



IMPACT!

God Calls His Men To Action

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only..."

James 1:22 (New King James).

Compiled and Written by
the Men's Ministry of
Liberty Baptist Church

LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH
11050 Chelsea Road • Chelsea, Alabama 35043
205.678.9928
Visit us on the web at www.lbcchelsea.com

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IMPACT: God Calls His Men To Action

“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”
— *Proverbs 27:17*

When we commit our lives to God, we find that, by ourselves, “growing” our faith is difficult. We need the strength and presence of the Holy Spirit to pull along side us; this is true. But we also need the strength and presence of fellow Christians.

In the book of Philippians, the apostle Paul tells us this: *“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.”* (Philippians 2:1-2).

This is what we mean when we talk about Christian fellowship. It is a unity of belief, of spirit, of love and of Christian men pushing in the same direction.

A lone believer is vulnerable before the world. But when we are part of a Godly, active fellowship we grow to become a force worthy of our God, who promises to make us strong, firm and steadfast in our common battle with evil.

Christian fellowship requires us to take new brothers into our arms. The Bible directs us: “Whoever loves God must also love his brother...” (1 John 4:21) and “[Do] only what is helpful for building others...” (Ephesians 4:29)

There’s that word—do. Without “doing,” our fellowship is hollow. Men’s fellowship is built by men telling other men about God’s promise of salvation, just as one brick stacked with another soon makes a wall. Our fellowship becomes a wall that resists evil. Our common strength gives us power to make disciples. Proverbs 27:17 show us how. *“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”*

You may recall this line: “We few, we happy few, we band of brothers; For he today that sheds his blood with me Shall be my brother.”

Look into the eyes of the men around you. We are all brothers in a bloody war with evil. We are soldiers of God, sent out to spread His message of salvation.

God’s Word is our weapon. We defeat evil—we show evidence of strong faith in God—in the everyday things we do in fellowship with each other. We offer this devotional to help you lay down a foundation of Biblical truth to support your growing fellowship with your Christian brothers.

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“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only...” James 1:22 (*New King James Version*)



On the following pages are devotionals inspired by scripture and prayer.

GOD'S MIGHTY HAND

By David Black

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. — 1 Peter 5:6-7

The “therefore” in this verse refers back to the previous scripture: *“God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”*

Peter seems to be writing to the lay leaders of the Church. He is telling them to be submissive and depend on God for leadership, timing and for their needs.

Our human nature leads us to want to be self sufficient, to be proud of our accomplishments and our abilities. This often leads us to commit to things quickly, without prayer and without waiting for God to reveal His plan for us.

Our human nature allows us to fall into an easy trap: If we do not think of it, it must not be a good idea.

God wants us to be totally dependant on Him. We cannot do what God wants, when and how He wants it done, without taking our every step with Him.

We must allow God to hold us in His hands. He will lift us up. He knows when we are ready to perform the task he has prepared us for. Along the way, He will comfort us and take care of us.

Father, teach us to humble ourselves so you will not need to. Provide for our needs. Use us for your work, when and where you need us. Amen.

HOW'S YOUR WALK WITH CHRIST?

By Phil Fogle

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. — Galatians 6:9-10

How many times have you been asked about your walk with Christ? You may hear Christians tell one another that we are not very good at witnessing with our words, so we let our lives do the witnessing for us.

It is true that many of us do not want to open our mouths when it comes to sharing the good news of the salvation God affords to all men. It may be that we are afraid or that we don't feel “smart” enough.

In this verse Paul was encouraging the Galatians. He cautions them not to lose heart. He was letting them know that if they were faithful and worked hard, the promised harvest of new believers would come.

So how do we keep our strength up? How do we do it day after day? Luke 18:1 gives us the answer: “Men ought always to pray and not to faint.” Constant communion with God, staying connected to the vine (Christ), gives us the strength we need.

Paul also tells us that we are to “do good to all.” This is how we let our light shine and how we glorify our Father in heaven. If we live our life in a way that reflects the fact that Christ is living within us, others will want to know about the hope that He gives us. It is our works then that pave the way for us to share Christ with others.

So if you subscribe to that Christian notion that you want your life to do the witnessing, then you might want to ask yourself “how am I doing?”

If no one is asking you about the difference in your life, then maybe it's time to do an examination of your life. Are you really living a life dedicated totally to Christ?

Here's a thought for today: A life lived for Christ is a word spoken for Christ.

Heavenly Father, You have called me to be a witness for you. You have called me to carry your light into the world so that others will come to know You. I surrender all to you. Allow my life to be used to win the lost and encourage the saints. Remove the sin from my life that may be causing others to stumble. I pray that you will be glorified in my life. In Jesus precious name, Amen.

ACT ON GOD'S CALL

By Joe Frost

Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin. — James 4:17

I've always considered this verse to be the biblical definition of sin. But after studying God's word I realized that there are two types of sin: commission and omission. Both will be judged.

The sins of commission are the obvious ones that we struggle with. We know that when we commit them, we are wrong. They are sins, such as adultery, stealing, lying and all the rest. These are conscience driven, I believe by the Holy Spirit through conviction.

If you have to ask if something is wrong, it probably is, so don't "commit" that sin.

The verse here deals more with the sins of omission, such as not witnessing when the opportunity is there, or knowing where there needs are within the church and not volunteering to serve.

Omission, to me is the greater sin, or ultimate sin. When God draws you to him through conviction and you reject Him or refuse Him, then that is the ultimate omission.

If we are true Christians, we must serve God. We should be workers and harvesters in the Jesus' Church. God commands it.

God requires our best. Because he gave His Son to save me, it is the least I can do to honor Him.

If we are true Christians, we must serve God. We should be workers and harvesters within the church, the body of Christ. God commands it.

Dear God, If there is anything displeasing to you in my life, please forgive me and make it known to me that I might run from it. Please open our eyes to see the opportunities around us and give us the strength to seize them. Amen.

WISE MEN RESIST PEER PRESSURE

By Todd Shoemaker

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. — 1 Timothy 6:17-19

Current economic conditions have reminded us that no financial investment is truly safe.

The accumulation of wealth may give the illusion of security, but in the end our trust in our wealth is misguided: investments can lose value and money can be lost by theft, fraud, or by economic events beyond our control.

Even if we succeed in acquiring great wealth, it cannot protect us from accidents, relationship problems, and it certainly cannot give us the eternal life that only God can provide. If we try to secure ourselves with our own wealth, it can gradually consume all our attention.

The Bible verses above command us to moderate how “riches” control our time, energy, and trust. Ultimately, God is the only trustworthy source of security and protection. The wealth God blesses us with should be used to extend God’s kingdom and to demonstrate God’s love through sharing with others.

Money, willingly and joyfully shared, is an investment that pays valuable dividends in this world and in ‘the time to come’ (Heaven). These returns are guaranteed by the Creator of all things.

Father, forgive me for trusting in my own abilities and my own wealth for my security. Only You can be fully trusted, and only You can provide eternal security. Help me remember that all the things around me will soon be gone, but only You will remain forever. Amen.

FAITH DOESN'T BRING FISH INTO THE BOAT

By Dan Miller

**You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.
— James 2:24**

It's early and the cicadas are already singing, their tune the promise of a hot day. The sun, orange and tired, crawls into the morning sky. You sit in a boat, electric motor pushing it without sound deep inside a bay. Here and there trees slump down into the water. A finger of the graveled shoreline reaches out into the lake and after a stretch, it slips beneath the water. This is where the large mouth bass prowl.

Funny thing though, you have no pole and no bait in the boat. You do have faith that the bass are there. And you believe, with all your heart, that those bass are going to jump into your boat...because you have faith.

James offers us another thought about faith. We cannot say we have faith in God, he says, and then refuse to use the tools He gives us to make disciples.

Faith without works is dead, James says. We know too, that works alone cannot save us. But here, James says that neither can faith in God alone bring us salvation. James 2:19 says, "Even the demons believe."

True Christian faith carries with it the desire actually a deep need to show our faith to others by our works. Godly faith is shown with our words, by our thoughts and through our works. It is true faith in God's redemption that obliges us to offer praise to God with our works. True faith cannot exist separate from works.

Jesus tells us this in John 21:16: "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." Because we love Jesus, we do good works.

One writer explains faith and works this way. We don't just "profess" or say we have faith, we "posses" our faith. We own it.

James recalls Abraham, who, in obedience to God, showed his faith by placing his son, Isaac on the altar to sacrifice him. At that moment, Abraham's faith and deeds came together. Abraham proved that his faith was real by his actions.

Faith is not a lifestyle. It is something we live in. It is obvious by the work we do. True faith means we use the equipment God gave us.

Lord, remind us that our works proves strong faith; that we can do nothing more than work for You because of Your love for us. By the grace that you offer us all, we ask that hear this prayer. Amen.

QUICK TO LISTEN

By Matt Adams

“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;” — James 1:19

On June 1, 2007, minor league Mississippi Braves baseball manager Phillip Wellman threw a major league tantrum that earned him the national spotlight, if only for a moment.

During a losing game against the Chattanooga Lookouts, Wellman was infuriated over a call made by the home plate umpire. Wellman charged out of the dugout, stood nose-to-nose with the umpire, and began screaming. He then framed his hands just outside the umpire's face and shook them emphatically as he blustered all the more.

Wellman then stormed toward home plate. He knelt on one knee, covered the plate with dirt, and then retraced home plate with his finger, this time about a yard wide.

Then, after a brief altercation with the third base umpire, Wellman stole third base—literally. He pulled the bag out of the ground, sauntered toward second base, and hurled it discus-style out of the infield. But it's what happened next that got people talking. Walking back toward the pitcher's mound from second base, Wellman dropped to the ground and belly-crawled toward the mound, picked up the rosin bag, and, after pulling an imaginary pin with his teeth, lobbed it like a grenade at the home plate umpire.

Then, he headed for the outfield. On his way, Wellman uprooted second base, picked up the discarded third base, and took them with him. Just before he left the field via the outfield wall, Wellman blew a kiss to the cheering crowd. Wellman's temper earned him global recognition—and a three-game suspension.

James 1:19 instructs us to “be quick to listen.” It is almost as if God is saying “hurry up and hear”. As Christ followers we should always be ready to hear the word of God as well as godly counsel. We should be teachable by the Holy Spirit. We should be “slow to speak.” James cautions us to guard our conversation. Solomon would have completely agreed with James. He once said, “He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin” (Proverbs 13:3). He also said, “When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise” (Proverbs 10:19). Phillip Wellman's actions may have been entertaining but not very wise.

Father, as we recognize you as being the almighty God we understand that you desire a personal relationship with each of us. Help us to hurry up and hear. Help us listen twice as much as we speak. Guide our thoughts and the words we speak. Amen.

THINKING GODLY THOUGHTS IN UNGODLY TIMES

By Richard Tinnell

**Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.
— Philippians 4:8-9**

We don't naturally think godly thoughts.

As a matter of fact, it is often just the opposite. It's easy to tear a brother or co-worker to pieces and just keep piling it on.

We often do this in front of others.

That's not a great testimony to others about our faith. And, others do watch the actions of Christians.

A great way to overcome this habit is to begin the day in God's Word. Do it before you turn on ESPN or the news.

Make a conscious decision to meditate on God and seek Him before your brain is saturated with the daily things of this world.

We must, with the presence of the Holy Spirit, take charge over what we think. If we don't, it is ungodly thoughts that will come to control us. Paul tells us that we need to be intentional about focusing our minds on God.

If you are not growing toward Christ, you are drifting away from Him. We must be intentional and persistent in seeking Him.

Heavenly Father, Help me to seek your ways. Amen.

BRING IN THE HARVEST

By Scott Roddy

**The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.
— Matthew 9:37-38**

Until recently, I read these verses and the thought would come to my mind about the great need we have to send missionaries to areas around the world, nations that had never heard of God and his son Jesus.

This is what the church is commanded to do in Matthew 28:19: “Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

No doubt, the need for Christians who are called for this ministry is still great. But what about those not called by God to be an international missionary? The harvest is great here in our country, state, and communities, too.

There are people who are hurting and who don't know where to turn. We all know those who are struggling physically and financially. People struggle to keep their homes and the necessities of life as unemployment continues to rise. I also would dare say each of us can think of individuals who are battling life threatening diseases.

For many of these individuals, there seems to be no hope and few answers.

However, there is hope and there is peace to be found even in our darkest hours. God loves us so much that even though we had done nothing to deserve His love, He sent His son to pay the price for our sin.

Each of us has sinned and because of that sin a penalty had to be paid. God paid that price for us by allowing Jesus to take on our sin and die for our sake. When we accept that free gift of salvation and understand how much God loves us, there comes with that an assurance that the same God who created the universe will provide all our needs.

The fields right here are ripe for the harvest. We need laborers to share the hope and assurance of salvation God has given us.

Lord regardless of what tomorrow may bring, I know that You will not forsake me. Thank You for the assurance and peace that comes with that promise. Lord, help me to exemplify that peace in my daily walk. Lord, give me the courage to share with those that are seeking a way out of the burdens and uncertainty of life to help bring them into Your heavenly harvest. Amen.

LOOK IT UP ON THE WEB OR DO THE WORK

By Jeremy Pennington

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. — James 1:22

James stresses the importance of taking action, and not just sitting idle.

In today's society, we have a ton of "talkers." Talk radio and the news channels ensure that we hear opinions on every play of a football game, every bill that comes through Congress, every topic under the sun.

We do not hear much about people actually acting on their opinions. Coach Gene Stallings used to say that if playing football was easy, there would be 85,000 folks playing and 22 watching them play, rather than 22 playing and 85,000 watching. His point was that it's easy to talk and think about something. But it's something else to actually do it.

This is true in our personal lives as well. For example, a doctor's visit informs a patient that they have high cholesterol and high blood pressure. The doctor says, "You have got to begin a strict diet and exercise regimen." The easiest thing that the patient could do would be to go online and search for the best personal trainer in the city, or spend time researching proper exercise techniques. The patient could spend hours and hours thinking and debating over the best exercise plan.

But we know this. Exercising is something you have to do. Getting up early to run, or lifting weights at the end of a long day at work is the hard part.

If we aren't careful, we can slip into this mode in our walk with God. It's easy to go to church, hear a sermon, and then, go home. We can spend time in reflection on the verses that were discussed. We can even debate with our Sunday School class on the topic that we heard.

But until we put what we heard into action, we are not doing what scripture has called us to do.

Are we doers? Or, are we hearers only?

Lord Jesus, please give me the discipline and strength to be a doer, and not just a hearer. I want to take the truth that you provide to me and put it into action in my life, so that I may be drawn closer to you, and in turn, point others towards you. Amen.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

By Jeff Picklesimer

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. — Matthew 5:16

As I read this verse and the two verses prior to it, I immediately recall the words in a song that we sang in Sunday School: This little Light of mine, I'm going to let it shine.

You probably remember that song, too. What verse 16 says to me is that we Christians are to be different from the rest of the world. It says we've been given the free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

This gift is a Light showing us our way in a world of darkness. It is a Light that guides us. It shows us how to make good choices every day.

We are to give God the glory and honor for everything we have and do. We also are to spread the Gospel, to share with others about Jesus Christ.

I have found that while we can verbally share our faith with others—and we should—it is how we act day-to-day that is the best tool we have to witness in this dark world.

We may not always know others are watching, but they are. So let your light shine. Give God the Glory!

Dear Lord, Thank you for all You do for me. Thank You for salvation through Your son Jesus Christ. Please forgive me for my sin and help me be like You would want me to be. Let my Light shine so that others may see You through me, and I give You all the Glory! Amen.

THE CHOSEN ONES

By Tony Picklesimer

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, his own special people: That you should proclaim the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
— I Peter 3: 9

If you are a whitetail deer hunter as I am, you no doubt know the difference in the special animals that we pursue from the other creatures of the woods. The adult male whitetail deer is viewed as the mighty giant of the woods.

We like to think of it as a mighty warrior when in truth it is the biggest coward in the woods. Any sound that is abnormal, any scent that is suspicious, sends it heading to the deepest cover to stay until nightfall. Many times the larger bucks will bed in the same spot the entire day. Only after months of quiet will they start to wander around a little during the daylight hours in search of food.

That is what makes the first couple of weeks of the season almost as special as the last part of the season when their motivation changes a bit...for a short while. You know what I mean.

The opening day of gun season this year for me was special. I have a favorite spot that wind permitting I always spend opening morning. It is the top of a ridge that is a border of big hardwoods and select cut pines. Evidence shows that the hardwoods provide food and the pines provide cover.

Early in the season there is a chance that I'll be in the right spot to see that transition from food to cover. That was the case for me this season. Shortly after 8 a.m. I had a beautiful 8-point moving from the hardwoods to the pines and I just happen to be in the way. It scored 128 and was my second best buck harvest ever.

It was my "chosen" one. The same can be said when we surrender our lives to Jesus Christ. We become His chosen ones. It is God's desire that all will accept this free pardon of sin. He chose us all when He gave His one and only Son to die for our sins.

But the choice to give our lives over to Him is our choice. It is not a predetermined destiny. God's Word is clear when it says that "whosoever" believes in Him should not perish, but will have eternal life.

We have to choose Him in order to be His chosen one.

TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER

By Russ Roberts

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”

Jesus said to him, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” — Matthew 22:36-39

Jesus has an incredible way of cutting right to the heart of the matter.

As a Christian, what should my daily life be about? Jesus takes the guesswork out of doing His will. It is this: Love God, love others.

Even I can understand that. But I tend to either complicate the matter or flat-out disobey. I always have a good excuse.

But there are times when God allows me to minister to someone and I get to experience His incredible love just by doing what I’m supposed to do.

It’s amazing how the mystery of God’s grace and love unfold through simple obedience.

*Father, thank You for the instruction Your word. I need it every day.
Please help me to hide Your word in my heart so I can hear Your voice
and by following You others can experience Your grace, mercy, and love.
Amen.*

STRENGTH AND COURAGE COME FROM THE BOOK

By Al Schukoske

Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” — Joshua 1:9

Joshua, chapter 1 relates to the time when, after the death of Moses, Joshua was commissioned by God to lead the nation of Israel. Here's how the verse 9 reads in its entirety:

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”

Perhaps, after reading this, you may think that “if God gives me a task, He will be with me, so I can be confident in His promise and just move forward.”

However, look at the 8th verse in this chapter, the scripture prior to this one.

It says, “The book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”

For us today, it is not only important that we are commissioned to a task in God's work, but that we “read and heed” God's directions found in scripture.

It is in this way we can indeed be strong and of good courage, and perform in accordance with God's Word.

Let us make a commitment to read God's word daily, to develop a personal prayer relationship with God. This will give us the strength to accomplish God's Joshua 1:9 mission.

Father, direct our steps each day that we might accomplish the tasks that You have laid before us. We claim Your strength and power. Amen.

LEAVE YOUR MARK FOR CHRIST

By Allan Smith

Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

— Philippians 3:13-14

Sometimes we have a hard time with ourselves. Satan often tries to discourage us by reminding us of our past failures and the unwise choices we have made.

But we must remember every day is a new battle with Satan. So we must put on our armor to fend off evil and be prepared to run the race with Jesus.

The Lord does not ask us to run the race in our own strength or ability. He wants us to leave our sins behind and look to Jesus.

We know not what each day holds or what time we have left to serve. But God wants us to lay aside our troubles and glorify Him in all that we do.

Leave your mark for the Lord.

Replace our time with His purpose.

Let go of yesterday.

Live fully for today and look forward to tomorrow.

Remember, we are on the Lord's journey. He has called us and He will complete His work in, and through us. Our journey doesn't end until that day when our time on this earth is at an end.

GOD IS NEVER SURPRISED

By Mike Taunton

**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**

Before I had a true relationship with Jesus, I tried to find happiness and peace many different ways. Every time I would try something new, I would only get let down. I also have found that if you put your faith in people, no matter how good those people are, sooner or later they are going to fall short. They don't mean to hurt you, it just happens.

It was only when I found a relationship with Christ that I found true peace.

This is the good news. When we put our faith in Jesus He never falls short. He even died on a cross to pay for my sins. How undeserving I am!

There are bad things that happen to us throughout our lives—perhaps it is the loss of job, a divorce, maybe even death of spouse or other loved one.

But none of these can take God by surprise. No matter what this world throws at you, God has already defeated it.

God help me to be focused on You today. For I know it is only in You that I will find true peace and happiness. Amen.

GOD CALLS US OUT

By Justin White

**“Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”
— Matthew 7: 5**

Wow! God’s word is very clear on this topic. The very first word of this verse clearly defines God’s view of judging others.

The first four verses of Matthew chapter 7 warns against judging others. We read “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.”

Our human nature makes it so easy to look at others and cast judgment. Fault, blame, and mistakes are always so evident in the lives of others, but not nearly as obvious in our own lives. Even when they become evident, we will do almost anything to avoid acknowledging our faults, mistakes, and shortcomings—all otherwise known as sin.

Matthew sharply cautions us to avoid the trap of ignoring our sin, while calling others out for their sin.

We should constantly be in a state of self-evaluation, allowing God to examine our lives. If we ask God to search us and know us, and to reveal areas of our lives that are not pleasing to Him, He will do just that. Then, it is up to us to make the necessary changes to line up with God’s will for our lives.

Once we are in line with God’s plan and direction for our life, He can use us to point others to Him.

God, please search me and know me. Examine my mind, my heart, my thoughts, and my actions, and reveal to me anything in my life that is not pleasing to You. Father please grant me the strength to rid my life of this sin and draw near to You. I pray that You will use me to point others to You and to bring honor and glory to You. Amen.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

(God Keeps Us Together)

By Greg Wood

Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? — Matthew 6: 25-27

This past hunting season while I was bow hunting in Illinois, the most vividly-colored bird I had ever seen caught my attention. His wings were bright red and his chest was solid white. The top of his head was black while the lower part around his beak to his neck was a yellow color.

I was quickly reminded of this great scripture of how great our God is that had clothed this bird and that this bird didn't have anything to do with it. And then how much more important and significant to God we are.

Just like the bird, that had not chosen those great colors and that does not work for its food, we should not worry about what we wear or what we eat.

Jesus tells here that we are only to trust in the Lord.

Lord, thank You for showing us the beauty of creation so we may know and understand You as creator. Thank You for saving me and providing for me. Help me to trust You for all I do and help me to leave it all up to You! Amen.

LIVING BY EXAMPLE

By Alan Kuykendall

Likewise exhort the young men to be sober-minded. — Titus 2:6

The requirement for the young men here is brief: practice self-control.

The scripture was written in warning about the degenerate culture practiced on Crete and its negative influence on believers in the young church. Young Titus was Paul's delegate to Crete and Paul wrote this letter to him, giving him advice on choosing church leaders and encouraging him to model godly behavior. Titus was to be an example to the younger men with whom he would easily identify.

Exhortation and example were to be his tools for building up the younger men in the faith. "Exhort," the word used in verse 1, is stronger than "speak." It may also be rendered "urge" or "admonish." Since young men are inclined to be somewhat impetuous and unrestrained in conduct, their basic need is to be "self-controlled," cultivating balance and self-restraint.

As husbands and parents, we teach best by the way we live our life. Whatever we want our children to be, we must first be by example. "For they say, and do not" was our Lord's indictment against the Pharisees (Matt. 23:3). To "say" and then, "to do not" is hypocrisy.

Emerson wrote: "Thought is the seed of action." Proverbs 27:19 states "...a man's heart reveals the man." Proverbs 4:23 exhorts us to "keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."

If we are to teach children self-control, we must begin by yielding our life to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and be conformed to His image by the daily renewing of our mind (Romans 12:1-3). We must remember that our thoughts control our emotions, and our emotions control our actions. And, our actions speak louder than our words.

Holy Father, I praise you today for the gift of salvation and the gift of your Holy Spirit. Thank You for renewing my mind by Your Holy Word, and conforming me to the image of Your Son. You are developing in me the mind of Christ. I thank You that Your Word is filled with great and precious promises, that through these I may be a partaker of Your divine nature. Therefore, I surrender my will to Your will. I draw near to You that You may draw near to me. Let Your words be my words and Your thoughts my thoughts that I may teach my son self-control by personal example. Thank You for helping me understand that self-control cultivates balance and self-restraint in daily practice. Amen!

USING GOD'S PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

By Ricky King

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. — Ephesians 6: 11

The equipment issued to a firefighter is referred to as PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). This is all of the cool stuff you see firefighters wearing as they perform their jobs.

When a firefighter recruit is issued this gear, it's quite amusing to watch them attempt to put the PPE on without instruction. If a firefighter is not familiar with how to put on his gear, much less use it, he cannot be effective in performing his job, which is to protect life and property.

In Ephesians 6:10-18, Paul, an apostle of Christ and at that time in captivity, watched his Roman guard. Thinking of the spiritual battles we face in our Christian walk, Paul used the soldier's armor to illustrate the spiritual armor God has given us. Just as a firefighter uses his PPE, Christians must be ready to use their spiritual armor.

As you arm yourself, consider these prayers for the PPE God offers us:

The Belt of Truth: Thank you for reminding me that You are the only God, and that You are my provider, my counselor, my hope, and my strength.

The Breastplate of Righteousness: Thank You for showing me the truth about myself, that on my own I could never be good enough to live in Your presence. Thank You for taking my sins to the cross. Show me any sin that I need to confess right now, so that nothing will hinder me from being filled with Your Spirit.

The Sandals of Peace: Thank You for the peace You give me when I trust and follow You. Show me how to help others find that peace.

The Shield of Faith: Thank You for helping me to have faith in You. I choose to count on everything You have shown me about Yourself--and everything You have promised me.

The Helmet of Salvation: Thank You for promising me salvation, both for today's battles and for all eternity.

The Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God: Thank You for the scriptures You give me for daily meditation; that apply to my day-to-day walk and that gain victory in every battle.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO FALL

By Mac Dean

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

—1 John 2:15-17

When I think of this verse, I can't help but think of recent news about Tiger Woods.

The news wasn't that he sank some ridiculous sixty-foot putt or came back from four strokes down to force a playoff. No, his news was about infidelity. It's the kind of news that destroys marriages, and most of the time, it destroys entire families.

When I first heard the story break I was pretty shocked. How could a guy who has seemingly everything have it all go so wrong? I think we all have heard the stories of what actually happened, but it seems to further validate that "there are many ways to fall but only one way to stand upright."

So how do we stand "upright" in a world that seems to pull us down at every opportunity? If you played baseball growing up then you know that it is extremely difficult to focus on two things at the same time.

That same rule applies to us today as men. Knowing that no one is perfect and we will all mess up from time to time, what we must avoid is getting wrapped up in anything that takes our focus off God.

This world has a way of taking us down a road that we may not intend on going. Set your focus on God and He makes your path straight.

Lord, help me realize today what I am truly focused on. Help me understand where I am falling short and give me the strength and the wisdom to correct that behavior and focus on you. In Jesus Name. Amen.

LOVE WITHOUT ATTITUDE

By Ray Franklin

Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter with them.
— **Colossians 3:19**

Here are two translations of Colossians 3:19.

First, the New International Version: Husbands love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

Second, from the King James Version: Husbands love your wives and do not be bitter with them.

There is one distinct difference between the two. One version uses the word “harsh,” one uses “bitter.” Both are displeasing words. Let’s look at the definition of those two words from Webster’s Dictionary:

Bitter: 1. Exhibiting intense animosity (bitter enemies) 2. Marked by cynicism and rancor (bitter contempt). 3. Intensely unpleasant, especially in coldness or rawness.

Harsh: 1. Causing a disagreeable or painful sensory reaction. 2. Irritating. 3. Physically discomforting.

Wow! What a way to describe attitudes we might have toward our wives: “intensely unpleasant” and “physically discomforting.”

No matter the translation, Col. 3:19 is a God-given command to men, as husbands. It does not say, “if you want to” or “when you feel like it” or “when she’s nice to you.” No, the Bible says no matter what, we are to love our wives and not be bitter or harsh to them. Eph. 5:25 tells us that we are to love our wives as Christ loves the church and gave Himself for her.

How do we live up to this commandment? For me, it’s through prayer and asking God to guide my attitude towards my wife each day. My wife and I have been married going on 13 years—some with Christ and some without. But I can honestly say that the years with Christ as the center of our relationship have been the best.

We won’t always be perfect husbands, but we should chase perfection daily.

Lord, help me live out your commandments daily in my marriage and strive to love my wife by following your example of your love for the church. I pray that I can give myself freely to her and cherish her daily. Thank you for the relationship of marriage. Amen.
Amen.

WHAT IS MEN'S MINISTRY AT LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH?

We are directed by God to be Christian leaders in our families, in our communities, and in our churches. We are God-sent warriors, commanded to spread His Word.

As individuals, we will fail. The challenges, the temptations and our own shortcomings defeat us at every turn.

But as Jesus teaches, and as the early Christian church showed, we are strongest when we stand in fellowship with one another—and that fellowship stands with Christ.

More, our bond and direction, anchored in God's grace and message of salvation, serves to show our sons the Holy strength that will flow into them when they faithfully serve God's purposes. And, it is in our sons that the hope of our Christian fellowship is bound.

This then is our prayer:

God, bless faithful men gathered around Your name. Make ours a faithful fellowship of reborn Christians; with brave desire to spread Your promise of judgment for unfaithfulness, but also Your good news of eternal life in the message of Christ Jesus.

We ask You to lay Your protective hands over our sons. We remember that You hold children with special favor; that You have charged us with teaching them Your ways—to bring them up in the knowledge that Christ's death and resurrection paid for their sins in full. Remind Your church here that it is preparing faithful ambassadors who, even through adversity, will remain strong in their faith, powerful in their mission, thoughtful in their prayer and humble in their spirit. Let our sons learn from their fathers what indeed, we have learned from our Father.

Finally, place Your protective hands over us all. We know that while those dark nights of temptation and struggle are long, hope rises with your Son. And, hope in You will not disappoint us.

"...whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does." John 5:19-20

GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

Jesus Christ was with God the Father before the world was created. He became human and lived among humanity as Jesus of Nazareth.

He came to show us what God the Father is like. He lived a sinless life, showing us how to live; and He died upon a cross to pay for our sins. God raised Him from the dead.

Jesus is the source of eternal life. Jesus wants to be the doorway to new life for you.

In the Bible He was called the Lamb of God" (John 1:29). In the Old Testament, sacrifices were made for the sins of the people. Jesus became the sacrificial lamb offered for your sin.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). He is waiting for you now.

Admit to God that you are a sinner. Repent, turning away from your sin. (See Acts 3:19, Rom. 3:23; 6:23.)

By faith receive Jesus Christ as God's Son and accept Jesus' gift of forgiveness from sin. He took the penalty for your sin by dying on the cross. (See John 3:16.)

Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. (See Rom. 10:9-10, 13; I John 1:9.)

You may pray a prayer similar to this as you call on God to save you: "Dear God, I know that You love me. I confess my sin and need of salvation. I turn away from my sin and place my faith in Jesus as my Savior and Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen."

After you have received Jesus Christ into your life, tell a pastor or another Christian about your decision.

Show others your faith in Christ by asking for baptism by immersion in your local church as a public expression of your faith.

“I want to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.” — Philippians 3:10-14

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

I am a guest of _____

I currently attend _____ church.

I made a decision to follow Christ.

I desire to receive information about Liberty Baptist Church.

I desire a personal contact from Liberty Baptist Church.

Prayer Request/Comments: _____

WHO IS LIBERTY BAPTIST?

Liberty Baptist is guided by our purpose: Loving God, Loving Others.

Ours is a community of Christians who have worshipped in Chelsea since the mid-1800s. Under the perfect direction of God, our work begins here. But from these grounds, He uses us and our resources to spread the Gospel around the world.

Our invitation is genuine. If you desire a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and God is moving you to a relationship with Liberty Baptist, know that we are a church committed first, to showing you how to find a love relationship with God; and second, to forming a fellowship with your family.

Here's a thought that guides us: "When the child of God looks into the Word of God, He sees the Son of God, and the Spirit of God transforms him into the image of God, for the glory of God."

Thank you for visiting Liberty. God has brought us many blessings. We'd like to share them with you.

THE MINISTRY TEAM OF LIBERTY BAPTIST

Dr. Tim Cox, Pastor, 678-3523

Rev. Alan Kuykendall, Interim Associate Pastor, 678-7081

Rev. Mike May, Minister of Music, 678-0989

Rev. Leon Burdette, Minister of Education/Evangelism, 678-9928

Rev. Matt Adams, Student Minister, 678-5708

Mrs. Laura Cain, Director of Preschool and Children, 678-7595

Mrs. Becky King, Preschool Associate, 678-9804

Mrs. Kristie Bradberry, Mother's Day Out Director, 678-6414

Each staff member can be reached by e-mail by typing first and last name immediately followed by @lbcchelsea.com.

"We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ."—1 John 1:3

LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH
11050 Chelsea Road • Chelsea, Alabama 35043
205.678.9928
Visit us on the web at www.lbcchelsea.com

LIBERTY BAPTIST, CHELSEA, AL

Archery Tournament



MAY 1, 2010

Howard Hill Archery
Range in Wilsonville

REGISTRATION 8am–9am

TOURNAMENT 10am
(Shotgun Start)

\$10 Adults

\$5 Children



Kid's Ranges • Twenty 3-D Targets

Novice Class • NASP Class

BHA Rules Apply

Each "round" consists of 20 3-D McKenzie targets.

Bowhunter of Alabama Tournament rules apply with a Novice class for any shooter that has never shot in a 3D tournament (30 yards max).

There will be a range set up for any child who does not have a bow at no charge. Genesis bows from Archery in the Schools will be available.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Phil Carter 602-4733

Tim Carter 678-8775

Liberty Baptist Church • 11050 Chelsea Rd., Chelsea, AL 35043
205.678.9928 • www.lbcchelsea.com

LIBERTY BAPTIST SERVICE TIMES AND SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

For updates and events, visit our website at www.lbcchelsea.com.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:15 a.m., 10:45 a.m., and 6:00 p.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

8:00 a.m. – Adult Sunday School only; (no Youth, Children, or
Preschool during the 8:00 a.m. time)

9:15 a.m. – Adults, All Youth, Children, Preschool

10:45 a.m. – Adults, Preteen, Preschool

DISCIPLESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Adults: Visit our website (www.lbcchelsea.com) for current studies

Youth: Sunday at 5:00 p.m.

FAMILY MEAL

Wednesday from 5:00 to 6:15 p.m. (during school year)

MUSIC MINISTRY

Celebration Choir: Sunday, 4:45 p.m.; Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

Celebration Band: Sunday 4:00 p.m.

Ladies Ensemble: Monday 7:00 p.m.

Youth: Sunday 4:00 p.m.

Preteen & Children's Choirs: Wednesday 5:30 p.m.

Preschool Music: Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

MISSION ACTIVITIES

Women On Mission: 1st Thursday of each month 10:00 a.m.

Preschool– Mission Friends: Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

Children– Girls in Action & Royal Ambassadors: Wednesday 6:30 p.m.

Widows' Might: 3rd Thursday of each month 9:00 a.m.

DRAMA

Youth Drama Rehearsal: Wednesday 5:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY WORSHIP & BIBLE STUDY

Adult Bible Study & Prayer 6:30 p.m.

Youth Worship 6:30 p.m.