday
March 15 @ 4:00PM	Cottage Prayer Meeting @ Marty & Anita's
March 17 @ 6:30PM	Planning Committee

flood or to fall prey to cancer; *it is another thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

The words that the disciples spoke after Jesus calmed the sea are very revealing. They cried out, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" The question was, "What *manner* of man is this?" They were asking a question of kind. They were looking for a category to put Jesus in, a type that they were familiar with. If we can classify people into certain types, we know immediately how to deal with them. We respond one way to hostile people and another way to friendly people. We react one way to intellectual types and another way to social types. The disciples could find no category adequate to capture the person of Jesus. He was beyond typecasting. He was *sui generis*—in a class by Himself.

R. C. Sproul, *The Holiness of God* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1993).

Visit the Cedar Grove Baptist Church website
<http://www.cedargrovebaptistchurch.net>



Birthdays

Michelle Camp	March 03
Linda Heath	March 11
Billy Owens	March 13
Kristy Whitehead	March 16
Michael Franklin	March 19
Wayne Brewer	March 31

AUGUST 25: Only the Spirit Can Give Sight

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

—2 Corinthians 4:3–4

The uncomprehending mind is unaffected by truth. The intellect of the hearer may grasp saving knowledge while yet the heart makes no moral response to it. A classic example of this is seen in the story of Benjamin Franklin and George Whitefield. In his autobiography Franklin recounts in some detail how he listened to the mighty preaching of the great evangelist. He

Meet our New Deacon

even walked around the square where Whitefield stood to learn for himself how far that golden voice carried. Whitefield talked with Franklin personally about his need of Christ and promised to pray for him. Years later Franklin wrote rather sadly that the evangelist's prayers must not have done any good, for he was still unconverted....

The inward operation of the Holy Spirit is necessary to saving faith. The gospel is light but only the Spirit can give sight. When seeking to bring the lost to Christ we must pray continually that they may receive the gift of seeing. And we must pit our prayer against that dark spirit who blinds the hearts of men.

Lord, I'll do my part today to share the gospel with anyone You'll bring my way. But Holy Spirit, I'll wait for You to open eyes and give sight. I'll leave the results with You.

Amen.

A. W. Tozer, *Tozer on Christian Leadership: A 366-Day Devotional* (Camp Hill, PA: WingSpread, 2001).

“Lukewarm people don’t really want to be saved from their sin; they want only to be saved from the penalty of their sin.” — Francis Chan²

ONE night in Hobart, Tasmania, as my wife and I were walking home together from the meeting, she said, “Archie, I have just wasted my time tonight. I have spent the whole evening talking with the most frivolous girl I have dealt with for a long time. I made no impression whatever. I just wasted my time. I don’t believe it pays to talk to that kind of a girl.” But she went home and cried to God for that girl. The next night that girl came to her completely transformed and brought her mother with her and asked Mrs. Torrey to talk to her. They were both brightly converted. Often-times where we seem to have accomplished the least, we have in reality accomplished the most.³



² <https://twitter.com/Logos/> 01/10/14.

³ R. A. Torrey, *Anecdotes and Illustrations* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1907), 50–51.

Pakistan

In July of 2013, two young girls in Pakistan received a copy of “the Story of Jesus” in their native language of Urdu. The Christians who distributed the booklets happily reported that these girls trusted Christ after reading these engaging booklets. Two more sisters were added to our family!



Just a couple of months later, on a sunny Sunday morning, two suicide bombers entered the All Saints Church compound in Peshawar, Pakistan. These Islamists waited until the services were over and the nearly 500 worshipers began to gather for a meal together. At 11:45, they detonated their suicide vests and killed 78 people and injured another 130. It was the deadliest attack on the Christian minority in the history of Pakistan.

In October, I received word that the two young sisters who received “the Story of Jesus” during the July distribution, and began to follow Jesus, were killed in the attack on that bright Sunday morning.

The death of children is especially tough, and many of the victims from Peshawar were women and children. There are never easy answers for difficult situations like this. They serve as vivid reminders of how fallen our world is. But, we do not mourn as those without hope! We believe that “while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:6–7).

As you look at the photograph of these two young girls, please remember their families in prayer, along with the other families

who lost loved ones in this attack. Pray also for those who plotted this attack. May God’s glory be manifested in all of the chaos that continues in this area. Finally, please pray with us that God will guide us as we do our best to minister in that difficult place.

https://www.persecution.com/public/newsroom.aspx?story_ID=NjU1&featuredstory_ID=NDIx&clickfrom=ZmVhdHVyZWZrdG9yaWVz, accessed 02/06/14.

A man got up in one of our meetings in New York some years ago, who had been pretty far down, but a wonderful change had taken place, and he said he hardly knew himself. He said the fact was, he was a new man in his old clothes.

That was just it. Not a man in new clothes, but a new man in old clothes.

I saw an advertisement which read like this: “If you want people to respect you, wear good clothes.” That is the world’s idea of getting the world’s respect. Why! A leper may put on good clothes, but he is a leper still. Mere profession doesn’t transform a man. It is the new nature spoken of in 2d Corinthians, 5th chapter, 17th verse, “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”⁴

A man was converted some years ago, and he was just full of praise. He was living in the light all the time. He used to preface everything he said in the meeting with “Praise God!”

One night he came to the meeting with his finger all bound up. He had cut it, and cut it pretty bad, too. Well, I wondered how he would praise God for this; but he got up and said:

“I have cut my finger, but, praise God, I didn’t cut it off!”

If things go against you, just remember they might be a good deal worse.⁵

⁴ D. L. Moody, *Anecdotes, Incidents, and Illustrations* (Chicago; New York; Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1898).

⁵ D. L. Moody, *Anecdotes, Incidents, and Illustrations* (Chicago; New York; Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1898).

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

Thomas A. Dorsey, 1899–1993

For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, “Do not fear; I will help you.”
(Isaiah 41:13)

Out of a broken heart after his wife and newly born son had both died, Thomas Dorsey cried to his Lord to lead him “through the storm, through the night” In doing so, he created lines that have since ministered to others in an unusual way. This tender song, written by a black gospel musician in 1932, has since been a favorite with Christians everywhere.

Thomas A. Dorsey grew up in Georgia as a “preacher’s kid.” As he began to be successful as a composer of jazz and blues songs, however, he drifted away from God. After it seemed to him that he was miraculously spared in brushes with death, Dorsey came back to the Lord. As his life dramatically changed he began to write gospel songs and to sing in church services. It was during a revival meeting in St. Louis, Missouri, that he received a telegram telling the tragic news of his wife and infant son. Stunned and grief-stricken, Dorsey cried, “God, you aren’t worth a dime to me right now!”

A few weeks later, however, as Dorsey fingered the keyboard of a piano, he created the lines of *Precious Lord* to fit a tune that was familiar to him. The following Sunday the choir of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in South Chicago, Illinois, sang the new song with Dorsey playing the accompaniment. “It tore up the church!”

God continued to lead Thomas Dorsey by the hand until he had written more than 250 gospel songs. He once stated:

“My business is to try to bring people to Christ instead of leaving them where

they are. I write for all of God’s people. All people are my people. What I share with people is love. I try to lift their spirits and let them know that God still loves them. He’s still saving, and He can still give that power.”

* * * *

*Precious Lord, take my hand,
lead me on, help me stand—
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
thro’ the storm, thro’ the night,
lead me on to the light—
Take my hand, precious Lord,
lead me home.*

*When my way grows drear,
Precious Lord, linger near—
when my life is almost gone.
Hear my cry, hear my call,
hold my hand lest I fall—
Take my hand, precious Lord,
lead me home.*

* * * *

Enjoy the fellowship of God so strongly that you feel He is holding your hand and leading you in whatever circumstances you may find yourself. Share this testimony of Thomas Dorsey as you go—

Kenneth W. Osbeck, *Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1996), August 29.



He is not here, for He is risen