

Eisenhower Church of Christ

The Gospel Produces Faith

There is nothing this side of heaven more beautiful than what happens when the Gospel contacts an honest human heart. A conviction is formed, and a simple faith begins to bud. At its most basic level, the Gospel produces faith...but what is this faith like?

This faith is an integral part of conversion. Because baptism's crucial role in God's plan has been distorted by religious people for centuries, Gospel preachers often emphasize it in their preaching. This emphasis needs to be continued, but not to the neglect of the convictions in a person's heart that lead him to the waters of baptism. At the very foundation of a relationship to Christ is the presence of deep, personal faith in Jesus as God's promised Messiah. Any Gospel presentation that has baptism as its sole motivation is misguided. Immersion into Christ will be the natural result when a person gives his heart to the Lord, but that baptism is effectual only when the Gospel has already produced faith. Peter's Gospel sermon in Acts 2 had as its primary goal creating faith in the hearts of his hearers, as seen by his accumulation of "witnesses" to the deity of Christ (vv. 14-36). The result— their being "pricked in their heart"— suggests that he succeeded with many of those who heard him. This pattern is followed in every conversion account: ***"And believers were the more added to the Lord"*** (Acts 5:14). ***"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them...But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women. Then, Simon himself believed also and was baptized"*** (Acts 8:5, 12, 13a). Philip's preaching focused on presenting evidence pointing to the identity of Christ. When the Ethiopian eunuch wanted to be baptized, Philip sought clarification: ***"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest"*** (Acts 8:37). He wanted to baptize him into Christ, of course, but he wanted to make sure that the Gospel had stimulated faith, without which baptism is meaningless.

This faith overcomes obstacles. New Testament believers faced trials as they became Christians. By identifying themselves with Jesus of Nazareth, they made themselves enemies of the established religious hierarchy of first-century Judea and exposed themselves to horrific persecution. Some weak-minded hearers of the first century heard the Gospel and believed it, but their fear overcame their faith, and they were unwilling to confess lest they be ostracized (John 12:42-43). Others believed for a time, but when the persecutions arose they fell back into their former religion. The Lord spoke to this weakness in His Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13). Some develop a shallow faith that cannot sustain them when the sun comes up and they become "scorched" and soon "wither away" (Matthew 13:5-6, 20-21). When the Gospel contacts good and honest hearts; however, it produces a substantial faith that embraces persecution and trials as opportunities for growth (James 1:3-5). These believers face temptation with their eyes fixed squarely on Jesus and consequently refuse to succumb to the world's allurements (Hebrews 12:1-2; 1 John 2:15). Through the difficulties of life, its disappointments and struggles— this kind of faith sustains them, giving them a peace that calms and a hope that sustains.

This faith is contagious. The faith of the early church spread like wildfire. The three thousand believers of Acts 2 became five thousand men in Acts 4, with the growth thereafter being described with phrases like, ***"and believers were the more added to the Lord"*** (Acts 5:14) and ***"the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly"*** (Acts 6:7) This growth was related to the genuineness and fervor of the believers' faith. Their convictions led them to form a familial bond of unity that expressed itself in intimate fellowship (Acts 2:42-47) and generous sharing (Acts 4:32-37). This led, at least in part, to the early church's positive relationship with their community (Acts 2:47). Their faith in the face of persecutions impressed those around them (Acts 4:13). They were bold in sharing their faith (Acts 8:4ff). This should come as no surprise, however. When we are truly convinced that we are sinners and that God robed Himself in human flesh to die as an innocent sacrifice so that we can be saved, shouldn't we be bold in telling others? Should we not stand up to persecution? Should we not be excited about the local family of believers and be diligent in maintaining that unity? When the Gospel produces true faith in us,

that faith will be the strongest conviction we have. It will permeate every aspect of our lives so visibly that unbelievers around us will want to know more. Faith is, indeed, a powerful thing. Without it, religion is empty ritual, and life is void of hope. When it consumes a good heart, however, a believer will do whatever his Lord asks of him.

—Chuck Webster

Sympathy

We would like to express our sympathy to Debbie Marrs in the loss of her first cousin, **John Ford**. John passed away Sunday night, May 20th, from a massive heart attack in Tulsa, OK. He had battled cancer for a number of years and had undergone 13 cancer surgeries and was cancer free. John was 60 years old. Keep this family

Prayer Requests

George Warren fell last Saturday and bruised his face pretty bad. He had a CT scan done on Monday, May 21st. Keep George in your prayers.

Maxine Newton has pneumonia and not doing well at all. She was moved to the Country Manor Care living quarters in Lavernia, TX.

Concerns Update

Rosalinda Benavides' triplets will be in the NICU until July. Continue to keep Rosalinda and the babies in your prayers.

Jennie Fuls (Nancy Easlon's sister) underwent a complete mastectomy surgery on Thursday, May 17th, at Midland Memorial Hospital. Keep her in your prayers.

Conchida Williams (Devida's sister) had an MRI done on her back Wednesday, May 23rd, to pinpoint the cause of her pain. Conchida lives in Picketon, OH.

Prayer List

Tom Bauer; Rosalinda Benavides; Elsie Bradford; Brad Bundick; Bill Butler; Blas Campos; David Castor; Beth Clay; Sherry Cox; Dayton Dennard; James & Joyce Drake; Glenda Driver; Verona Dykes; Dana Erwin; Jennie Fuls; Hattie Gilmore; David Guynn; Maria Guzman; Anna Groves; Opal Hager; Winford Hambright; Shirley Harvey; Glenda Hillis; Letha Hooper; Betty Leeth; Eliseo Lopez; Juan & Estella Morolez; Tanya Nichols; Kathy Nunley; Curtis Parum; Trina Plyler; Jackie Rex; Elvia Ruckman; Janelle Shirley; Brenda Simmons; Charles Simmons; Matthew Simmons; Velma Tolbert; Marilyn Upshaw; Laura Vasquez; Jurlean Warren; Doris Weakland; Jimmy Weaver; Lisa Wells; Janet Wesson; Wanda Wheeler; Ann Wilson; Glenda Winkley; John Wood; Jack Wright.

Eisenhower's Shut-ins

Roberta Hamil; Dusty and Kathy Marshall; Janelle Shirley; and Lester Whisenant.

Remember to keep all of our sick, shut-ins, the bereaved, our military personnel and the spiritually weak in your daily prayers.

Youth

Bible Quiz Question...

When Jesus came unto John to be baptized of him, John was baptizing on the Jordan river. Matthew 3:1 says that John was preaching in the wilderness of Judah. From which province did Jesus come to be baptized of John?

Last Week's Bible Quiz Answer...

The Jewish Law forbade the people to work on the Sabbath Day.

Events

Watch *“In Search of the Lord’s Way”* every Sunday morning at 7:00 am on KWES TV 9, (New West 9)

Also, tune in to hear a message from the Brown Trail Church of Christ on the *“Speaking the Truth in Love”* program every Sunday at 8:00 a.m. on ABC.

Thank You

My family and I would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation for all the prayers that were offered during our brother’s illness. The cards and expressions of prayers meant a lot to Russ. He battled his illness for a long time but was not able to overcome it. Your sincere expressions of concern were very endearing to me and my family.

In Christian Love,
Devida Montgomery

Office News

The *“New Mexico Children’s Home”* will be back in Odessa June 5th, 2018. They are requesting **55 Gallon Trash Bags.**

We will have a *“Praise & Sing Service”* on Wednesday (May 30th)

A Bit of Heaven

Everyone was meant to share
God’s all-abiding love and care;
He saw that we would need to know
A way to let these feelings show.

So God made hugs a special sign
And symbol of His love divine,
A circle of our open arms
To hold in love and keep out harm.

One simple hug can do its part
To warm and cheer another’s heart.
A hug’s a bit of heaven above
That signifies God’s perfect love.

–Jill Wolf

May 27th, 2018

Announcements
Song Leader
Sermon
Opening Prayer
Scripture
Second Prayer
Closing Prayer

A.M.

Larry May
Jacob Carson
Allen Weakland
Larry May
Richard Siler
Josh Wells
Cody Wesson

P.M.

Larry May
Craig Wesson
Allen Weakland
Larry May
Dex Dennard
Jr. Munoz
Jacob Carson

Lord's Supper
West...

Dex Dennard
Trinidad Wood
Bill Ryan

George Warren
Communion
(In Library)

East...

Scot Straw
Josh Wells
Cody Wesson

Other Responsibilities: *Elder* : Larry May 638-3990 *Deacon*: Bill Ryan 272-5507 *Pulpit*: Jacob Carson 940-3775 *Table*: George Warren 557-2171 *Song Leaders*: Larry May 638-3990 *Recording Duties*: Chris Butler 362-7486 *Collections*: Chris Butler 362-7486

Sunday AM

"Building Fellowship & Friendship"
(I Corinthians 12:23-25)

Sunday PM

"Stronghold in the Day of Trouble"
(Nahum 1:7)

Our Records

Bible Class... 69
Morning Worship...100
Evening Worship...68
Wednesday...86
Contribution...\$4,121.00