

# THE NEWSLETTER

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## **GOD IS LOVE GOD AND LOVE ARE SYNONYMOUS. LOVE IS NOT AN ATTRIBUTE OF GOD, IT IS GOD... WHATEVER GOD IS, ... LOVE IS!**

In CREATION – the love of God gives us a new method of seeing nature. His voice is on the rolling air, we see Him in the rising sun, and in the setting He is fair. In the singing of the birds, in the love of human hearts, the voice of God is present. If only we had ears to hear the stars singing, to catch the glorious anthem of praise by the heavenly hosts.

In HIS WISDOM – God did not create humans as puppets to please a despotic desire of His own. He created us out of His overflowing love and goodness, and He made us able to receive all the blessedness which He had ordained for us. He “thought” us in the rapture of His own great heart, and lo, we are! Created in the image of God were we, innocent of evil, of great God-like capacities.

In HIS POWER – The whole world moves to God’s great, inscrutable will. Animate and inanimate creation, the celestial bodies moving in their orbits, the globe with all its diverse issues and accompaniments, are all subservient to this end.

In HIS HOLINESS - God walked with man and talked with him. He told him His mind, and showed him the precise path in which he must walk in order to enjoy the happiness God had ordained for him. He rejoiced in the fullness of His nature over man as His child, the offspring of His love. He left nothing unrevealed to man; He loved him. Oh, the joy and rapture of God the Father over man His son!

In HIS JUSTICE - God showed to man that compliance with His dictates would always mean eternal bliss and unspeakable joy, life and knowledge forever – but that failure to comply would mean the loss of life with God and eternal death.

In the world’s bright morning, the stars sang together and all creation leaped in joy. Then the wild desolation of disobedience, pride and selfish sinfulness entered, opening a great gulf between God’s children and Himself. But, as always, love found a way – God came to us and for us. Now, with chastened hearts and quivering lips and glistening eyes, yet with love deep and strong in our hearts, we say again with deep adoration, God is love.  
(thoughts of Oswald Chambers)

## **A COVENANT COMMUNITY**

Cornerstone’s ELDERS have designated the Sundays in October

for Covenant Renewal. Each year, all of the members & friends of our congregation are invited to renew their vows with God and each other by signing the covenant. As the “Lord’s free people” (these words are taken from the covenant of the Gainsborough congregation - they were written in 1606), we voluntarily sign the covenant to acknowledge that we are bound to each other and to God by the obligations explained in the document.

By signing the covenant, we indicate that we understand the obligations that come with being part of the family of God that meets at Cornerstone. Further, we acknowledge our need for each other if we are to walk in the ways in which He leads. We renew our commitment to God and each other by signing the covenant annually. This annual covenant renewal recalls those obligations to our minds and reaffirms their importance in our lives.

On Sundays, October 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30 2016, we invite you to enter, or reenter, into covenant with all the people of this congregation by signing, or re-signing, the church covenant.

What a wonderful example of what it means to be followers of Christ and members of His family.

## **PUTTING FIRST THINGS FIRST**

The world that we live in is filled with activity. It seems like everywhere we turn there is something or someone needing our time and attention. However, with only twenty-four hours in a day, there is only so much we can do. That is why it is critical that we establish proper priorities.

The Bible says that we are to *live purposefully and worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as wise (sensible, intelligent people), making the very most of the time because the days are evil* (Ephesians 5:15, 16).

**In order to make the most of everything God has given us, we need to make Him top priority in our lives.** By asking ourselves some straightforward questions and answering them as honestly as possible, we can discover where God fits in our lives in relation to everything else. We will find that when we put Him first and follow the leading of His Spirit, everything else falls into its proper place.

Many years ago, I remember hearing the scripture *you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind* (Matthew 22:37). Right away, this began to bother me because I knew that God was not first in my life. But God used this scripture to drive me to seek a deeper relationship

with Him.

At that time I was born again, but my relationship with God was shallow – I was a Christian in name only. I loved the Lord, but I didn't love Him enough to do what He told me; I was just going through the motions (sound familiar). I had inserted Jesus into my program, hoping He would make everything in my life work. However, that was not the position He wanted to fill.

**God wants to be first in everything.** In Exodus 20:3 God said, *You shall have no other gods before or beside Me.* This was the first commandment that God gave, so I believe it is probably the most important. I have found that if I put my marriage before my personal relationship with God, my marriage suffers. The same is true if I put my children before my relationship with God. Although my husband and my kids are very important, God must be first. If He isn't, I won't have the strength and ability to have and enjoy a relationship with them or anyone else.

**Putting God first means to put His ways first –to live the way He would live.** What God loves, we must learn to love; what God hates, we must learn to hate. For example, God loves people, so we need to learn to love people. God hates evil, so we need to learn to hate evil

I have discovered that one of the best ways to see how God would live is to observe the way Jesus His Son lived. Jesus said, *I am the Way and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except by Me* (John 14:6). I believe that one of the things that Jesus was trying to say was, "If you study my life, you will see how I treated people, how I handled situations, and the way I fellowshiped with the Father. If you follow my example, you will be blessed."

Jesus really got this point across in Matthew 6:33. He said, *Seek first of all His kingdom and His righteousness, and then all these things taken together will be given you besides.* So **seeking the kingdom of God means finding out how God wants things done and then doing them His way through the power of His Spirit.**

In order to truly be set free and begin to experience the blessings of God in our lives, you and I need to face the truth. If we really want to grow to the next level of faith and service, then we need to get honest with ourselves and with God about where we are and what our priorities are. This may be a bit painful, if we are truly honest, but the outcome will be powerful.

I challenge you to regularly stop and take a good look at your life. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where your priorities are out of line. Then allow His conviction to motivate you to seek a deeper relationship with God. Give God all that you **are** and all that you are **not** – surrender to Him your strengths and your weaknesses. If you see that you've done something wrong, recognize it, repent, receive God's forgiveness, and press on to a higher level in Him.

Remember, it is God through the power of the Holy Spirit that will give you the ability to adjust your lifestyle and bring it in line with the Word (see 1 Thessalonians 5:23). He will enable you to put Him first in your thoughts, conversations and actions – He will show you how to place Him first in your time, money, relationships and decision-making.

Even though it may not seem like things are changing, they are. No matter how big of a mess your life is in, God will turn it around and bless you if you put Him first and refuse to quit. **If you have**

**accepted Jesus as the Savior of your soul, I encourage you to let Him be the Lord of your life.** When you put God first in everything you do, you are destined for success!

### PRAYER POWER

Make me know Thy ways, O LORD;  
Teach me Thy paths.  
Lead me in Thy truth and teach me.  
For Thou art the God of my salvation:  
For Thee I wait all the day. Psalm 25:4-5

1. PRAY for our **church** – for **guidance & direction**
2. PRAY for our **congregation**
3. PRAY for our **Pastors**
4. PRAY for **individual needs**
5. PRAY for **special events**, etc.

Be anxious for nothing, but in **EVERYTHING** by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known to God.  
Philippians 4:5-6

### NO EXCUSES

The next time you feel like GOD can't use the likes of you, just remember:

**Noah** was a drunk; **Abraham** was too old; **Isaac** was a daydreamer; **Jacob** was a liar; **Leah** was unattractive; **Joseph** was abused; **Moses** had a stuttering problem and was a murderer; **Gideon** was afraid; **Samson** had long hair and was a womanizer; **Rahab** was a prostitute; **Jeremiah** and **Timothy** were too young; **David** was an adulterer and a murderer; **Elijah** was depressed; **Isaiah** preached naked; **Jonah** ran from God; **Naomi** was a widow; **Job** went bankrupt; **John the Baptist** ate bugs; **Peter** denied Christ; **The Disciples** fell asleep while praying; **Martha** worried about everything; **The Samaritan woman** was divorced, more than once; **Zaccheus** was too small; **Paul** persecuted Christians and then became too religious; **Timothy** may have had an ulcer; **Lazarus** was dead!

Should I go on?!? No more excuses now. God can use you to your full potential. Besides, you aren't the message – HE IS – you are just the messenger. God is waiting to use your full potential.

- >Be ye fishers of men ... you catch them - He'll clean them.
- >Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.
- >Forbidden fruits create many jams.
- >God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called.
- >God grades on the cross, not the curve.
- >God loves everyone, but probably prefers "fruits of the spirit" over "religious nuts!"
- >God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.
- > He who angers you, controls you.
- >If God is your co-pilot, swap seats.
- >Most people want to serve God, but only in an advisory capacity.
- >Prayer: Don't give God instructions, just report for duty.
- >The task ahead of us is never greater than the Power behind us.
- >The Will of God will never take you where the Grace of God will not protect you.
- >We don't change the message, the message changes us.

**Do you love God? Then He is your source of existence and Savior. He keeps you functioning each and every day. Without Him, you will be nothing. Without Him, you are nothing, but with Him you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you.**

#### A Penny for your Thoughts

Have you seen this story?

*Several years ago, a friend and her husband were invited to spend the weekend at the husband's employer's home. The wife was nervous about the weekend. The boss was very wealthy, with a fine home on the waterway, and cars costing more than her house.*

*The first day and evening went well and the wife was delighted to have this rare glimpse into how the very wealthy live. The husband's employer was quite generous as a host, and took them to the finest restaurants. The wife knew she would never have the opportunity to indulge in this kind of extravagance again, so she was enjoying herself immensely.*

*As the three of them were about to enter an exclusive restaurant one evening, the boss was walking slightly ahead of the woman and her husband. He stopped suddenly, looking down on the pavement for a long, silent moment. The wife wondered if she was supposed to pass him. There was nothing on the ground except a single darkened penny that someone had dropped, and a few cigarette butts.*

*Still silent, the man reached down and picked up the penny. He held it up and smiled, then put it in his pocket as if he had found a great treasure.*

*How absurd! What need did this man have for a single penny? Why would he even take the time to stop and pick it up?*

*Throughout dinner, the entire scene nagged at her. Finally, she could stand it no longer. She casually mentioned that her daughter once had a coin collection, and asked if the penny he had found had been valuable.*

*A smile crept across the man's face as he reached into his pocket for the penny and held it out for her to see. She had seen many pennies before. What was the point of this?*

*"Look at it," he said. "Read what it says." She read the words "United States of America." "No, not that; read further." "One cent?" "No, keep reading."*

*"In God We Trust?" "YES!" "And?" "And if I trust in God, the name of God is holy, even on a coin."*

*Whenever I find a coin, I see that inscription. It is written on every single United States coin, but we never seem to notice it. God drops a message right in front of me telling me to trust Him. Who am I to pass it by?*

*When I see a coin, I pray, I stop to see if my trust IS in God at that moment. I pick the coin up as a response to God; that I do trust in Him. For a short time, at least, I cherish it as if it were gold. I think it is God's way of starting a conversation with me. Lucky for me, God is patient and pennies are plentiful."*

*(When I was out shopping, I found a penny on the sidewalk. I stopped and picked it up, and realized that I had been worrying*

*and fretting in my mind about things I cannot change. I read the words, "In God We Trust," and had to laugh. Yes, God, I get the message. It seems that I have been finding an inordinate amount of pennies in the last few months, but then, pennies are plentiful. And God is patient.)*

### THROUGH THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

#### October

- 1 Isaiah 63 & 64; Proverbs 25; 1 Timothy 6
- 2 Isaiah 65 & 66
- 3 Jeremiah 1 & 2
- 4 Jeremiah 3 & 4; Proverbs 26; 2 Timothy 1
- 5 Jeremiah 5 & 6; Proverbs 27; 2 Timothy 2
- 6 Jeremiah 7 & 8; Proverbs 28; 2 Timothy 3
- 7 Jeremiah 9 & 10; Proverbs 29; 2 Timothy 4
- 8 Jeremiah 11 & 12; Proverbs 30; Titus 1
- 9 Jeremiah 13 & 14
- 10 Jeremiah 15 & 16
- 11 Jeremiah 17 & 18; Proverbs 31; Titus 2
- 12 Jeremiah 19 & 20; Ecclesiastes 1; Titus 3
- 13 Jeremiah 21 & 22; Ecclesiastes 2; Philemon
- 14 Jeremiah 23 & 24; Ecclesiastes 3; Hebrews 1
- 15 Jeremiah 25 & 26; Ecclesiastes 4; Hebrews 2
- 16 Jeremiah 27 & 28
- 17 Jeremiah 29 & 30
- 18 Jeremiah 31 & 32; Ecclesiastes 5; Hebrews 3
- 19 Jeremiah 33 & 34; Ecclesiastes 6; Hebrews 4
- 20 Jeremiah 35 & 36; Ecclesiastes 7; Hebrews 5
- 21 Jeremiah 37 & 38; Ecclesiastes 8; Hebrews 6
- 22 Jeremiah 39 & 40; Ecclesiastes 9; Hebrews 7
- 23 Jeremiah 41 & 42
- 24 Jeremiah 43 & 44
- 25 Jeremiah 45 & 46; Ecclesiastes 10; Hebrews 8
- 26 Jeremiah 47 & 48; Ecclesiastes 11; Hebrews 9
- 27 Jeremiah 49 & 50; Ecclesiastes 12; Hebrews 10
- 28 Jeremiah 51 & 52; Song of Solomon 1; Hebrews 11
- 29 Lamentations 1 & 2; Song of Solomon 2; Hebrews 12
- 30 Lamentations 3 & 4
- 31 Lamentations 5

### HERE'S HOW YOU CAN START TRUSTING JESUS CHRIST WITH YOUR CARES & CONCERNS A RIGHT FOCUS

When troubles come your way, look beyond the present. Focus on the promises God has for your future, both on this earth and for eternity – *'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'* (Jeremiah 29:11). *Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus* (Philippians 1:6).

### AN OPPORTUNITY TO GROW

Accept your suffering as an opportunity to grow in your faith. God can use your trials to teach you and to make you a stronger Christian – *Consider it pure joy, my brothers (and sisters), whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything* (James 1:2-4). *No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it* (Hebrews 12:11).

### AN EXPECTATION OF SUFFERING

Remember that Christ did not promise a life of ease for those who follow Him; He told us that as His true disciples, we would have to endure hardship, persecution, and suffering. As the disciples did, embrace suffering for Christ. An eternity spent with Him is worth far more than anything this fleeting life can offer –

*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world (John 16:33). I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us (Romans 8:18).*

### **GROW IN CHRIST**

Make sure you are not neglecting your daily walk with Christ. This is essential to finding peace, wisdom, and joy for the road ahead. Spend time each day studying the Scriptures and pouring out your heart to God in prayer. Also, share your burdens with other believers who can support you and pray with you – *For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope (Romans 15:4). Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us (Psalm 62:8).*

### **THE LORD'S INDWELLING**

In his book The Imitation of Christ, Thomas A Kempis writes speaking as God,

*"I am the lover of purity and the giver of all holiness. I seek a pure heart and there I make my resting place.... If you want me to come to you and to remain with you, rid yourself of the old leaven and cleanse the dwelling place of your heart.*

*"Nevertheless, you must realize that **you cannot make adequate preparation for Me through your own merits**, even if you prepared for an entire year with your mind on nothing else. It is through My generosity and love that you are invited to come to Me; just as if a beggar were invited to a rich man's dinner and could only say thanks for the kindness shown to him.*

*"Do the best you can and as well as you can; not from habit or necessity, but with reverential fear and affection.... Remember who condescends to come to you! **I am He who invited you!** I will make up whatever is lacking in you. Come, then, and receive Me!"*

Always and completely we are dependent on Christ to finish the process of our salvation. But we are called to make the best preparations for Him in our hearts that we can make. Moses said that we should be holy as God is holy because God is holy (Leviticus 11:44-45). Jesus told us to be perfect (the Greek word means complete or whole) as God is perfect (Matthew 5:28). The apostle Paul told us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12). Even though we are dependent on Jesus, there is clearly a scriptural obligation placed on each of us to be "growing" in our relationship with Jesus Christ. But how do we grow in our relationship with Him?

We grow in our relationship with the Lord through the study and diligent application of the truths taught in His word. The process begins at our celebrations. The author of Hebrews wrote, "do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together" (Hebrews 10:25) for in so doing we "spur one another toward love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24). **How is your attendance at our celebrations? Are you there to spur others towards love and good works and so others can spur you on to the same?** The process continues through our attendance at an Adult Bible Fellowship (Sunday School Class). There, we pray for each other and love and encourage each other. There, we begin to work together to bring others into relationship with Him. **Are you attending an ABF?** The process continues as we become involved in a Spiritual Growth Group where we become involved

in understanding and applying the teachings of the scripture in a group of friends who hold us lovingly accountable to the process of growing in the Lord. **Are you attending a Spiritual Growth Group?**

Thomas A Kempis wrote, "Try the best you can...." And he promised that if we do, Christ will make up the shortage. But, are you really trying the best you can to prepare your heart for the Lord's indwelling?

### **THANKSGIVING DINNER**

As we did last year, families and friends of Cornerstone are invited to share Thanksgiving Day dinner with others who may not have family near. We will gather at Cornerstone for a traditional Thanksgiving Day celebration. More details will be announced later, but set aside the date NOW – Thursday, November 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

**UPWARD BASKETBALL & CHEERLEADING** comes back to Cornerstone this fall/winter. Registrations and evaluations will be held in November, with practices to follow and a game schedule from January through March 2017. Upward Sports is dedicated to introduce children, grades K-6, to Jesus Christ while teaching them the fundamentals of basketball & cheer. For more information, or to register your children/grandchildren, please see Peter Jensen. Please sign up to help with evaluations that will be held on November 14 & 15. We NEED COACHES & ASSISTANTS! Will you help?

### **ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM** - Sunday, December 4

You are invited to come to Cornerstone's annual Christmas Program. This year we will again share in the JOY of the Christmas season through this service of word and song. You won't want to miss this highlight of the Advent/Christmas season. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS** – Sunday December 4 at 4pm.

SO – please invite your friends, family and neighbors to join you for this special Christmas program. Following the program will be a time of refreshment and fellowship. Come one, come ALL! Watch for FREE tickets to be available for you to use in inviting your friends!

**SWAG NIGHT** - Ladies & Men -- are you looking forward to SWAG night? The date is Monday, December 5. Come to the church to create your own holiday swag. Bring your greens, ribbons, decorations, etc., (there will also be some supplies available to share) and enjoy this evening of fellowship and creation. We had a GREAT time last year. Plan on coming this year. It's OK to bring a friend. Watch for the sign up sheet so we have an idea of how many to set up for.

**BREAKFAST WITH THE WISE MEN** - Saturday, December 10, at 9am. Children up through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to come to the church to enjoy breakfast with our special guests, **Balthazar, Gaspar and Melchior**.

**PUNK ROCK CHRISTMAS PARTY** - Wednesday, December 14, at 7pm. Come to the church for a **GREAT TIME** of worshipping and caroling. **EVERYONE SHOULD COME!!!!**

### **CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES** **A FAMILY CHRISTMAS SERVICE**

December 24, 2016 - 4 pm

Bring the whole family for a wonderful puppet show to

welcome in the Lord's Birthday.

### CANDLELIGHT COMMUNION

December 24, 2016 - 11 pm

We will gather around the Lord's Table for a service of candles, carols and readings from scripture as we welcome in the day of our Lord's birth.

This very special service is also an opportunity for you to invite family and friends to join you!

**THIS IS THE VERY BEST WAY TO BEGIN YOUR CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION!**

### CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES

**DON'T FORGET TO INCLUDE THE LORD IN YOUR CHRISTMAS DAY CELEBRATIONS!** Christmas is on Sunday this year. What better way to thank the Lord for His indescribable gift than to worship Him on that day. Cornerstone will have services at 8:15 and 10:45 am, with Bible classes at 9:30am.

### STRONG MAN vs MAN OF STRENGTH

A strong man works out every day to keep his body in shape... but a **man of strength** kneels in prayer to keep his soul in shape.

A strong man isn't afraid of anything... but a **man of strength** shows courage in the midst of his fear.

A strong man won't let anyone get the best of him... but a **man of strength** gives the best of himself to everyone.

A strong man walks sure-footedly... but a **man of strength** knows God will catch him when he falls.

A strong man wears the look of confidence on his face... but a **man of strength** wears grace.

A strong man has faith that he is strong enough for the journey... but a **man of strength** has faith that it is in the journey that he will become strong!

### I SAW JESUS

I saw Jesus last week. He was wearing blue jeans and an old shirt. He was up at the church building. He was alone and working hard. For just a minute, He looked a little like one of our members. But it was Jesus, I could tell by His smile.

I saw Jesus last Sunday. He was teaching a Bible class. He didn't talk real loud or use long words. But you could tell He believed what He said. For just a minute, He looked like my Sunday school teacher. But it was Jesus, I could tell by His loving voice.

I saw Jesus the other day. He was at the hospital visiting a friend who was sick. They prayed together quietly. For just a minute, He looked like my pastor. But it was Jesus, I could tell by the tears in His eyes.

I saw Jesus yesterday. He was bringing a covered dish over to me because I had been sick. For just a minute, I thought it was Him, with His gentle hands stroking my shoulder. I thought it was Him, but it looked like my sweet neighbor. But it was Jesus, because I could feel Him in my soul.

I saw Jesus this morning. He was in my kitchen making my breakfast and fixing me a special lunch. For just a minute, He looked like my Mom. But it was Jesus; I could feel the love from His heart.

I see Jesus everywhere, taking food to the sick, being friendly to a newcomer. And for just a minute, I think He's someone I know. But it's always Jesus, I can tell by the way He serves.

May someone see Jesus in you & me today. (AllWorship.com)

### YOUTH NEWS

#### DON'T FORGET!!

**YOUTH FELLOWSHIP** (grades 6-12) - WEDNESDAYS, 7-8:30 pm weekly (following the Mid-Week Worship Celebration)! Come and experience it! Bring your friends!!

**YOUTH SPIRITUAL GROWTH GROUP** - THURSDAYS at 7pm (EVERY YOUTH is invited!)

**YOUTH BIBLE FELLOWSHIP** - for Jr & Sr High - 9:30 am Sunday mornings

Worship Celebrations - Sundays at 8:15 and 10:45 am and Wednesdays at 6:30pm

#### PLEASE HELP US OUT!

#### EMPTY INKJET PRINTER CARTRIDGES

Please donate your empty inkjet printer cartridges to the youth group to be recycled. A container is placed in the **coat room** to receive your donations. **KEEP THOSE CARTRIDGES COMING!** We appreciate every bit of help we receive.

#### EVENTS for YOUTH in grades 6-12

Saturday, October 8 - A DAY AT THE BEACH

Wednesday, December 14 - PUNK ROCK CHRISTMAS PARTY

### CHILDREN'S NEWS

**COOL KIDS** - Children, 4 years old up through grade 3 are invited to participate in COOL Kids on Sunday mornings at both the 8:15 and 10:45 celebration services. Following the praise time and the reading of scripture in the Worship Center, kids are dismissed to ROOM 108. COOL Kids (Children Of Our Lord Kids) helps kids learn to celebrate Christ in a way they enjoy and become excited about.

#### EVENTS FOR KIDS

Sunday, October 30, 5-7pm - **FALL FEST**

Friday, December 9, 6pm - **LOCK IN (Sleepover)** for kids in grades K-5

Saturday, December 10, 9 am - **Breakfast With the Wisemen**  
Saturday, December 24, 4pm (**CHRISTMAS EVE**) - Puppet show

### THE WORLD'S MOST GENEROUS PEOPLE

Here are some interesting facts:

- No developed country approaches American giving.
- A study conducted showed that religious Americans are 25% more likely to give charitably than secularists and are 23% more likely to volunteer their time.
- Religious people do not just donate to their own church – they also donate more to charities with secular causes than do secularists.
- Self-described “conservatives” are 30% more likely to give to charities – and give more money – than self-described “liberals.”
- Conservative Americans are more likely to donate blood each year, and do so more often, than liberals. People who said they were “conservative” or “extremely

conservative” made up less than one-fifth of the population, but donated more than a quarter of the blood.

- Charitable giving in America has generally risen faster than the growth of the economy for more than half a century.
- Tax deductibility for charitable donations is irrelevant for most Americans.
- IRS records show that only about a third of people who file tax returns itemize their deductions, which means that most Americans don't even claim the deductions to which they are entitled.

The truth is, unlike Christianity, most religions in this world do not foster concern or care for other people. Most major religions have a fatalistic worldview and do not believe in a personal God who cares how humans treat one another. Christians believe that God is watching how we behave while we are here on Earth, and Jesus admonished us to practice acts of kindness, benevolence and charity because doing so pleases God. The Bible teaches that those who live by these values will be rewarded spiritually and otherwise here and in the hereafter. And the bonus is that it blesses us even in the present.

**OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**

We again have the privilege and responsibility of participating in **Operation Christmas Child**. Boxes and brochures are now available for you to pick up and use. Start planning now how many shoe boxes you will contribute. Get together as families, ABF's and other small groups as well as individuals to help meet this important need.

Operation Christmas Child is a unique project of Christian relief and evangelism that delivers gifts to hurting children while also telling them about God's greatest gift – His Son, Jesus Christ. You and your family can take part in this exciting project simply by picking up an Operation Christmas Child brochure and preparing your SHOE BOX GIFT. Also, please pray for the child who will receive your shoe box. The brochure will tell you how to prepare your box and what types of things should go in it. Watch the screen on Sundays for more information. Ask Duck Wilson your questions. **DEADLINE TO RETURN YOUR FILLED BOXES IS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6.**

**THE GIFT**

*Your word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.* Psalm 119:105

“For best results, follow the instructions of the manufacturer.” These words often appear in the instruction manual that comes with a new item that needs to be assembled. The statement is true because the one who made the item or appliance usually knows better than others how to put it together and how it will work best.

God, our heavenly Father, is the “manufacturer” of life – the Maker and Sustainer of all life and all people. He created the whole world and all the people in it. As the Creator and Sustainer of life, He then knows how life will work best.

We've probably all heard the saying, “The problem with life is it doesn't come with an instruction manual!”

**OH, YES IT DOES!**

The instruction manual is called the Bible, the written Word of God. The Word of God is His will and His wisdom.

God's Word covers all of life in its counsel. Every issue, every topic and every matter in all of life is addressed in some way. In direct statement or principle, everything is covered. God's Word is the key to all of life.

Thus, believers need to make it a high priority to read, to meditate on and to use the Word of God in our lives. Tragically, though, too many believers fail to understand the great importance of spending time daily in God's empowering Word.

Let's consider a few reasons why every believer should decide to make it a high priority to spend time in God's Word every day:

1. It tells you how to be genuinely saved and how to grow in your faith (John 3:16; Psalm 119:105; Philippians 4:6-7).
2. It gives you clear guidance and direction for all of your life (Psalm 119:105; 2 Timothy 3:15-17).
3. It empowers your prayer life (Philippians 4:6-7).
4. It sharpens your ability to hear the Holy Spirit more clearly in your life (1 Corinthians 1:5).
5. It ministers to your mind, body and spirit (Proverbs 4:20-22).
6. It helps you maintain your mental health (Romans 12:2).
7. It increases the anointing on every area of your life (Proverbs 1:3).
9. It enhances your intellect and personality (1 Corinthians 1:5).
10. It pours grace, joy and peace into your spirit, your mind and your life (2 Corinthians 1:2, 1 Timothy 1:2, Galatians 5:22).

Reading 3 chapters a day from the Word of God will greatly bless your life. Lets make it a high priority every day. And Parents, have your children read 2 or 3 chapters out loud to you. It will greatly bless them and you. --American Family Radio

**CHRISTIAN CHARACTERISTICS**

N	A	M	S	T	E	A	D	F	A	S	T	Z	J	U	S	T	H	W
S	I	K	Y	T	R	I	G	H	T	E	O	U	S	P	Q	H	U	D
S	S	E	L	E	M	A	L	B	T	H	C	A	N	L	F	G	M	E
U	M	E	O	K	G	U	I	L	E	L	E	S	S	U	E	I	B	L
O	X	M	H	O	F	Y	A	B	N	C	D	R	E	F	A	R	L	I
L	D	F	D	I	L	U	F	H	T	I	A	F	E	H	R	P	E	F
A	G	L	C	W	T	H	G	N	I	V	O	L	R	C	I	U	I	E
E	Y	R	O	J	K	R	L	M	V	N	O	P	U	T	N	Q	R	D
Z	E	L	S	B	P	R	U	D	E	N	T	T	P	A	G	I	U	N
M	V	W	O	B	E	D	I	E	N	T	X	A	Y	W	Z	B	S	U

- |           |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| attentive | just      | sincere   |
| blameless | loving    | steadfast |
| bold      | lowly     | true      |
| faithful  | meek      | undefiled |
| fearing   | merciful  | upright   |
| godly     | obedient  | watchful  |
| guileless | prudent   | zealous   |
| holy      | pure      |           |
| humble    | righteous |           |

**October is Covenant Renewal Month**