



Church Newsletter

First Baptist Church of
Niles

Volume 2/Issue 10

WHAT WE ARE DOING? AND WHAT WE SHOULD DO?

IN THIS ISSUE

WELCOME

Welcome to Volume 2 of the FBCN Newsletter or the “current new normal” editions.

This week’s reading will be Psalm 86, Titled “Great Is Your Steadfast Love.”

A PRAYER OF DAVID.

¹ Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. ² Preserve my life, for I am godly; save your servant, who trusts in you—you are my God. ³ Be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all the day. ⁴ Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. ⁵ For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you. ⁶ Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; listen to my plea for grace. ⁷ In the day of my trouble I call upon you, for you answer me. ⁸ There is none like you among the gods, O Lord, nor are there any works like yours. ⁹ All the nations you have made shall come

and worship before you, O Lord, and shall glorify your name. ¹⁰ For you are great and do wondrous things; you alone are God. ¹¹ Teach me your way, O LORD, that I may walk in your truth; unite my heart to fear your name. ¹² I give thanks to you, O Lord my God, with my whole heart, and I will glorify your name forever. ¹³ For great is your steadfast love toward me; you have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol. ¹⁴ O God, insolent men have risen up against me; a band of ruthless men seeks my life, and they do not set you before them. ¹⁵ But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. ¹⁶ Turn to me and be gracious to me; give your strength to your servant, and save the son of your maidservant. ¹⁷ Show me a sign of your favor, that those who hate me may see and be put to shame because you, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

Our guest speaker this month is Rev. Ebi Perinbaraj. He will be bringing a series he entitled “Gospel Church.”

His first three messages were a blessing if you can’t join us Sunday mornings I encourage you to watch the sermons on either First Baptist of Niles Facebook Page or on the website.

We invite you to Join us for a virtual prayer meeting on Wednesdays at 7:00pm.

Wednesday Bible Study ([Click Here](#))
Meeting ID: 899 2251 1230
Password: 409807
One tap mobile
+13126266799
Meeting ID: 899 2251 1230
Password: 409807

Make sure you view the updated prayer list. There are so many needs.

“Those who want to know him [Christ] must walk the same path with him. These are the ‘martyrs’ in the scriptural sense of the word, which means simply ‘witnesses.’ In life, as well as in death, we are called to be ‘witnesses’ – to ‘bear the stamp of Christ.’ Elisabeth Elliott

For who knows what is good for man while he lives the few days of his vain life, which he passes like a shadow? For who can tell man what will be after him under the sun?
Ecclesiastes 6:12

Paging through a number of books I came upon the quote I opened with by Elisabeth Elliott. For those that aren’t familiar with Elizabeth Elliott she was the wife of American missionary Jim Elliott. On January 8, 1956, when Jim was 28 years old he was martyred, along with four missionary partners and friends. In addition to the opening quote she wrote in the preface of *Shadow of the Almighty: The Life and Testament of Jim Elliot*, first published in 1958, she writes:

“Jim’s aim was to know God. His course, obedience—the only course that could lead to the fulfillment of his aim. His end was what some would call an extraordinary death, although in facing death he had quietly pointed out that many have died because of obedience to God. He and the other men with whom he died were hailed as heroes, ‘martyrs.’ I do not approve. Nor would they have approved. Is the distinction between living for Christ and dying for him, after all, so great? Is not the second the logical conclusion of the first? Furthermore, to live for God is to die, ‘daily,’ as the apostle Paul put it. It is to lose everything that we

may gain Christ. It is in thus laying down our lives that we find them.”

“Every Christian is either a missionary or an impostor.” Charles Spurgeon went on to say, “A person who thinks highly of Christ, highly appreciative of Christ, can not possess a tongue that is silent about Christ.”

The sacrifice of these five men Jim Elliot, Nate Saint, Roger Youderian, Peter Fleming and Edward McCully in the Amazon jungles of Ecuador was not in vain. Nate’s son, Steve, was baptized by two of the men who murdered his father, in the very river where his father died. Steve Saint followed in the footsteps of his father and has served the mission fields in West Africa, Central America and South America.

At the request of the Waodani elders, he returned to the Amazon in 1995 along with his wife and children to live among the tribe for several months. While working with the Huaorani to build an airstrip in the jungle, Steve Saint spoke with Gikita, the leader of the attack on his father. Then eighty years old, Gikita told Steve that he was, “go to heaven and live peacefully with the five men who came to tell him about Wangongi, creator God.” You see, these five men did not die in vain.

In a previous Newsletter I approached the topic of leaving a legacy. This is what Nate Saint left for his son Steve. Nate demonstrated by his love and commitment to Christ, that his faith was real. In the next generation Steve’s son Jamie’s life was shaped by tragedy and radical transformation. His grandfather was murdered by the tribe he was trying to reach out to in 1956. Through years of hard work, the tribe and

family have reconciled, and their story has inspired Jamie’s missionary work across the world today. Quoting Jamie, “God did not allow those killings to take place. He actually orchestrated them.” He goes on to explain: “Without those killings, the next chapter of the story wouldn’t have been written. Through a series of events, the warrior who speared my grandfather, ended up adopting my Dad.”

“When the focus is on what you’re gonna get rather than what you’re gonna give, then mission goes backwards.” Jamie Saint

This is a legacy that has lasted three generations to date.

This was further amplified in my reading this week with the following statement regarding missions.

What gave me pause was the author’s description of “...compartmentalizing Jesus’ commands as church programs which can then turn into optional programs for us personally.” He goes on to say,

“I find it interesting that we don’t do this with other words from Jesus. We take Jesus’ command in Matthew 28 to make disciples of all nations, and we say, ‘That means other people.’ But we look at Jesus’ command in Matthew 11:28, ‘Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest,’ and we say, ‘Now, that means me.’ We take Jesus’ promise in Acts 1:8 that the Spirit will lead us to the ends of the earth, and we say, ‘That means some people.’ But we take Jesus’ promise in John 10:10 that we will have abundant life, and we say, ‘That means me.’”

In the process we have unnecessarily (and unbiblically) drawn a line of distinction, assigning the obligations of Christianity to a few while keeping the privileges of Christianity for us all. In this way we choose to send off other people to carry out the global purpose of Christianity while the rest of us sit back because we're 'just not called to that.'

Now, we know that each of us has different gifts, different skills, different passions, and different callings from God. God has gifted you and me in different ways. This was undoubtedly the case with the disciples. Peter and Paul had different callings. James and John had different callings. However, each follower of Christ in the New Testament, regardless of his or her calling, was intended to take up the mantle of proclaiming the gospel to the ends of the earth. That's the reason why he gave each of them His Spirit and why he gave them all the same plan: 'make disciples of all nations.'

Now, what if we say that we are not called to the foreign mission field. Well then I refer back to our compartmentalizing God's commands, obligations or privileges, to meet our own desires. We forget that Christianity centers around God not us.

**"God has a story to write with each of our lives, while he doesn't promise that every chapters going to be easy, he promises to make sense of even the difficult chapters."
Jamie Saint**

If we are to use the argument that we are here to reach the many needs right here in the U.S., in my community, I then would have to ask, What am I doing to reach it? Before we can even begin to follow God's command to "make disciples of all nations," we need to set our priorities right. We have been given a legacy we just need to act and build upon it. So where do we begin?

First, we need to realize There are so many things that clamor for our attention and devotion: our jobs, our families, our hobbies—the demands and distractions of life. And we have to be careful not to let them become more important or more of a priority than our relationship with God.

Our purpose in life as Christians is to know God and bring Him glory. If you will do that with your life, if you will get up every morning and say to yourself, "I want to know God, and I want to bring Him glory," then you will find the happiness that has eluded you. You will find the satisfaction you have always wanted by having your priorities in order.

It must be crystal clear to the Christian that he/she has a double purpose for which to live.

From the book by M. Eides, *Revolution and Religion in Ethiopia: The Growth and Persecution of the Mekane Yesus Church*, he quotes Gudina Tumsa, an Ethiopian theologian and General Secretary of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, (Protestant evangelical church.)

"As someone has said, 'when a person is called to follow Christ, that person is called to die.' It means a redirection of the purpose of life,

that is death to one's own wishes and personal desires and finding the greatest satisfaction in living for and serving the one who, died for us and was raised from death (2 Cor. 5:13-14). In other words, the Christian has been crucified with Christ and has no life which he claims to be his own. The life the believer leads is a life of faith and the risen Lord lives in him (Gal. 2:19). It is a life set free from the power of sin and it is beyond the capacity of death to destroy it. Because it has its source in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, that resurrection life is at work in the life of the believer. Being in Christ the Christian is already the possessor of eternal life by being placed in a new order of existence where the law of life is the love of Christ (2 Cor. 5:13). And where the power of the resurrection of the Lord is at work, and the life of the Christian is a life of witness to the risen Lord.

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

A Christian has not chosen God, but God has chosen him/her and in the act of being chosen he/she is set apart for service in the kingdom of God. Because of what has happened to him/her, the Christian is encouraged to let God transform him/her inwardly by a complete change of mind. Romans 12:1-2: 'So then my brothers, because of God's great mercy to us, I make this appeal to you: offer yourselves as a living sacrifice to God, dedicated to his service and pleasing to him. This is the true worship that you should offer. Do not conform outwardly to the standards of this world, but let God transform you by a complete

change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God - what is good, and is pleasing to him, and is perfect."

The take-away is that God has chosen us to be His voice, His feet, His hands. We are to impact peoples lives which in turn will impact generations for the glory of God. This plan, if you will, is counterintuitive to where we see churches headed today that have been largely influenced by our culture. Whereas Jesus acted humbly and quietly by focusing on individual's lives, the current mindset is the bigger and flashier the better. Sharing, influencing and impacting His disciples by using this broad brush-stroke method is not how Jesus did it. He spent years with 12 men patiently focusing on this small group that would then go out and impact others. That's the beauty of God's intended design. It is the opposite of mass-producing believers it is a slow methodical process that involves every one of us sacrificing every aspect our lives to multiply Christ to others.

We do not need our churches to be "Christian" versions of the "American Dream" where we gather weekly in enormous structures with thousands of others for highly polished programs and performances. We need to be spreading the Gospel. Luke 14:23 says, *"Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full.'" Back to the Elizabeth Elliott quote we started with "Those who want to know him [Christ] must walk the same path with him. These are the 'martyrs' in the scriptural sense of the word, which means simply 'witnesses.'* In life, as well as in death, we are called to be

'witnesses' – to 'bear the stamp of Christ.'" Our plan should be to disciple Christians not disinfest them. I feel David Platt defines these two terms beautifully:

"Disinfesting Christians from the world involves isolating followers of Christ in a spiritual safe-deposit box called the church building and teaching them to be good. In this strategy, success in the church is defined by how big a building you have to house all the Christians, and the goal is to gather as many people as possible for a couple of hours each week in that place where we are isolated and insulated from the realities of the world around us.

When someone asks, "Where is your church?" we point them to a building or give them an address, and everything centers around what happens at that location.

When we gather at the building, we learn to be good. Being good is defined by what we avoid in the world. We are holy because of what we don't participate in (and at this point we may be the only organization in the world defining success by what we don't do). We live decent lives in decent homes with decent jobs and decent families as decent citizens. We are decent church members with little more impact on the world than we had before we were saved. Though thousands may join us, ultimately, we have turned a deaf ear to billions who haven't even heard his name.

Discipling is much different.

Whereas disinfesting Christians involves isolating them and teaching them to be good, discipling Christians involves propelling Christians into the world to risk their lives for the sake of others. Now the world is

our focus, and we gauge success in the church not on the hundreds or thousands whom we can get into our buildings but on the hundreds or thousands who are leaving our buildings to take on the world with the disciples they are making. In this case, we would never think that the disciple-making plan of Jesus could take place in one service a week at one location led by one or two teachers. Disciple making takes place multiple times every week, in multiple locations by an army of men and women sharing, showing, and teaching the Word of Christ and together serving a world in need of Christ.

All of a sudden, holiness is defined by what we do. We are now a community of faith taking Jesus at his word and following his plan, even when it does not make sense to the culture around us and even when it costs us.

In the process we are realizing that we actually were intended to reach the world for the glory of Christ, and we are discovering that the purpose for which we were created is accessible to every one of us. Children and the elderly, students and workers, men and women all joined together in a body that is united with other followers of Christ around the world in a practical strategy to make disciples and impact nations for the glory of Christ. A community of Christians each multiplying the gospel by going, baptizing, and teaching in the contexts where they live every day. Is anything else, according to the Bible, even considered a church?"

Multiplying the Gospel is far more than a desire to win converts. In

fact it is a small part of our mission. A word that I have used several times before is the word “radical.” As radicals we do not omit the more intense parts of discipleship, the parts that cut, the parts that confront and teach, the parts that take the most effort and time on our part.

“Jesus is a part of our lives when He should be our life. He is life. Following Him requires all our life. The disciples ate, drank, sweat and slept ministry from when Jesus called them to the day they died. Jesus wasn’t a part of their lives. He was their life. “
Tyler Edwards

Discipleship requires much more than belief. Discipleship requires men and women to follow Him whatever the cost. It’s a radical devotion, an unreasonable commitment and undivided dedication.

Converts are new believers. We all start as converts. Too often we stop there. We make Christianity all about what we believe. Salvation is the point from where we begin, from that point on we should be striving to mature.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. 1 Corinthians 13:11

We can’t stop at seeking to win converts, but we should be striving to make disciples. Here’s the difference.

1. Converts are believers who live like the world. Disciples are believers who live like Jesus.
2. Converts are focused on their values, interests, worries, fears, priorities, and lifestyles. Disciples are focused on Jesus.

3. Converts go to church. Disciples are the church.
4. Converts are involved in the mission of Jesus. Disciples are committed to it.
5. Converts cheer from the sidelines. Disciples are in the game.
6. Converts hear the word of God. Disciples live it.
7. Converts follow the rules. Disciples follow Jesus.
8. Converts are all about believing. Disciples are all about being.
9. Converts are comfortable. Disciples make sacrifices.
10. Converts talk. Disciples make more disciples.

A disciple is someone who wholeheartedly follows the life and example of Jesus, who makes His mission their mission, His values their values, and His heart their heart.

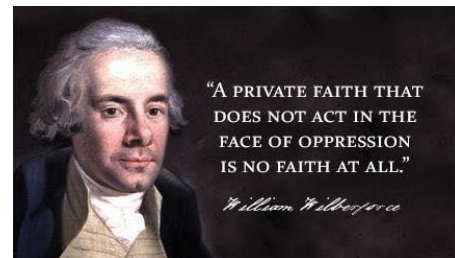
A disciple is someone who desperately seeks to be like Jesus. A disciple is someone so committed to the cause of Christ that they would follow Him through the gates of hell and back.

A disciple is someone who finds their entire identity, purpose and meaning in Jesus. Jesus is the center of their lives. They are all in, fully committed.

Not only is a disciple willing to die for Jesus, but dedicate to living every day of life for Him.

“When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die”
Dietrich Bonhoeffer

I began with the story of 5 missionaries who exemplified what it means to be a disciple. For them it wasn’t just a belief system. It was a lifestyle. Theirs were lives transformed by Jesus.





PRAYER LIST

- ✓ ✓ Continuing Prayers for loss: All the families that have lost loved ones this past year. Remember those who have recently lost loved ones due to COVID 19.
- ✓ ✓ Continuing Prayers for physical needs: Rita McManus, Maria Hatfield, Erwin and Elizabeth Lickman, Gloria-Lynn Fernandez, Betty Matson, Ronaldo Claveria
- ✓ ✓ Continuing Prayers for our Ministry Needs: The Pastoral Search Committee, Pulpit Supply, Our Deacons, Financial support
- ✓ ✓ Continuing Prayers for our Sister Ministries: BIEM Ministries, Orchard Church, Pastors Davis, Billow, Eddy, Vitel
- ✓ ✓ Continuing Prayers for Spiritual Needs: Leonard Hatfield, Carol Pelfrey's family, Daniel Ruehlman, George Bizadellis
- ✓ ✓ Continuing Prayers for: The spread of the Gospel, Our Government, Our Nation, Our Community, Our Neighbors, Our Families, pray for our members that have lost employment and for those who still have jobs and need to interact with others on a daily basis. Pray for those still working that God will protect. Lift up all our health professionals and their families who are on the front line of this pandemic especially Mylin and Errol Lardizabal and Liza Mitchell.
- ✓ URGENT Erwin Lickmann is requesting prayer for finalizing decisions regarding the future living arrangements for himself and Elizabeth. This is an urgent need as Elizabeth's health and mental faculties are quickly deteriorating.
- ✓ Alex Figueroa, (relative of Al Nuzikowski) Is undergoing treatments on his eye. Pray for a full recovery.
- ✓ Several requests from Carol Riemer
 - Her granddaughter's husband died of a massive heart attack at age 41.
 - Her daughter's ex-husband recently attempted suicide.
 - Through all of this her son, Rudy, just moved to Colorado with his family.
- ✓ Herb and Norma Weinthal former attendees of Niles Baptist. Herb is in the final stages of his life.

If you have prayer requests or updates on your family, we encourage to submit them to the Newsletter email address at the end of this newsletter.

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