

Ponderings From the Pastor

Points to ponder....

By Brad Taylor, Pastor

The July 2 worship service will be a special time. Worshipers will share in worship with some of the music and hand motions from Vacation Bible School. Then there will be a challenging message from the book of Daniel. We will conclude this special time with an opportunity to observe the Lord's Supper.

Pre-Teen Camp will be July 10-13 from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. Pre-Teen Camp is for students who have completed the 3rd grade through 5th grade. The camp theme is "Follow," as they will learn what it means to be a disciple of Christ. Each day will be packed with lots of fun activities. Campers will begin the day with a devotion, followed by fishing at Bass Pro, a tasty lunch at OGBC, then campers will have a time of worship and Bible study, arts & crafts then archery and the campers will complete the day with some time at the Brownlow's swimming pool. Camp is free for the first 25 students that sign up. Forms are available on the welcome center desk.

Our church family has elected the members for this year's Nominating Committee. These members have the responsibility to search out, enlist and bring before the church, nominees for officers, teachers and committees. To accomplish this task they will be contacting MEMBERS of Oak Grove to serve in these important areas of ministry. The proper functioning of members serving in these positions are very important for our church to fulfill our mission. If contacted by one of these members to serve in a position prayerfully consider the opportunity. They have spent much time in prayer and planning before contacting a prospective member for a position. This committee plans to

present the nominees during a special business meeting in August and they will begin serving in September.

As I write this I have just arrived back home after seeing the damage in our area from the violent winds that have destroyed trees, snapped power poles, damaged homes and property. While driving and seeing the damage I began thinking about the damage that sin leaves behind. It leaves marks everywhere it touches. Sin is the cruelest enemy of man and has reduced the greatest of men with its impact. The acts of sin may be manifest in hidden places, but hiding sin is like hiding fire; it burns through. 1 John 3:4 says, "Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness". Both Testaments have united to give us the clear warning of sin, not trying to restrict us, but always to protect. Sin is always and in every case a manifestation of something dark in our nature from which the Father longs to protect us.

The practice of sin is not to be the normal lifestyle of believers. When we sin it has an effect upon us as well upon others. For one thing, it robs us of our ability to understand spiritual truth. The Bible says that it is the Holy Spirit that helps us understand the will of God. (1 Corinthians 2:9-12)

The Christian is completely dependent upon the Holy Spirit if he or she expects to learn anything of permanent spiritual value.

1. Quenches Holy Spirit's Ministry

Sin quenches the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19). Sin means to throw a wet blanket over. Sin is not acknowledging the will of God through preach-

ing (1 Thessalonians 5:20), not being thankful in everything (1 Thessalonians 5:18), not praying spontaneously (1 Thessalonians 5:17), not rejoicing in whatever circumstances we find ourselves (1 Thessalonians 5:16), and not abstaining from evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22). All these things quench the Holy Spirit's teaching ministry in our lives and takes away our sharpness to understand spiritual truth.

2. Bible Study Becomes Unfruitful

The Psalmist wrote: Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; but their delight is in the law of the LORD, and on His law they meditate day and night (Psalm 1:1-2).

Bible study does not accomplish anything; But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a person observing their natural face in a mirror; for they observe themselves, go away, and immediately forgets what kind of person they were (James 1:22-24).

We are supposed to let God's word act like a mirror to point out areas in our personal life that need changing. Instead we make excuses or forget to apply Bible teaching to our everyday situations and decisions.

3. Robs Us Of Joy

The Bible says that God wants our joy to be full 1 John 1:4. Joy is a deep satisfaction that stems from the knowing the channel is open between us and the Lord. We are in the place that He approves. It is an inner happiness not dependent upon outside circumstances. Sin will rob us of that joy.

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Continued

4. Takes Away Excitement

Another problem with sin is that it takes away the excitement of the Christian life. An example of this would be King David. After his sin of murder and adultery he asked the Lord for restoration of his joy Psalm 51:12. Sin causes us to lose the joy of our salvation. We do not feel saved right then. The Christian then looks to worldly pleasures to fill that void. It is like an anesthetic to deaden the pain of an empty heart.

5. Robs Us Of Our Peace

Sin also robs us of peace. The believer is to be characterized by an inner calm and contentment. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus Philippians 4:7.

Sin causes anguish of the heart - which is complete loss of peace: When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer Psalm 32:3-4.

6. Hinders Our Fellowship With God

Sin robs us of fellowship with God. That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship

with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ . . . If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth 1 John 1:3,6.

7. Causes Feeling Of Separation

Sin can cause a feeling of separation between ourselves and the Lord. If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we live a lie and do not practice the truth 1 John 1:6. Live a lie means trying to live the Christian life in the energy of the flesh. Do not the truth refers to those who are ignorant or willfully disobedient of God's commandments.

The believer experiences a lost or alone feeling until they get things right with God.

8. Loss Of Confidence In Prayer

Sin also robs us of confidence in our prayer life. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. Beloved if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight 1 John 3:19-22.

Notice that the final promise is qualified. The Christian must be obedient - they must keep God's commandments to have their prayers answered. Thus the Holy Spirit controls only those who ask to be under His control. The things the believer prays for are what the Holy Spirit directs them in the will of God. Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered Romans 8:26-27.

9. Unanswered Prayers Until Confession

Sin can cause our prayers to be unanswered. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear Psalm 66:18. When believers sin, God does not answer their prayers with a, Yes. God wants to first hear a prayer of confession.

When we sin it has an effect on us as well as others. We lose our spiritual sharpness. Confession is the only thing that can bring that back. Therefore, it is vital that Christians confess their sins and walk in them no longer.

America the Beautiful: About the Song

"America the Beautiful" was inspired by the view from the top of Pikes Peak in Colorado. In the summer of 1893, poet Katharine Lee Bates was teaching English at Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Later she remembered:

One day some of the other teachers and I decided to go on a trip to 14,000-foot Pikes Peak. We hired a prairie wagon. Near the top we had to leave the wagon and go the rest of the way on mules. I was very tired. But when I saw the view, I felt great joy. All the wonder of America seemed displayed there, with the sea-like expanse.

On the pinnacle of the mountain a poem started to come to her. She wrote down the words after returning to her hotel room. The poem was first published with the name "Pikes Peak" in the Independence Day edition of the church periodical "The Congregationalist" in 1895. Over the years, several existing pieces of music were adapted to the poem. A hymn tune composed by church organist and choirmaster Samuel A. Ward in 1882 was first published with Bates' poem in 1910 as "America the Beautiful."

Lyrics

O beautiful for spacious skies, for amber waves of grain
For purple mountain majesties, above the fruited plain
America, America, God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea

O beautiful for Pilgrim feet, whose stern impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat, across the wilderness
America, America, God mend thine every flaw
Confirm thy soul in self control, Thy liberty in law

O beautiful for heroes proved, in liberating strife
Who more than self their country loved, and mercy more than life
America, America, May God thy gold refine
Till all success be nobleness, and every gain divine

O beautiful for patriot dream, that sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam, undimmed by human tears
America, America, God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea



As we at OGBC prepare to celebrate Independence Day let's remember who created and allowed us to be born in the United States. Our Holy and merciful Lord God. Let us pray that He will keep His hand on our country and we as citizens do our part in spreading His truth and love to everyone that we may encounter day to day, after all we are Kingdom Citizens first. Let's spread His Word because we are free to do so due to the price some have paid. So, no more excuses! Let's get up and appreciate our freedom!

Mindy Taylor

Source by balladofamerica.org

OGBC Youth News

Submitted by Matt Shepard, Youth Leader

We had 6 students go forward to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior at Falls Creek! We took a total of 27 people (23 students)! I just want to thank our church family for all that you all do for these students to be able to go to Falls Creek. I would also like to thank Brian Holloway and Nicole Zugelder for going as sponsors and Paula Shepard for going as a cook.

Upcoming Dates to remember for July:

- Church on July 12, 19, 26 (Wednesdays @6:30)

- No church July 5

If you have any questions, please email Matt at: Ogbc.mshepard@gmail.com



Daily Bible Reading Plan To Read The Bible Through In 2023

JULY

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> July 1 - Isa 63, Matt 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 2 - Isa 64, Matt 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 3 - Isa 65, Matt 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 4 - Isa 66, Matt 14 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> July 5 - Jer 1, Matt 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 6 - Jer 2, Matt 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 7 - Jer 3, Matt 17 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 8 - Jer 4, Matt 18 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> July 9 - Jer 5, Matt 19 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 10 - Jer 6, Matt 20 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 11 - Jer 7, Matt 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 12 - Jer 8, Matt 22 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> July 13 - Jer 9, Matt 23 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 14 - Jer 10, Matt 24 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 15 - Jer 11, Matt 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 16 - Jer 12, Matt 26 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> July 17 - Jer 13, Matt 27 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 18 - Jer 14, Matt 28 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 19 - Jer 15, Mark 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 20 - Jer 16, Mark 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> July 21 - Jer 17, Mark 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 22 - Jer 18, Mark 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 23 - Jer 19, Mark 5 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 24 - Jer 20, Mark 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> July 25 - Jer 21, Mark 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 26 - Jer 22, Mark 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 27 - Jer 23, Mark 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 28 - Jer 24, Mark 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> July 29 - Jer 25, Mark 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 30 - Jer 26, Mark 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> July 31 - Jer 27, Mark 13 | |

July 2023



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

						1 Ed Moheng & Jennifer Lee bdays
2 Lord's Supper Ava Pruett bday	3 Community Choir 6 pm	4 Independence Day Macy Collier & Joe Eastham bdays	5	6 Margaret Gaulding bday	7	8 Kahlen Gerhard bday
9	10	11	12	13	14 James Onyon bday	15
Preteen Day Camp 10th -13th						
16	17 Community Choir 6 pm	18 Charles Young bday	19	20	21	22
23 Chris Whitlock bday	24 Community Choir 6 pm Denise Brownlow bday	25	26	27 Crafty Christians; 10am	28 Bryan Zugelder bday	29 Community Choir Concert 6 pm
30 Cuma Hardison bday	31 Kayla Albright & Ronda Frizly bdays					

July Sermon Calendar

July 2—Daniel in the Lions-Den Daniel 6

July 9—A Superior Kingdom-Daniel 7

July 16—False Messiahs-Daniel 8

July 23—The Promised Arrival-Daniel 9

July 30—The Vision-Daniel 10

Watch OGBC Online Each Sunday

If you are unable to worship with us in person, you can log in to Facebook to watch the service online at <https://www.facebook.com/oak.grove.94043>.

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