



# Church Newsletter

First Baptist Church of  
Niles

Volume 2/Issue 13

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 90, titled From Everlasting to Everlasting

### A PRAYER OF MOSES, THE MAN OF GOD.

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. <sup>2</sup> Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. <sup>3</sup> You return man to dust and say, “Return, O children of man!” <sup>4</sup> For a thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past, or as a watch in the night. <sup>5</sup> You sweep them away as with a flood; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning: <sup>6</sup> in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.

<sup>7</sup> For we are brought to an end by your anger; by your wrath we are dismayed. <sup>8</sup> You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence. <sup>9</sup> For all our days pass away under your wrath; we bring our years to an end like a sigh. <sup>10</sup> The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away. <sup>11</sup> Who considers the power of your anger, and your wrath according to the fear of you? <sup>12</sup> So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. <sup>13</sup> Return, O LORD! How long? Have pity on your servants! <sup>14</sup> Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. <sup>15</sup> Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, and for as many years as we have seen evil. <sup>16</sup> Let your work be shown to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. <sup>17</sup> Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!

This will be Gaetano Paolino last service with us.

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.

## Optimism or Faith?

**"God uses chronic pain and weakness, along with other afflictions, as his chisel for sculpting our lives. Felt weakness deepens dependence on Christ for strength each day. The weaker we feel, the harder we lean. And the harder we lean, the stronger we grow spiritually, even while our bodies waste away. To live with your 'thorn' uncomplainingly—that is, sweet, patient, and free in heart to love and help others, even though every day you feel weak—is true sanctification. It is true healing for the spirit. It is a supreme victory of grace."**

**James Innell Packer**

Optimism or faith, which are you relying on? Every evening when you lay your head on your pillow are you glad that you made it through another day unscathed? To say that we are living in chaotic times would be an understatement. From the coronavirus, to civil unrest to political rhetoric our lives are inundated with far more negative elements than positive ones.

To answer that question, we need to define these two words. According to Study.com, "Optimism is a form of positive thinking that includes the belief that you are responsible for your own happiness and that more good things will continue to happen to you in the future." One of the most famous optimists was W. Clement Stone. He began each day, and demanded that his employees follow suit, by exclaiming: *"I feel happy! I feel healthy! I feel ter-r-r-ific!"* I met W. Clement Stone, when he was the CEO of Combined Insurance Company of America. He

made his shareholders stand up at the beginning of every Annual Shareholders Meeting by asking the question, *"Is everybody happy?"* You see, Mr. Stone lived his life as a prime promoter of his own version of Norman Vincent Peale's "Power of Positive Thinking" and Napoleon Hill's "Think and Grow Rich." He emphasized using a "positive mental attitude" to make money, both for himself and for the millions of people who became his "disciples" through the self-help books and magazines he wrote, edited and published.

Basically, a positive mental attitude centers around our thoughts and beliefs which are being shaped by both our perception and experience of ourselves and the world around us. Research indicates that nearly 80% of our self-talk is negative. "Self-Talk," is when you provide opinions and evaluations on what you're doing as you're doing; it's a reliance on self.

Going back to the opening statement, *"our lives are inundated with far more negative elements than positive ones."* When we have the thoughts such as "I'm not good at anything," "Life is hard," or "People can't be trusted" cross our minds so frequently we begin to recognize them as facts and no longer question the possibility that things could be different. The answer is not a turning to self for the answers, but turning to God.

It was mentioned that those who followed Mr. Stone and Mr. Peale became their "disciples," by definition, they embraced, and actively backed and spread this philosophy to others. Mr. Peale

preached a prosperity gospel, which is a gospel of blessings, money, riches, wealth and health, a gospel of worldly materials and success. That's right I said "preached." Tim Challies summarizes his Mr. Peale's rise. *"He was ordained in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was assigned a small congregation in Berkeley, Rhode Island. Two years later he moved to Brooklyn, New York where he established himself as a gifted communicator so that in only three years he grew a church from 40 to 900 members. He spent a few years at another Methodist congregation in Syracuse, New York, before changing his affiliation to the Reformed Church in America so he could pastor Marble Collegiate Church, one of the oldest Protestant congregations in America. When he arrived, this church had around 600 members; upon his departure 52 years later it had 5,000. It was here that he would gain worldwide acclaim and notoriety as a teacher of positive thinking."*

*"Peale developed a fascination with psychiatry as an answer, or partial answer, to his congregant's problems. While he was at Marble, he teamed up with a Freud-trained psychiatrist, Dr. Smiley Blanton, to begin a religious-psychiatric clinic in the church basement. They wanted to respond to the psychological needs of their congregation and especially the deep-rooted effects of the Great Depression. In 1951 this clinic was organized into the American Foundation of Religion and Psychiatry, with Peale as president and Blanton as executive director."*

During this time he continued to refine his message which was a

mixture of ideas from Christian Science and psychology and supplemented them with motivational statements and finished it with a thin coating of scripture. His foremost contribution to the world was this notion that thoughts are relevant, that our thoughts can change our lives, our health, our destiny. In other words if you believed it, you could have it, or be it, or do it.

**"...a form of mental activity called imaging. It consists of vividly picturing, in your conscious mind, a desired goal or objective, and holding that image until it sinks into your unconscious mind, where it releases great, untapped energies. It works best when it is combined with a strong religious faith, backed by prayer, and the seemingly illogical technique of giving thanks for benefits before they are received. When the imaging concept is applied steadily and systematically, it solves problems, strengthens personalities, improves health, and greatly enhances the chances for success in any kind of endeavor." (Positive Imaging)**

What makes this all significant is that Peale taught it as a Christian minister. Yet as a Christian minister he asked, *"Who is God? Some theological being? He is so much greater than theology. God is vitality. God is life. God is energy. As you breathe God in, as you visualize His energy, you will be reenergized!"* (Plus: The Magazine of Positive Thinking).

As a Christian minister Peale told Phil Donahue, *"It's not necessary to be born again. You have your way to God, I have mine. I found eternal*

*peace in a Shinto shrine ... I've been to Shinto shrines and God is everywhere. ... Christ is one of the ways! God is everywhere."* He denied the very heart of the Christian faith and replaced it with his doctrine of positive thinking. This is optimism.

Where Peale taught that our deepest problem is a lack of belief in ourselves and that our salvation comes with a simple shift in thinking, the Bible teaches that no man can save himself, regardless of how positive his thoughts may be. His salvation must come from outside himself. The glory of Jesus Christ is in the fact that he *"has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death" sinners "who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds"* (Colossians 1:21-22).

**"Tragically, by his life and legacy, Peale showed that he rejected this Savior and chose to trust in his own strength." Tim Challies**

*"...so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes."* Ephesians 4:14

Faith is the opposite. Faith is not a mere intellectual stance, but a belief that leads to action, to trust in, wait for, look for, or desire something or someone; or to expect something beneficial in the future. God designed us to live with faith. Hebrews 11:6 says, *"And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him."* This would be

the most concise biblical definition of "faith." But what else does the Bible say about faith?

Optimism like faith is a choice. When we choose to trust God for everything, we can rest in His promises to take care of us the way He sees fit (Philippians 4:19; Luke 12:30–31). We can *"cast our care upon him"* (1 Peter 5:7), *"let our requests be made known unto God"* (Philippians 4:6), and accept His *"peace that passes all understanding"* (Philippians 4:7). Knowing that we have a loving heavenly Father who desires to care for us and provide for us should give every child of God a reason for true optimism (Matthew 6:8; Luke 12:29–31).

When we have faith in God, we put our trust in His sovereign plan above what our circumstances tell us in Luke 1:37 *"For nothing will be impossible with God."* In 1 Corinthians 2:9 Paul is speaking of our future reward and the things that *"God has prepared for those who love him"*

*And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." Mark 11:22-24*

We often use the term **"faith"** to refer to something that may or may not happen, but Scripture views "faith" as a sure thing. Faith is

related to that which we do not yet see, *“Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.”* But that does not make that for which we hope any less real than if we could see it right now. On this side of eternity, we do not see or experience the full glory of God, but this glory is certain. Its reality is so sure that it serves as an anchor for our souls (Heb. 6:13–20).

Dr. R.C. Sproul notes in his commentary on Romans: *“Hope is not taking a deep breath and hoping things are going to turn out all right. It is assurance that God is going to do what he says he will do.”*

It is understandable that people throughout history have sought easy answers and simple agendas in an effort to make sense of a changing and, at times, baffling world. Especially during our current fast-paced culture, at a time of a pandemic and world-wide social unrest many people are looking for meaning and a source of security. Surveying the cultural landscape and sensing the world around us is headed in a destructive direction, as Christians how do we comprehend the underlying worldviews and the collisions between them? What is worldview and how does a Christians faith give us hope in these troubling times.

Worldview as defined by James Anderson, *“It’s not a physical view of the world, but rather a philosophical view, an all-encompassing perspective on everything that exists and matters to us. A person’s worldview represents his most fundamental beliefs and assumptions about the*

*universe he inhabits. It reflects how he would answer all the “big questions” of human existence: fundamental questions about who and what we are, where we came from, why we’re here, where (if anywhere) we’re headed, the meaning and purpose of life, the nature of the afterlife, and what counts as a good life here and now.”*

Another, more detailed definition borrowed from the website Monergism.com states worldview is: *“The composite set of presuppositions, beliefs, and values a person possesses that shape how he or she see reality and determines how he or she will act. It refers to the collective set of fundamental convictions people hold and on which they base their actions. A set of assumptions and perspectives that are true, partly true or completely false, which we hold consistently or inconsistently, consciously or unconsciously, through which we make sense of our lives and our world. This is the case for individuals and collectively for a society or culture, as well.”*

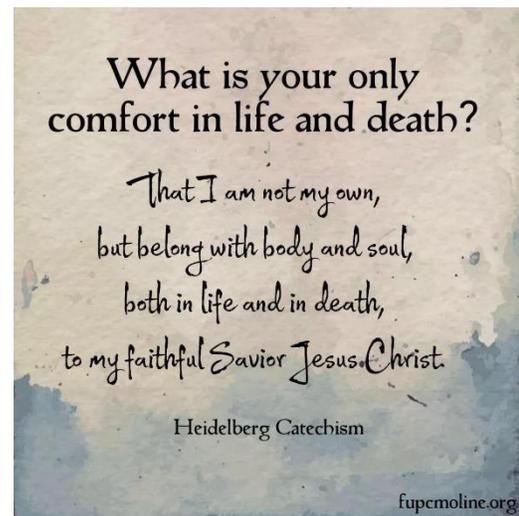
Understanding that we all have a worldview that varies between persons makes it difficult to know what a person really believes about life. Can you define your worldview? What elements does it consist of? And what effect does it have on your opinions about the Bible, your family, your church, and your life and society as a whole? Our beliefs are influenced by our worldview.

Quite simply it is the glasses through which we view life. It forms our perception and influences our

beliefs about basic everyday things. We really do believe (faith) and act (behavior) based on how we perceive reality.

*For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known. I*  
Corinthians 13:12.

If we are to be salt and light and witness to people we also have to know what we believe. We need to be sure of our faith and certain about truth.





## PRAYER LIST

- ✓ Continuing Prayers for loss: All the families that have lost loved ones this past year. Remember those who continue to lose 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, Brandon Myers, Pulpit Supply, Our Deacons, Financial support
- ✓ Continuing Prayers for our Sister Ministries: BIEM Ministries, Orchard Church, Pastors Davis, Billow, Eddy, Vitel, Ebi and Esther Perinbaraj
- ✓ 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. Erwin Lickmann pray for wisdom regarding future living arrangements for Elizabeth and himself.  
Alex Figueroa, (Nephew of Al Nuzikowski) pray for full recovery as he receives treatments for his eye.
- ✓Remember Carol Riemer and her family
- ✓Norma Weinthalder and family.

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.

### IMPORTANT DATES

- **Sunday, September 20, 2020**  
Pastoral Candidate Brandon Myers will be available following the service to answer questions. We encourage all members to make themselves available for this important meeting. Your attendance is important.
- **Sunday, September 27, 2020**  
Pastoral Candidate Brandon Myers will be preaching and will address any questions following the service. Your attendance is important.
- **Sunday, October 4, 2020**  
A vote to call Pastor Brandon Myers as Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Niles will follow the morning service.  
It is important that all members vote. Your attendance is extremely important.

Special provisions are being made for eligible Church Members who have not been able to attend services due to Covid-19. No Touch Absentee Ballot Collection will take place on Sunday, October 4, 2020 in the parking lot between 10:00am and 1:00pm.

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