



On the Same Page

“Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.” (1 Corinthians 9:25 NAS95)

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.**

Self-Control

Sunday, January 15, 2017

It is difficult to do marriage counseling. You sit with a couple and listen to their stories, and then give them some advice. Then you go home and realize that often times you don't follow very well the advice that you give. We find it is easier to give advice than to practice it.

It is also difficult to teach children. In children's Sunday School, we have been studying together [“The Fruit of the Spirit,” a list of nine qualities created by the Spirit](#) within the lives of believers, features of our union and relationship with Christ. The list starts with “love,” which is expected, and not all that painful to talk about. But it ends with “self-control.” That is the quality for this coming Sunday, when I will be explaining to the children how self-control is really God-control, and when we don't practice self- or God-control, then we have to admit that there is some other factor, some other power at work in us, perhaps called the flesh, and maybe even the devil. That sounds pretty strong, but if we admit that a spiritual force, the Holy Spirit, can influence us for good, then why should it be so difficult to admit that another spiritual force, Satan, could influence us for bad? But then, maybe we don't even need the devil's help to resist handing control over to God, and instead man-handling ourselves, which, oddly, does not result in self-control.

So, before my own children tell you the story, I will tell it myself, on myself. We were traveling somewhere, the four of us, and were in a motel room. This was several years ago, and the kids were younger, watching TV or something. I had to get an email sent out on my laptop, something dreadfully important, I am sure. In that era, the mystery of establishing a working internet connection in motel rooms was buggy at best. And I tried, and I tried. I was muttering away, and the kids did their best to ignore me, at least until I slammed the lid of the laptop down in disgust. That got their attention. And so they were watching closely when I opened the laptop again to find that the screen was now a ruined, fractured mess. I'm pretty sure God-control was not much involved in my actions.

So pray for me this week, as I sit with this class of children and teach them about the Spirit and the fruit He produces, especially self-control. And pray that I would learn the lesson as well, and maybe you too. And then, maybe I can come over and give you some advice about your marriage. I know it will be difficult.

Martin Luther's on Justification by Faith:

As the man is, whether believer or unbeliever, so also is his work - good if it was done in faith, wicked if it was done in unbelief. But the converse is not true, that the work makes the man either a believer or an unbeliever. As works do not make a man a believer, so also they do not make him righteous. But as faith makes a man a believer and righteous, so faith does good works. Since, then, works justify no one, ad a man must be righteous before he does a good work, it is very evident that it is faith alone which, because of the pure mercy of God through Christ and in his Word, worthily and sufficiently justifies and saves the person.



The Essence of the Reformation, by Kirsten Birkett. Matthias Media, 2009, p.129.

News and Notes

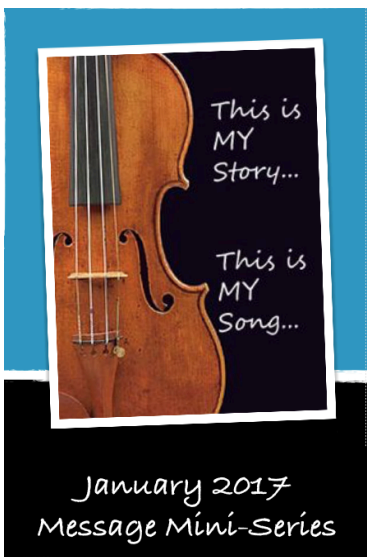
Prayer Time: Sundays, 9 a.m., in the sanctuary

Ladies Bible Study, studying 1 Peter, meets each Tuesday, 10 a.m.

Awana meets Wednesdays, 6 - 7:30 p.m. - age 3 thru 5th grade.

Men-of-Action breakfast meeting is Saturday, January 21, 7:30 a.m. **Circle of Grace ladies fellowship** is Tuesday night, February 7, 6:15 p.m. at the Swayze home

Our **Annual Meeting will be Sunday, January 22**, immediately following worship. The meeting will be followed by a potluck meal. Please bring a main dish, and either a side dish or dessert.



Weekly Worship @ 11:00 a.m.

4 Songs that Tell the Story of the Difference Made when the Savior enters the World, and when Jesus enters your Life - Jan 8, 15, 22, 29

Last Sunday, January 8, "Gabriel's Song," (Luke 1:13-17). [Listen to the message here.](#)

Next Sunday, January 15, "Mary's Song," (Luke 1:46-55), with a message entitled "Mighty, yet Merciful."

Sunday, January 22, "Zecharias' Song," entitled "No More let Sins and Sorrows Grow."

Sunday, January 29, "Simeon's Song," entitled "A Weary World Rejoices."

Sunday School classes meet on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. Our Adult class will study and discussion on the theme of the morning message.

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