



Church Newsletter

First Baptist Church of
Niles

Volume 2/Issue 18

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 94 titled, The LORD Will Not Forsake His People

O LORD, God of vengeance, O God of vengeance, shine forth! ² Rise up, O judge of the earth; repay to the proud what they deserve!

³ O LORD, how long shall the wicked, how long shall the wicked exult?

⁴ They pour out their arrogant words; all the evildoers boast.

⁵ They crush your people, O LORD, and afflict your heritage. ⁶ They kill the widow and the sojourner, and murder the fatherless; ⁷ and they say, “The LORD does not see; the God of Jacob does not perceive.”

⁸ Understand, O dullest of the people! Fools, when will you be wise? ⁹ He who planted the ear, does he not hear? He who formed the eye, does he not see? ¹⁰ He

who disciplines the nations, does he not rebuke? He who teaches man knowledge—¹¹the LORD—knows the thoughts of man, that they are but a breath. ¹² Blessed is the man whom you discipline, O LORD, and whom you teach out of your law, ¹³ to give him rest from days of trouble, until a pit is dug for the wicked. ¹⁴ For the LORD will not forsake his people; he will not abandon his heritage; ¹⁵ for justice will return to the righteous, and all the upright in heart will follow it. ¹⁶ Who rises up for me against the wicked? Who stands up for me against evildoers? ¹⁷ If the LORD had not been my help, my soul would soon have lived in the land of silence. ¹⁸ When I thought, “My foot slips,” your steadfast love, O LORD, held me up. ¹⁹ When the cares of my heart are many, your consolations cheer my soul. ²⁰ Can wicked rulers be allied with you, those who frame injustice by statute? ²¹ They band together against the life of the righteous and condemn the innocent to death. ²² But the LORD has become my stronghold, and my God the rock

of my refuge. ²³ He will bring back on them their iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness; the LORD our God will wipe them out.

Next Sunday we will welcome our new Senior Pastor Brandon Myers, his wife Kaiti their daughters Eva and Audrey, and son, Patrick. Pray for the family as they make the transition. Pray that the LORD will anoint him with wisdom and desire to accomplish HIS goals for the First Baptist Church of Niles.

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

ON THE TOPIC OF BEING A ROLE MODEL

Nearly 30 years ago, in a 1993 Nike commercial, professional basketball legend Charles Barkley fired the first shot at the "role model" concept. It was popularized by Columbia University sociologist Robert K. Merton in the aftermath of the 1960s counterculture movement. "I am not a role model," Barkley proclaimed in the half-minute spot. "I'm not paid to be a role model. I'm paid to wreak havoc on the basketball court. Parents should be role models. Just because I dunk a basketball doesn't mean I should raise your kids."

"Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us." Philippians 3:17

The above excerpt from an article caused me to think about society but more so our Christian lives in general. Early on in my Christian life, I had the sobering revelation that my life was under a microscope. Being involved with a number of different youth ministries of my church I quickly learned that in addition to the ten eyes of my family I had 1,200+ additional eyes watching me. But it wasn't about me but about Christ and how I mirrored him in my life. We see that idea in Philippians 3:17 where Paul is addressing the problem in the Church at Philippi. He is calling out men whose conduct was an open scandal to the Gospel, and who by their lives, showed themselves to be the enemies of the Cross of Christ. Paul says that a good "antidote" to these evil examples is a good example. Paul wants his life not to be admired, but imitated. All

men will imitate someone. Paul wants us to be imitators of those who are wholeheartedly devoted to Christ.

I once asked a pastor who he went to for advice. Were there any men that he held in close regard from whom he would seek counsel? I was seeking names that I respected which would give me confidence as to the direction that he was leading the ministry. His answer surprised me. He said that he sought scripture and prayed concerning decisions, direction and counsel. What a revelation. The ministry that I was a part of constantly cited names of well-known preachers, evangelists and missionaries to give weight to decisions that were being made. These might not be bad examples to follow, as long as their lives reflected Christ. We need to be careful who we follow, who our "role models" are. It's good to have Godly men from whom we can seek counsel from but ultimately the burden lies with us. We are the ones that will need to answer for our lives and the lives that we have impacted either in a positive or negative way. *"Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ."* 1 Corinthians 11:1. It's important to understand that as we are looking directly at Christ, and His Word is being reflected in us, that this is the reflection that others see. We should not be influenced by others' "personal biases" based on their emotions but rather by Christ. If you were asked to "Name a Christian you've known or heard about, living in say the last 50 years, that is a good human model of how Christians should live and what makes them a good model?" A response I read provides a sobering indictment for us. "I cannot think of

any in my lifetime that was totally honest, loved their God before all else, and loved their neighbor as themselves."

"Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Ephesians 5:1&2. We should walk in love. As someone once asked me, after completing an especially trying shift at work. "Are we to love everyone all the time." Next to pride, not exhibiting love towards everyone is one of the most prevalent struggles that one faces as a believer. It becomes evident to everyone that we know, especially our families, in the solitude of our homes behind closed doors where we feel safe to vent our deepest feelings. Once outside of our homes these feelings are passed on to our "other family," our church family. Our discontent with the pastor or fellow church member becomes unruly and injurious. Taking it one step further, if we openly express these feelings about fellow believers how do react to those outside our church family and how does this impact our testimony for Christ? More is involved in restraining the tongue than watching what we say. After all, our words are a product of the heart rather than of the mouth. *"The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks."* (Luke 6:45.) The book of James says a lot about the tongue, *"but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a 'restless evil,' 'full of deadly poison.'"*⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it 'we curse people who are made in the

*likeness of God.'*¹⁰ *From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.*" (James 3:8) James was aware of this vital truth: an unruly tongue is destructive. Undoubtedly, he was familiar with the Bible proverb that compares thoughtless words to "sword thrusts." In contrast, the same proverb says that, "but the tongue of the wise brings healing." (Proverbs 12:18) Indeed, words can have a powerful effect. They can hurt, or they can heal.

The word bigot means a person who is intolerant of the views of others. Is this true of us as Christians? I don't think it has to be. Christians are, of course, prepared to tolerate the views of others – but this does not mean that they have to agree with those views. The word tolerate itself implies this – if I tolerate something I don't agree with it but I put up with it and respect the other person's right to express that view. (If I agreed with them there would be nothing to tolerate.) Dr. Amy Orr-Ewing is a Senior Vice President with Ravi Zacharias International Ministries

In I Peter 2:1, Peter admonished Christians to, "put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander." The New World translation substitutes slander with the word, "backbiting." The Greek word translated "backbiting" means "insulting language." It conveys the idea of 'shooting people with words.' How well that describes the effects of an unruly tongue! Jesus said: "A good man brings forth good out of the good treasure of his heart, but a wicked man brings forth what is wicked out of his wicked treasure; for out of the heart's abundance his

mouth speaks." (Luke 6:45) Therefore, to control your tongue, you may need to pray as did David: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10. Bridling our tongue is a struggle. So is controlling our actions. Describing the challenge that he faced, the apostle Paul wrote: *For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.*¹⁹ *For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.*²⁰ *Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.*²¹ *So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.*²² *For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being,*²³ *but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.* (Romans 7:18-23) However, the battle must be fought—and it can be won with God's help. In relationships that are characterized by love and respect, there is no room for thoughtless, harsh words. Think of the example that Jesus Christ set in this regard. Jesus never used insulting speech with his disciples. Even on the last night of his life on earth when his apostles were arguing over who among them was the greatest, the Son of God did not scold them. "A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest."²⁵ *And he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors."*²⁶ *But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves.*²⁷ *For who is the greater, one who reclines at*

table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves." (Luke 22:24-27)

Remember what was previously said concerning our words. It is also true of our actions they are a product of our hearts. "There's a really strong connection between the heart and the brain," said Dr. Karol Watson, a professor of medicine and cardiology at the University of California, Los Angeles, told The Huffington Post.

"The human heart has hidden treasures, in secret kept, in silence sealed." — Charlotte Brontë

"Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life." Proverbs 4:23

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it? I the Lord search the heart and test the mind, to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his deeds." Jeremiah 17:9-10

The heart, according to the Bible, is part of man's spiritual makeup. It is the place where emotions and desires begin; it drives the will of man towards action. It's a spiritual organ that drives man's behavior. We know that the heart is the starting place for spiritual life because of what the Bible says about God's actions toward the human heart. In order to get people to desire what He desires, God must "remove the heart of stone" and replace it with "a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26). This is a humbling reality, and can be very difficult for many of us to accept. We want to believe that people, in their hearts,

are essentially good and that they must be compelled, victimized or provoked into bad behavior. However, Jesus said the opposite: *"For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person."* (Mark 7:21-23).

Humanity has a heart problem, and needs a heart transplant.

We see in Mark 7 that Jesus said that evil emanates from the heart. The Bible teaches us that our actions are connected to our heart, especially revealed in unexpected situations. Therefore, our actions become an evidenced part of who we are, *"But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints."* Ephesians 5:3, and they cause us to make room for them because they are buried in our heart. It will be only a matter of time for those who are closest to us to figure out our deepest desires. By observation they can deduct our desires from our behavior.

Our family and closest friends are shrewd observers and may well know more about our desires than we imagine.

Sandwiched in between the two stern condemnations of sexual avarice in Ephesians 5:3 we find a rebuke regarding a specific kind of speech as well. We circle back to a censure of what ensues from our hearts to our mouths and colors our testimony before men. *"Let there*

be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving." Ephesians 5:4.

Breaking down these types of speech we notice that the word "filthiness" is a translation of a word that some scholars say is limited to speech. This is the only place where this word is found in the New Testament and it is within the context of speech. It has as part of its base the same stem from the Greek word that we translate as "shameful" given the context, the shame would be in association with unlawful promiscuity. It is also rarely used in classical Greek as well and when it is, has reference to things that are lascivious in nature.

The phrase "foolish talk" is a translation of one Greek word and is a fairly straightforward and literal translation. In this context, foolish talk would be anything that might embroil one in a situation where one would be tempted to commit some kind of sexual sin. This word also is only used this one time in the New Testament and its context would seem to define for us what it is referring to.

Finally, we find the word "crude joking" as translated by the English Standard Version. I like this translation, though it doesn't give the specific kind of crude joking that this word is describing. The word literally involves a turn of a phrase. In English today we would refer to it as a double-entendre where something seemingly innocent is said, but it really has a second meaning that is sexual in nature. Richard C. Lenski in his Commentary on the New Testament, p. 596

writes, "The three may refer to speech, the last two certainly do so. And because of the context these are given a sexual coloring. How worldlings so generally love nasty stories, throw out silly, vile remarks, crack supposed jokes of a spicy kind!"

The next sixteen verses provide a stern warning on how we should live our lives as believers, our testimony. According to Merriam-Webster, testimony is "a solemn declaration usually made by a witness under oath in response to interrogation by a lawyer or authorized public official; firsthand authentication of a fact; an outward sign; a public profession of a religious experience."

⁵ For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.⁷ Therefore do not become partners with them;⁸ for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true),¹⁰ and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.¹² For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.¹³ But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible,¹⁴ for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from

the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” Mark 5

As Christians, our testimony is one of the most powerful tools we have. It is the visible sign of our personal relationship with Christ and is evidenced by our turning over control to the direction of the Holy Spirit. As such we are to “walk” in the Spirit. To “walk” in Self-control (“temperance” in the KJV) is, of course, the ability to control oneself. It involves moderation, constraint, and the ability to say “no” to our baser desires and fleshly lusts. Those who walk in the Spirit rely on the Holy Spirit to guide them in thought, word, and deed. “So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹²Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. ¹³Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. ¹⁴For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.” (Romans 6:11–14).

Our human nerves are very sensitive and easily stimulated by outside things. Outward conversations, attitudes, environments, and human relationships can easily touch us. Our mind has many thoughts, plans, and imaginations which are truly confused. Our will has many opinions and ideas and loves to do things according to its own whims. None of the faculties of our soul-life give us peace. Whether individually or collectively, the soul-life causes us to shift from time to time, change often, be disturbed, feel confused, and have no peace. Watchman Nee

¹⁵ “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ^[a] ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let

the wife see that she respects her husband.” Mark 5

We close where we began with the idea of “role models.” We can’t be role models to our children if as husbands and wives we are not obedient to God’s Word. Obedience is defined as “dutiful or submissive compliance to the commands of one in authority.” Using this definition, we see the elements of biblical obedience. Obedience to God proves our love for Him. “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. ³ For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.” (1 John 5:2-3). It demonstrates our faithfulness to Him, “And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. ⁴ Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, ⁵ but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: ⁶ whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.” (1 John 2:3-6), glorifies Him in the world, “Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.” (1 Peter 2:12), and opens avenues of blessing for us, “If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.” (John 13:17). “Dutiful” means it is our obligation to obey God, just as Jesus fulfilled His duty to the Father by dying on the cross for our sin. “Submissive” indicates that we yield our wills to God’s. “Commands”

speaks of the Scripture passages or verses in which God has clearly delineated His instructions. The “one in authority” is God Himself, whose authority is total and unequivocal. For the Christian, obedience means complying with everything God has commanded. It is our duty to do so.

Obedience is a lifestyle. When we learn to live an obedient lifestyle, our perspective on every challenge becomes one of peace and confidence.

It is important to remember that our obedience to God is not *solely* a matter of duty. We obey Him because we love Him, Jesus answered him, *“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.” (John 14:23)*. We also understand that the spirit of obedience is as important as the act of obedience. We must beware of using a veneer of obedience to mask a sinful heart. We serve the Lord in humility, singleness of heart, and love.

Some decisions you make are more important than others. Whose I venture to say that the first decision we make every morning concerns what you are going to wear. Your decision might be based upon who you might meet, what classes or appointments you might have or it might be as simple as whether it will be sunny or raining, etc. Nothing major or tragic is going to result from a wrong decision in any of these matters. However, in the big picture of our lives there is one decision that has massive implications, “How will I reflect Christ this day?”



“I told him as an expert in the field I strongly recommend wearing it, but he just kept bringing up his ‘rights.’”



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, Gloria-Lynn Fernandez, Betty Matson, Ronaldo Claveria, Alex Figueroa

✓ Continuing Prayers for our Ministry Needs: Pastor Brandon Myers, Our Deacons, Financial support.

✓ Continuing Prayers for our Sister Ministries: BIEM Ministries, Orchard Church, Pastors Davis, Billow, Eddy, Vitel, Ebi and Esther Perinbaraj, Gaetano and Krista Paolino

✓ 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.

Mikaelle (Mikey) at Olivet Nazarene College. The college is experiencing several cases of COVID. Mikey is ok at this time.

Kurt Pazdra II, Pastoral Intern at The Orchard, he was our speaker this past July. His meniscus in his knee was ruptured on the inside and I had orthopedic surgery this past Friday. "I am now in recovery and will begin physical therapy in the oncoming weeks. Please pray that I will be healed, well rested, relaxed, that I will trust God for a full recovery, be responsible to tend to my knee, and be patient while I am very inactive and dependent upon others for a season."

Pray that the LORD will anoint Pastor Brandon Myers with wisdom and desire to accomplish His goals for the First Baptist Church of Niles. Pray for Kaiti their daughters Eva and Audrey, and son, Patrick.

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.

First Baptist Church of Niles

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