

IN THE PROMISE

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From
the
Editor

The summer months typically plague us with extremely hot temperatures. We seek to "beat the heat" by wearing lighter clothing, sitting in the shade, sipping lemoniced tea, swimming in a cool pool and if nothing else, just chilling in an air-conditioned room.

While these methods are all good for avoiding the heat, one source of heat we do not want to seek shelter from is the fire of the Holy Spirit. We hope this issue will add some fun to your sun and keep you on fire for the Lord. Happy Summer!!

Michelle Neal

(Editor's Note: This article was originally intended for the January 2003 issue which was not published.)

A Word from the Pastor...

THE PAIN OF JABEZ

How awful it must feel to be called a name that reminds you of your past, to be called a name or labeled by people because of what they think of you due to your past. No doubt you may have done some things in the past that you regret or are sorry for doing. Unfortunately, there are some who seemingly will not let you go from the mistakes, the errors, the misunderstandings of your past. It would be one thing if you were still living the past life, but now you are born again and washed in the blood of the lamb. God has forgiven you of the wrong, placed the sins of your life in his sea of forgiveness and placed a sign there for the world to see, "No fishing." Still this has not stopped people from reminding you of your past. They have called you a liar, cheater, stealer, con-artist, fornicator, gossip, backbiter and perhaps the list goes on. Yes, I can imagine it does not feel good.



Yet an even more troubling and disturbing thing than people calling you a name that reminds of your wrong is to be named or called something from your past which was not your fault. Such is the case of a character in the Bible named Jabez. Jabez's name means pain. The Bible tells his mother bore him in sorrow and thus named him Jabez. What the sorrow was the Bible does not say. All we know is that Jabez was saddled or inflicted with a name meaning pain. Regrettably, everywhere Jabez went he heard the awful sound of the word pain. Can you imagine the heartache, the sorrow, the dejection Jabez undertook being picked on from his enemies, or doing wrong just going about his daily life while hearing the name "Pain" everywhere he went? Imagine Jabez in a classroom scenario and hearing the teacher say, "Pain, what is the answer to the math problem on the board?" Or being at the local supermarket to hear the clerk say, "Pain, the total of your groceries is \$3.20." Or perhaps being in a crowded room and hearing someone say, "Telephone for Mr. Pain."

What was Jabez to do? It was not like he could have had his named changed by God as in the case of Jacob and Abraham (narratives found in the book of Genesis). Abraham had his named changed from Abram to Abraham, a Hebrew term which meant "father of multitudes". This change reflected what Abraham would do in the will of God. Jacob, whose name meant trickster, had his name changed to Israel by God because the work God had for him to do was not going to be done by trickery, but by the will of God.

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When You Are The “I” Of Your Storm

As soon as you snap your seatbelt, you're thrown violently against your strap. The plane free falls 1000 feet. Suddenly, the dark plane seems to buck. A flash of lightning...after 3minutes the dark clouds brighten. Blinding, white light stings your eyes. The hiss of heavy rain stops. One sharp bump, the plane flies smoothly again. You're in the eye of the storm!

Some of you are going through a very destructive storm that has come your way through no fault of your own. But sometimes you are the “I” of your own storm.

Storms created by sin

When we choose to make ourselves the center of the universe by ignoring the laws of God, we also make ourselves the “I” of a violent storm. The easiest way to keep this storm from developing in the first place is by living in obedience to God.

Storms created by the denial of sin

Storms gain strength when we fail to acknowledge we've sinned. When King David committed adultery with Bathsheba, over 9 months elapsed between his adultery, having her husband Uriah killed, and his confession. After Nathan left David, “the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bore to David” (2 Samuel 12:15). So Bathsheba had already given birth to David's child by the time David was confronted by Nathan and confessed his sin.

Unconfessed sin was the cause of the storm in David's life and his was the I: “My bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. Day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my vitality was turned into the drought of summer” (Psalm 32:3-4). Later he describes the joy which comes to the upright in heart when they confess.

First, don't become the “I” of your own storm by sinning against God. But if you do sin, impulsively or purposely, confess it immediately. That's the quickest way to let the air out of the “I” of a gathering storm.

Storms created by foolishness

Maybe we create a storm by establishing an unwise friendship, not getting counseled before making an investment or not properly disciplining a child. There are hundreds of ways we can become the “I” of our own storm by not following the simple, yet profound, precepts of the book of Proverbs about practical and skillful living.

Damage control caused by this kind of storm dictates doing the reverse of whatever you're doing wrong: Break off unwise relationships! Get counsel! Discipline your child! The book of Proverbs, as well as the entire Bible, is filled with practical guidelines for avoiding the thunder and lightning caused by foolish living.

Storms created by a half-hearted commitment to Christ

With a true hurricane, the storm is on the outside and the calm eye on the inside. But with storms created by a half-hearted commitment to Christ, the outside can appear calm, but on the inside lives are being battered by the winds of compromise and carnality. The “I” of stormy lives is often disguised by religious activity and moral double-mindedness.

Give Jesus Christ full and complete access to the “I” of your stormy life. Only He can bring peace, calm the winds, and repair the damage. There is a door to the “I” of your life, and He stands outside knocking (Revelation 3:20). If you'll open that door and allow Him to come in and fellowship with you, you'll no longer be alone in the storm.

I'll never regret missing the thrill of flying into the eye of a storm! But I would always regret it if I didn't let Jesus keep me from becoming the “I” of any storm that could harm me. With Jesus' help, you need never be the “I” of another storm!

Stephanie Forbes

(A WORD from the PASTOR -- Continued from pg 1)

However, the Bible does not mention anything in which God had in mind for Jabez. What was "Pain, excuse me, Jabez to do?"

Jabez did what we should do in any case where people do not allow us to move beyond a forgiven and forgotten past. Jabez called on the God of Israel. Jabez talked with God. Jabez prayed to God to enable him to deal with his situation. Jabez did what Paul wrote about later to the church at Philippi. "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." (NIV Philippians 4:6-7). The good news about talking with God through prayer is what occurs in I Chronicles 4:10 when Jabez made four requests and God granted them all.

Understand that God is concerned about you and he wants to answer your prayers. He is concerned about your past present and future. He does not want your wrongful past to stunt your spiritual development in the present; nor your stunted spiritual present to destroy your destined glorious future. God has given the believers a name, an authoritative name to use in the earth to help us make it through whatever we are going through. That authoritative name is Jesus Christ. Demons tremble at the name of Jesus. So whenever your past comes back to haunt you or your enemies are after you, do like Jabez because "Having a little talk with Jesus makes it right."

Pastor Reginald Stepney

For Your Information...

Message from Gary and Barb Rosberg

The Christian family in our country is falling down around us because the foundation for marriage is no longer stable. Consider these statistics from The Barna Research Group, Ltd., released on December 21, 1999 (see www.barna.org for more details):

- 27% of Born Again adults are currently or have previously been divorced; Compared to 24% of adults not Born Again.
- People who attend mainline Protestant churches, overall, experience divorce on par with the national average (25%).

Being a Christian really doesn't seem to mean much when it comes to protecting the marriage and family anymore. So many have shared their grief about this problem. So many also have shared their passion to re-build and strengthen the foundation of the Christian home. As a result, we have responded by writing a book called *Divorce-Proof Your Marriage*. This marks the beginning of a campaign to reverse the trend among Christian marriages.

Our desire is to embark on a journey with you that will lead couples to experience God's dream for their marriages. Divorceproof.com is all about equipping couples and in turn every marriage in the church. Please take time to visit www.divorceproof.com and request the **free Divorce-Proof booklets** to give to the couples of your church.

WILL YOU HOLD ME?

A child's arm reaches high and the look on his/her face shows an inner hope that only you can fulfill. You reach down with arms of love and clutch them. His/her head gently presses against your shoulder, signifying trust and security.

I hold my hands up, too. In moments of insecurity, tiredness or fear, I ask Jesus if He will hold me. His willingness never subsides. His mercy is new every morning. He continues to amaze me with the assurance and comfort he provides.

Being held provides comfort. Deuteronomy 33:27 illustrates this thought so clearly: "The eternal God is your refuge and underneath are the everlasting arms." There are times I feel so inadequate. I get tired and depressed. I overbook my schedule and misplace my priorities. I trudge along, looking for comfort and security -- someone to give me strength and hope. A glance upward at the extended arms of Christ renews my own inner strength and encourages me to be an extension of His arms to my own children.

There are three ways we can hold our children. First, we can hold them spiritually through prayer, devotions and Godly guidance. It's a daily commitment required by God on behalf of our children. Second, we can obviously hold them physically, not only in our arms, but also through day-to-day comfort, strength and help. Third, we need to provide emotional stability to give them a consistency through all the changes in their life.

In all these situations, our children need to see His loving arms extended through us. We are the ones who can hold them through their stages of learning and questioning just as God holds us. We are the ones who can teach about the everlasting arms of the Lord.

Stephanie Forbes

POETRY CENTER

SWEET SURRENDER

“All to Jesus I surrender; all to him I freely give; I will ever love and trust him, in his presence daily live. I surrender all, I surrender all, all to thee, my blessed Savior, I surrender all.”

– J.W. Van Deventer

God has called us to a place of sweet surrender. This is where you can trade your burdens of sorrow, hurt, and despair for His joy, healing, and hope. Surrender is bittersweet because you have to lay down your wants and desires and replace them with those of your Father. The sweetness of surrender becomes apparent when God takes your worst and gives you His best! Sweet surrender is your place of refuge because only God can reign there. When you give up all you have in order to advance God’s kingdom, you indeed abide in the place of sweet surrender.

Maria Barber

ABIDING

(by Maria Barber)

When I look into your eyes I see
Who I am designed to be.

The light that shines illuminates my path
For all the world to see.

When I look into Your eyes I see
Who I am destined to be.

Without you, where would I be?
Tossed and driven on a stormy sea

When I look into your eyes
I see where I am determined to be...
Abiding in you and you in me.

Someone's in the Kitchen...

Here are a few summer recipes you can try that are healthy, tasty and pleasing to the eye.

STRAWBERRY DIP

- 1 small container of sour cream
- 1 LARGE jar of marshmallow cream

Blend above together until creamy. Serve with fresh fruit such as strawberries, pineapple chunks, melon chunks, etc. This recipe is SOOOO EASY and delicious! Don't forget to have plenty of toothpicks on hand!

VEGGIE DIP

- 1 cup of sour cream
- 2/3 cup Hellman's mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon parsley flakes
- 1 tablespoon dried chives
- 1 tablespoon dried dill weed
- 1 teaspoon seasoned salt (like Lawry's)

Mix above ingredients together and chill. Serve with fresh pieces of broccoli, mushrooms, cauliflower, carrots, black olives, green pepper, celery, etc. Makes a great veggie tray! Enjoy!

FRESH VEGGIE SALAD

- Broccoli heads (cut in small pieces)
- Cauliflower heads (cut in small pieces)
- Fresh green onions chopped up fine including the stems
- 1 cup of shredded Cheddar Cheese (or Co-Jack)

Toss the above ingredients together with one LARGE bottle of Kraft BUTTERMILK DRESSING. Chill and serve! (This is a little more work, fussing with just the heads of the broccoli and cauliflower, but well worth it when you hear the raves. Also, you can add fresh garden peas. I haven't tried that yet, but it seems like a good idea. Enjoy!

EASY SHRIMP SALAD!

- 3 pounds prepared macaroni salad from your local deli
- 1 pound frozen salad shrimp, thawed (pre-cooked, shelled, de-veined, and de-tailed variety)
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh green pepper
- 3 hard-boiled eggs, chopped (optional)
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon dill weed
- Salt & pepper to taste

Combine the above ingredients and chill overnight (to let flavors mingle). This is easy, delicious, does not heat up your kitchen, and is absolutely great to take to church picnics. Enjoy!

KIDZ CORNER

God's Treasure Chest



“ But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.” - 2 Corinthians 4:7 NIV

H E O G P R V N P F P N M D X
D O F U W R A A Z M M O B W D
L W Z I Z H T C J S R O W L L
O V E D R I U W D U T N X E L
V H J A E H E U G J E S U S R
E G S N F W T Y O J C F K R E
S X C C Y D T U F B A G K O G
G E C E X X D D R T E V Z X Q
U P B E S Q H G G T P R K P U
R P O G L I Z V I H T A V F R
X W Q H F L A H T Z O C D T L
V U O I E P E I C W N V N M M
Y P R T N I A N M O D S I W F
E L U R S F K C C T Y S H X M
I A K J P L R G H E O U M V M

Can you find these treasures?

EXCELLENCE
GUIDANCE
JESUS
LOVE
PEACE
TRUTH

FAITH
HOPE
JOY
PATIENCE
POWER
WISDOM

Whoso Findeth A Wife...Findeth A Good Thing

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Jeremy Squires married on March 15, 2003!

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Jacquelle Leggett married on May 24, 2003!

Congratulations as well to Sean Casper and Tracie Union, who became officially engaged during service on Sunday, June 1, 2003.

Please lift these couples up in prayer as we celebrate with them!

And The Lord Added To The Church Daily

FPT, please welcome our newest additions:

- Tarynn Denise Neal, born to Lee and Michelle Neal on June 1, 2003.
- Alayna Dionne Brewington, born to Rod and Latecia Brewington on June 14, 2003.

As we rejoice with these families, let us keep our expecting mothers, Detria Moore and Tammy Sylvester in our prayers.

IN THE PROMISE is a Christian newsletter ministry of **Fulfilled Promise Tabernacle (FPT)**, which strives to provide spiritually motivating topics to help you walk in the promises of the Lord.

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