

FAITH NEWS

LET'S BE CAREFUL – PASTOR PAUL



I was listening to a Christian radio station the other day when the host said we should all rejoice because “no matter what you believe, we are all children of God.” That statement was odd to hear. We have a tendency today to boil things down to simple bumper sticker statements. And, especially when it comes to our faith, we have to be very careful with this.

Our faith is not simplistic. If we are not careful we give Christians a misunderstanding of the truth, clouding their hope. We can also unnecessarily confuse nonbelievers as to what we truly believe. Let me make this point with two examples. The first, are we all children of God? Then the second example that I often hear is that all sin is the same, sin is sin. Both of these examples will make the point that we need to be careful with what we say to people because in each instance the statement can be true, but at the same time very false. As Christians, our desire should be to know God. And in knowing Him better we grow in our love of Him, and in our love for Him we desire for Him to be known by others rightly. 2 Timothy 2:15 says, “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” With this in mind, I want to encourage each of us to be careful with an oversimplification of the great truths of our faith.

So back to our first example: can we say that all people are children of God? The reason we need to be careful is the answer is yes and no. In a very limited sense, we are all children of God. We are all created by God and in that sense alone we are all children of God. But only those who have believed in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins are called, in Scripture, children of God.

John 1:12 tells us, “To all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” And in Galatians 3:26 we read, “In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.” Scripture makes it clear we are either children of God or children of the devil (1 John 3:10). Therefore it’s important for us to be careful we do not refer to someone who is a child of the devil as a child of God. If they have not believed, then they are standing in God’s judgment. And from their perspective, if they are already a child of God then it doesn’t make sense that God would condemn them. There is no reason to value the gospel if they are already a child of God.

Our second example addresses the question, is all sin equal? Again, the answer is both yes and no. Consider the perspective of a non-believer. If God treats a lie the same way that He treats child abuse, then how can you call that fair or righteous. This is where it is important that we be specific. In one sense, when we sin, the primary offense is against God. All sin is first and foremost against God (Psalm 51:4). And to offend the almighty God is worthy of eternal death. But that doesn’t mean that God sees all sin as equal. There is a vast difference between stealing a piece of candy and betraying the Son of God. The proof of this is seen in the punishments of God commanded through the law of God. There were some sins that God commanded people to be stoned for, and others where people simply had to offer a small sacrifice. There was a variety of punishments for different sins. Each and every sin earns us death, but it doesn't mean each sin is equal.

We need to be very careful to be specific with people. We must tell people the truth. Here is another example: does God love everyone? In one sense the answer is yes, but in another, no. Yes, God loves everyone, He sent His son (John 3:16). Even so, there are some who are enemies of God and some who are children of God. The love of God for the redeemed is different and unique from those who have not claimed the grace of Jesus. We need to communicate these specific truths to people, otherwise our message of the gospel will not be clear, and people may incorrectly generalize all sin as equal.

In light of our love for God, we should seek to represent him as accurately as possible. And in light of our love for each other and for the lost we need to seek to give people the truth. God’s love compels us to love others with the truth.

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THE GIFT OF PRAYER BY PASTOR MICHAEL

Prayer isn't a responsibility. It isn't something we HAVE to do. It is a privilege. It is something we GET to do. It is very easy for us to view prayer as just another thing to check off our list for the day. We pray before we eat our meals. We pray to open the church service. We pray to close it. We pray in our small group. We pray for the requests made to us. Prayer often becomes just a part of motions we go through. But prayer is much more than that. We have the remarkable ability to go

before the God of the universe and to converse with Him. This is the God who spoke everything into existence and holds all of it together, the Almighty God. We should be awestruck to have this privilege and should long to pray every moment we are able.

As I've been studying for my Sunday school class, I have been amazed with prayers of Old Testament saints: The boldness of Abraham and Moses; the intimacy of David; the zeal of Elijah. They all sought the Lord. Their prayer

lives reflected their pursuit of God. They wanted God for who He was, not for what they could get from Him.

In preparing for this class, I was challenged by this: Is my prayer life part of a checklist, or is it a pursuit of God? I believe this is a question we should all consider, and correct if necessary. Martin Luther said "A Christian without prayer is just as impossible as a living person without a pulse."

A PRAYING INTERN BY ELIZABETH PROUT

Hello all! I just wanted to tell you how thankful I am to have your support for my upcoming internship in Guatemala. You have all been so generous with your prayers, your money and other tools that will make sharing Jesus easier. You've helped to pull my focus back to where it should be, which is not on money, but on preparing my heart to share my Savior.

Since I originally asked for your support, some things have changed. The House of Hope orphanage is being sold right now, so I will not be staying there. I don't know all the details, so please don't ask for any.

The Millers are still based in Zacapa (I think), so the living situation might be similar, and I expect to be doing the same job. I know that I'll be helping teams and working with kids, but I'm unsure of what kids.

One thing you can pray with me for is flying. I love flying—in a group of people who can tell me what to do and watch my stuff. I will not be in a group this time, and it's intimidating. I also have a forty minute layover in Atlanta, so pray that I can run fast! (You could also pray that Greg remembers to pick me up in Guatemala—it's happened to people before!)

I've had trouble praying for this trip, so I feel funny asking you to pray about it. Honestly, I don't know how to pray, which is my I'm in a Sunday school class designed to teach it. I don't have an excuse, because I've seen God say yes to my prayers before. But I've also seen Him say no. More and more, I expect no. If you pray for anything, pray for peace so that I can focus on being His child and not on my own insecurities (like not understanding how to pray).

Thank you all for your support! You are amazing!



FAITH KIDS UPDATE BY SARAH CAMPBELL

This spring, we are studying the Armor of God. Here are some of the important things from our study:

- God gives us EVERYTHING we need to put on His armor. We simply have to choose to put in on daily.
- When you walk in your Father's shoes, your footprints start to look like His.
- Satan loves to lie and distract us from the TRUTH, and our armor is the only way we can stand strong against his tricky schemes.

Please join us in praying for the children and leaders as we continue in this study. These are eternal lessons, and the children are soaking them up! Glory to God!

Feb 20 & 27, March 5 - Regular Faith Kids

March 12 - No Faith Kids

March 19 - Regular Faith Kids

March 26 - No Faith Kids - Spring Break!

April 2, 9, 16 - Regular Faith Kids

UNDERSTANDING GOD'S LANGUAGE BY ANNETTE DOMBROWSKI

There are many variations and styles of the Bible in today's world. Translations range from very traditional and difficult to understand to editions with modern words, phrases and styles. My personal Bible is the King James version which at times can be difficult to read. However, like any book, the more you read and learn, the easier it becomes.

Pastor Michael's article in the June newsletter about understanding song lyrics in Christian music resonated with me. Both hymnal and Biblical terminology can be difficult at times. Many songs and writings stem from centuries ago when basics of language were different than what we employ today. We can be perplexed by a word or verses because of the way language has evolved from generations ago. Yet through all our changes, God's Word remains unchanged. Therefore, we need to study the Word to clearly understand God's messages to us. Further, when we don't understand words in Scripture, it is worthwhile to look them up.

In Jesus' times, apostles had limited resources to assist them in their walk with the Lord. There were no Barnes & Noble or Hobby Lobby reference materials or writing tools. Though these implements are available today, we often don't understand what God is trying to tell us through His Holy Word. The apostles gained knowledge through their relationship with God, Jesus, each other and self-teaching. They shared with the masses what they learned through talk and letters. Their memories must have been amazing;

just think of the recall abilities they had! With all that said, we really have no excuse not to establish a closer relationship with our Lord.

One of my favorite verses is 1 Peter 1:22, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." The word "**unfeigned**" was new to me so I googled it and found "to be genuine or real". To complement the internet, I turned to Webster's Dictionary and found "genuine." Clearly, Peter is telling us to love one another with a real, genuine love, not pretending or faking it. This is a demonstration of God's love for us. He has no reservations, nor does He hold back. We can stand confident in His love and thus also ask Him for help in times of need because, after all, He is our Holy Father.

The apostle Paul states in Philippians 4: 6-7, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Google defines supplication as "the action of begging or asking for something earnestly or humbly". Webster's states "To make humble entreaty" which means to ask earnestly or implore. Paul was explaining to the Philippians they needed to go to God in prayer with thanksgiving in their hearts, yet not be afraid to be bold in requests for help, and in

response God will keep our hearts and minds secure through His holy peace.

We are granted this inexplicable peace through the atonement Jesus made on our behalf on the cross. Atonement is reparation for a wrong one has done to another. The original meaning is being in harmony with someone. When Jesus gave his life for us, He enabled us to become one with God in complete harmony. Through this atonement we become justified – declared or made righteous in the sight of God. To be righteous is to be morally right in our thoughts and actions. Webster's defines this as "acting in an upright moral way, morally right or justifiable". One Wikipedia explanation of justification is "God's act of removing the guilt and penalty of sin while at the same time making a sinner righteous through Christ's atoning sacrifice".

As we study God's Word, we grow closer to Him and He can reveal more to us. If we have any hesitation about the meaning of what we read, we should take a few moments to dig deeper. As we build understanding, keeping notes or a journal will be helpful; God may reveal what He plans for us to share with others to build their faith.

If you come across something you find especially interesting please share with me - we never stop learning!

"Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."

-Romans 12:9-13

HOW WE FOUND OURSELVES AT FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH BY BOB GAMON

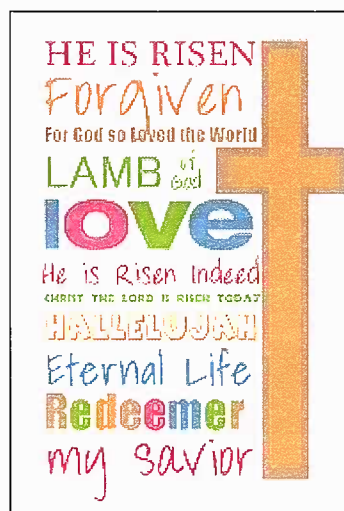
Early 2016 found Lisa and me very "comfortable" in our lifestyles with the Air Force at Eglin AFB, FL. Both of us had enjoyed rewarding military careers. I planned civil service retirement in 2018; Lisa in 2021. We had a good home in Niceville, updated 3-4 times in the past 30 years to be our perfect retirement home. We were leaders in several church ministries and small groups, had many good friends and no driving reason to leave Florida.

During an August 2016 worship service, God told me very clearly we needed to move to Michigan. I had no idea why, yet Lisa insisted if God was leading us to move, we needed to have faith and be obedient. We discussed pros and cons, prayed about it together and with friends, and soon God began to give us signs to confirm this was from Him, not something we were fabricating. In October 2016 we traveled to Michigan to look at potential homes. After an exhaustive search, and ready to quit, God pushed us to the top of the mitt. There we walked into a Che-

boygan home and knew this is where He wanted us to be. We still didn't know why, we just knew the Holy Spirit was working within us.

During the next couple of years, God opened many doors in guiding our move, from cost savings to conveniences. He led Lisa to retire two years earlier than intended, which had its significant financial impact. However, we knew God was in control; we've learned to trust Him in all aspects of our lives. For example, 25 years ago, we accepted His Malachi 3:10 challenge: "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." Our God is an awesome God. He has proven His faithfulness to us with abundant blessings when it came to life choices, health, finances, ministries, and many other things. We know the

move to Cheboygan is yet another blessing to be revealed. During the past 3 years we visited 8-10 local churches yet God kept bringing us back to Faith Baptist. We could feel His Spirit moving in the hearts of Pastor Paul, Pastor Michael, and the congregation. We loved what we saw and experienced — Biblically-based theology which included emphasis on God's love to all and the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The theology and deeply introspective sermons were blended with warmth of the people, the spiritual energy in the church, value of small groups for personal growth and outreach, and young children growing in the Word and sharing with the congregation. Thank you for welcoming us into the Faith family. We look forward to making many good friends here while stepping forward to use the training, skills and aptitudes with which God has endowed us. We plan to continue sharing the Good News with believers and non-believers alike and are excited about being part of this vibrant, loving church.



Mark your calendars!
Palm Sunday - April 5
Easter Sunday - April 12

We will have an Easter Egg Hunt and a Fellowship Breakfast on Easter morning before the service. Make plans to attend, and invite your friends, family and neighbors!

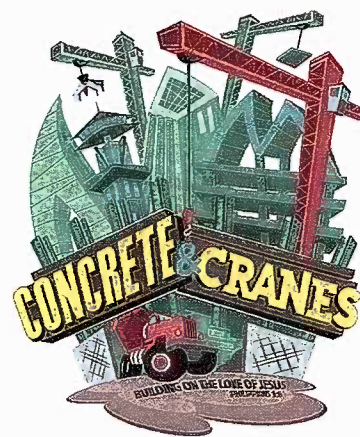
Save the Date!

VBS 2020

July 13-16

For children entering PreK4 - Grade 5.

See Pastor Michael or Sarah Campbell for more information!



WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED

WEBSITE: FAITHBAPTISTUPNORTH.ORG

FACEBOOK: [FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH - CHEBOYGAN](https://www.facebook.com/FAITHBAPTISTCHURCH-CHEBOYGAN)

EMAIL: [PRAYER & FAMILY CONNECTIONS - PRAYER@FAITHBAPTISTUPNORTH.ORG](mailto:PRAYER&FAMILYCONNECTIONS-PRAYER@FAITHBAPTISTUPNORTH.ORG)