



# On the Same Page

“But he said, “O Lord GOD, how am I to know that I shall possess it?”” (Genesis 15:8 ESV)

## A Developing Direction

### Forever-Family Fellowship

**We will teach and practice truth-and-love relationships with brothers-sisters in Christ that must survive/thrive in the present because we believe that these relationships will last forever**

### All-Week-Long Worship

As the local body of believers gathers each Sunday for worship, **we will inspire a worship experience for all age groups that will travel with you all week long.** What we do on Sunday will assist you in your singing, in your praying, in your devotion, and in your witness.

Conversely, it is as you worship all-week-long that you will be prepared to enter into gathered worship on Sunday.

### Day-to-Day Discipleship

As followers of Christ, we are disciples every single day. Respect for and commitment to Scripture is essential. **We will show you how to interact with and respond to God's Word, both as individuals, and in groups.**

### Moment-by-Moment Mission

God, the Architect of the world and of our lives arranges appointments and interruptions. Each of us is called to represent His Son for the glory of His Name. **We will cultivate a mind-set for moment-by-moment mission, whether close to home, or far away.**

## For What would One Die?

Sunday, December 31, 2017

For what would you die? Perhaps for the protection of family and home. Perhaps for freedom and country. Would you die for your faith, for the honor of your Savior? These are all difficult questions. Let's discover a truth that underlies the commitment of the Christian as we think about [Abraham's prayer/question](#).

Abraham says to God, “How can I know that I will possess the land You have promised?” As we have [previously written](#), the path forward seemed sketchy at best. “Lord, how do I know I can count on you?”

God then gives some rather strange instructions. Slaughter some animals: a cow, a goat, a ram, a turtledove and a pigeon. Cut them in half, and lay those halves parallel with a path in between. What is God doing? [He is “cutting” a covenant](#). He is making a solemn promise in which He communicates to the beneficiary, Abraham, (and by the faith of Abraham, us) something like this: “May what has happened to these animals happen to me if I do not keep My promises to you.” God is saying, I stake my Life on it - the very existence of God. And it's not mere words, because were God to violate His character - well - it's impossible. If He did, then God would not be God.

We can count on God, because God stakes His life on His promise. And we know that He would, because He did. In order to fulfill His promises Abraham and to us, [He in fact sent His Son, Jesus, to die](#) for us, bearing the curse of sin for us, that we might receive the righteousness of God. God was “cut in half” for us.

And so, the question in the title is a bit mis-leading. It is a bit of a trick, because we always read ourselves first into every question, into every situation. It's ingrained in us. For what would I be willing to die? But the foundational truth is that we as Christians may be better prepared to sacrifice our lives because One has already given Himself for us. It's not so much what we do, as what God has already done. Or, what we do is based on what God done. [We love, because God first loved us](#). We [forgive because we have been forgiven](#). We [serve, because we have been served](#).

This passage, Genesis 15, includes this phrase quoted in three places in the New Testament: “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” Yes, God, having witnessed Your word and action, that [“you would really rather die than live without us.”](#) I believe, and I know I can count on You.

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Closing Quote re: Martin Luther and The Freedom of the Christian

**“One can hardly imagine a greater contrast to what Luther meant by “the freedom of the Christian”: living in paradoxical bondage to selfless, loving service of your neighbors, tirelessly tending to their needs whatever they might be, as a result of gratitude for the unmerited gift of God’s saving grace.” ... “Luther would deride the idea of freedom we know today and disclaim any credit for it. In fact, he would be disgusted by it, because it has nothing to do with what he regarded as the only real freedom, the bound freedom of a Christian.”**

Rebel in the Ranks: Martin Luther, the Reformation, and the Conflicts That Continue to Shape Our World,  
by Brad S. Gregory. Harper, 2017, p. 262

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### News and Notes

**Prayer Time:** Sundays, 9 a.m., in the sanctuary

**Lord’s Table and American House** service are next Sunday, January 7.

**Ladies Bible Study** will hold its next meeting at the start of 2018.

**Awana meets** on Wednesday evenings, 6 - 7:30 p.m for ages 3 through 8th grade. We are now off for winter break, and will resume Wednesday, January 3.

Our **Annual Meeting** will be Sunday, January 15 9:45 a.m.

We would like to invite interested people to join **Milford Baptist’s Facebook prayer page** (search ‘Milford Prayer’) - a user-by-permission forum to post/read church family prayer requests.

**Please note the church’s phone number: 248-717-3564**

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### **Weekly Worship @ 11:00 a.m.**



**Last Sunday, December 24**, we met for morning worship at 11, and followed Martin Luther’s Christmas Day sermon, 1530, from Luke 2, and the angels’ announcement to the shepherds. We found that we only really understand the Christmas story, and the Gospel, when it becomes personal - when we understand that Jesus came “for the sake of you.” [Listen to the message here.](#)

**This Sunday, December 31**, our worship will devote a good portion to prayer, reflecting on the blessings of the past year (2017) and anticipating what is ahead (2018). This worship gathering will also include opportunity for testimony.

**No Sunday School on December 31.**

[Milford Baptist Website](#)

[Milford Baptist Facebook](#)