



Church Newsletter

First Baptist Church of
Niles

Volume 2/Issue 4

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 80 (ESV), titled, Restore Us, O God

TO THE CHOIRMASTER: ACCORDING TO LILIES. A TESTIMONY. OF ASAPH, A PSALM.

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock. You who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth.² Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up your might and come to save us!

³ Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved! ⁴ O LORD God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people’s prayers?

⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them tears to drink in full measure. ⁶ You make us an object of contention for our neighbors, and our enemies laugh among themselves.

⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved! ⁸ You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it.

⁹ You cleared the ground for it; it took

deep root and filled the land.¹⁰ The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches.

¹¹ It sent out its branches to the sea and its shoots to the River.¹² Why then have you broken down its walls, so that all who pass along the way pluck its fruit? ¹³ The boar from the forest ravages it, and all that move in the field feed on it.¹⁴ Turn again, O God of hosts! Look down from heaven, and see; have regard for this vine,¹⁵ the stock that your right hand planted, and for the son whom you made strong for yourself.

¹⁶ They have burned it with fire; they have cut it down; may they perish at the rebuke of your face!¹⁷ But let your hand be on the man of your right hand, the son of man whom you have made strong for yourself!¹⁸ Then we shall not turn back from you; give us life, and we will call upon your name!¹⁹ Restore us, O LORD God of hosts! Let your face shine, that we may be saved!

Our guest speaker this week will be Kurt Pazdra.

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

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Meeting ID: 899 2251 1230

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"In uncertain and turbulent times, accepting that challenge is the only antidote to chaos, stagnation, and disintegration. Times change, problems change, technologies change, and people change. Leadership endures."

– Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner (*The Leadership Challenge* Fifth Edition, page 1)

I came across that quote during my studies this week and spent time reflecting on how it applies to us today and what we are witnessing with regard to COVID 19 and the civil unrest across our world. Both of these are contributing to the malaise that has captured the psyche of so many and in turn produced a feeling or display of (usually smug) moral superiority originating from a sense that one's beliefs, actions, or affiliations are of greater virtue than those of the average person. In other words, they have become intolerant of the opinions and behaviors of others resulting in an aggressive conduct.

Reflecting on this past Sunday's message from Exodus 15 aptly titled "Deliverance," a correlation can be made to the Israelites at that time. The chapter begins with a song of praise and thanksgiving to God by Moses, Miriam, and Israel on their deliverance. But it quickly digresses from celebration to criticism at verse 22 and beyond. We see in verse 22 the people want water in the wilderness and could not find it. They forgot about the hardships and loss of personal freedom they experienced in Egypt. They were focused on satisfying the now. In verse 23 when they came upon the waters at Marah which were bitter, they murmur, Moses prays, and the waters are sweetened by God's direction.

As Christians we are on a journey. As disciples we are commanded to live lives that exemplify Christ and to live it out by sharing the gospel. Too often we are affected by the world around us and in our agitation we re-act in ways that leave God out of the equation. We begin to take bold actions that may affect our testimonies to the unsaved

instead of giving it all to God. We forget who is in control and we fall flat on our faces. We forget that as disciples when we get down on our knees the battle is not over, it has just begun.

As disciples we, need to be honest and patient about the reality in which we find ourselves in.

We can do this by taking **Psalm 46:10**, "Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" to heart. This verse is not a call for God's people to rest or relax in who God is. This verse is actually more of a wake-up call for us to be in awe rather than a gentle call to rest. But this command—"Be still..."—is written in the context of a time of trouble and war; therefore, we should consider the verse with that context in mind.

Instead of interpreting "be still" as a gentle suggestion, the meaning in this psalm lends itself more to: "cease striving" or "stop" and more specifically in this context "stop fighting," which is directed toward the enemies of the people of God. The people of God should interpret the command for themselves to read more like: "snap out of it," "wake up," "stop fearing"—acknowledge who your God is—be in awe! Going back to verse 1 of this psalm we read that "God is **our** refuge and strength" (emphasis added). The Psalms are for God's people. Taking time out of our day to meditate on Scripture and be silent with listening ears toward God is mentioned in other sections of Scripture (**Psalm 119:15, Joshua 1:8, Luke 5:16**).

As disciples we, resolve to be positive and hopeful as you communicate with fellow Christians and non-believers.

II Timothy 1:8-13 provides instructions for the Church especially during our current time of change and challenge. It is during these times that we need to step up, when as disciples we need to lead with courage, positivity and love knowing that we have the influence to

guide others responses. If we are negative, panicked and chaotic they will assume the same outlook. We need to be hopeful steering our conversations with courage and positivity.

"Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God,⁹ who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,¹⁰ and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,¹¹ for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher,¹² which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me.¹³ Follow the pattern of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus."

As disciples we, need to stay deeply rooted in your values and let them guide you.

Colossians 3 explains what our core values need to be. Who we are as disciples and what we claim is the most important guiding factor of our lives. These should not change during times of trouble or upheaval. If anything, we should look for ways to communicate more and live out our core values.

¹⁶" Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

As disciples we, need to be empathetic.

In looking at Ephesian 4:29:32, we find how we should be modeling our lives.

There is a good chance that the majority of those with whom we come in contact with are experiencing some measure of insecurity and fear, we could be as well. Some of those that may be the most outspoken and seem confident that everything is normal may actually possess a heightened fear response. We need to realize that their fears are legitimate to them. We need to take the time to hear those concerns and empathize with them. We need to be able to listen to their fears and provide counsel and reassurance.

²⁹ "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

"Sometimes we feel in the midst of these many tasks in our vast world as though we were laborers in a giant factory where something is being made that we can never see. We are being required to stamp out this piece of sheet metal, to make this handle, to tighten this bolt — and to do all this over and over again without knowing what the whole process is all about ... But for the most part, we fundamentally believe that something is going on, something is being accomplished ... We dimly see and hope that this is something glorious in which we are engaged. Something which, if we knew what it was, we could take pride in acknowledging as a work we had been allowed to serve."
This comes from the sermon, "Man's Work and God's," by Richard Niebuhr

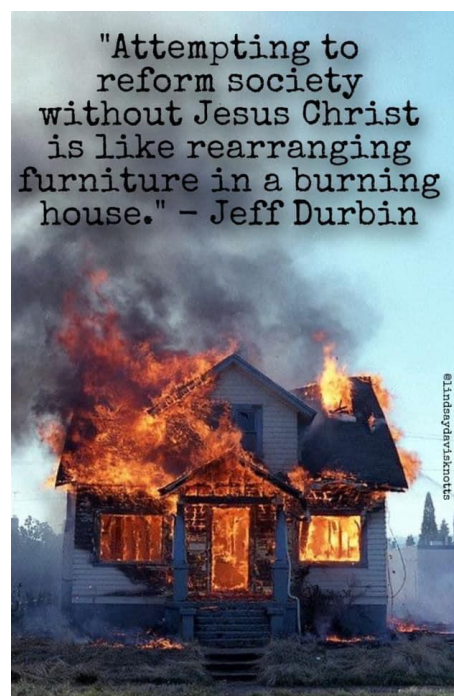
and finally, As disciples we, need to trust ourselves.

Confidence comes from commitment. If we commit ourselves to understanding God's Word and make the decisions that guide our paths based upon The

Word then we can be confident that we will possess the skills and knowledge needed for the mission at hand. This is made evident in I John 4:13-21.

¹³ "By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. ¹⁶ So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. ¹⁷ By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world. ¹⁸ There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot^[a] love God whom he has not seen. ²¹ And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother."

It is a blessed state to be so consumed with the zeal of the LORD Jesus Christ that wherever you go, you stand between the living and the dead. You represent the Lord to His lost creation.





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.

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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