

The Trumpet

“The trumpet shall sound...and we shall be changed”
(I Corinthians 15:52)



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Pastor’s Pen

When I was a little boy we started our school day with a prayer, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and reading a Bible scripture. High school commencement ceremonies were opened and closed with prayer. Over time, scripture reading went away, prayer went away, commencement benedictions disappeared, and reciting the pledge of allegiance became optional, and thus a non-existent practice in most schools. Concerning prayer and scripture reading there were three pivotal cases brought before the U.S. Supreme Court:

Engel v. Vitale – "The Regents School Prayer" – 1962

Murray v. Curlett – "School Prayer" – 1963

Abington Township School District v. Schempp – "Bible reading in school" – 1963

The Supreme Court dealt with the last two cases at the same time. When they finally handed down their ruling, they stated that prayer and/or Bible reading was a violation of the establishment clause of the first amendment. This effectively ended prayer and Bible reading in school. It is noteworthy that Atheism has been identified as a religion. So, by legislating God out of the schools, the SCOTUS (Supreme Court of the United States) made atheism a national religion to be practiced in every public school. (That’s a discussion for another time.) Not content with their SCOTUS victories, the atheists, agnostics, extreme liberals, and non-Christian groups have attempted to keep prayer out of school regardless of the circumstances.

I was recently sent an article that appeared in a recent Baptist Press publication. Here are some excerpts: **Football prayer complaint leads to employee training.** A public-school system has agreed to update employees on applicable constitutional law after a special interest group complained of a Southern Baptist pastor's impromptu prayer over an injured player at a high school football game. The Hamilton County Department of Education (HCDE) will "provide additional training to its employees on the application of the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses in public schools," HCDE attorney D. Scott Bennett told the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) Jan. 30. The FFRF complained Jan. 27 that students' constitutional rights

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were violated at a Sept. 9, 2016 football game because of a prayer by Eric Dill, student pastor of Bayside Baptist Church in Harrison, Tenn...Dill prayed over a Central High School football player who appeared temporarily paralyzed after a tackle... During these tense minutes, a local youth pastor **was asked to pray for the young man.** During the prayer, a number of students circled around the pastor. Out of respect for the injured player and the young men who were praying, many coaches and officials also bowed their heads. No coaches led any prayer. The injured student has since made a full recovery. Dill described the injured player as motionless for nearly 30 minutes after a

tackle, crying uncontrollably and unable to move his legs. A game attendee complained anonymously to the FFRF, which in turn filed the complaint from its Madison, Wis., office. The FFRF contended... "While it is laudable for students and coaches to express concern over an injured player, coaches may not use an injury as an opportunity to engage students in a religious exercise... We trust that this was a unique situation given the circumstances of the night and that coaches are not regularly leading their teams in prayer, or participating in team prayer circles initiated by students."

Did you ever think you would see the day when praying, upon request, over a severely injured high school athlete would result in teachers and coaches having to attend special training to teach them not to pray or join in a prayer circle?

Finally, brethren, pray...that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified...And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.

II Thessalonians 3:1-2

In Christian love, Pastor Jim Gregory

Note:

1. Excerpts from Baptist Press article don't change the context. Emphasis added by me

Concerning Murray v. Curlett; ***A foot note on this case:*** This case was centered around Madalyn Murray O'Hair's son, William Murray. Madalyn O'Hair was murdered in the 1990's, and her son William Murray became a Christian and is now a pastor. He now is an advocate for school prayer, and has written an excellent book on the subject, titled: Let Us Pray, A Plea for Prayer in Our Schools. In his book, you will find a detailed account of this case.

Youth Ministry

It is such a blessing to see God at work in the lives of our youth. We have been growing in both our Sunday School and Awana classes. This quarter in Sunday School we will be wrapping up the Old Testament study from Answers in Genesis and starting the New Testament. We had a wonderful Christmas Party on Friday, December 15th.

Jim & Nicole Clark and John & Shannon Crowe



Operation Christmas Child

Operation Christmas Child is a ministry formed by Franklin Graham that takes Christmas gifts and the Gospel to underprivileged children all over the world. We are collecting items to fill shoeboxes in November. Each month we will highlight a different item to bring in. But, please remember we will take all types of donations at any time! For February please bring in toothbrushes. For March combs & brushes.



PUTTING ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD

APOLOGETICS - FROM BOB NEUBAUER

Theodicy The Problem of Evil

The late Dr. Ronald Nash, professor of philosophy at The Southern Baptist Seminary, said that the only really difficult problem for believers to deal with, the only rational way an individual might consider leaving the Christian faith was theodicy. It is something Christians have had to deal with since the inception of the faith. Since you may be faced with this issue by someone you are trying to reach for Jesus Christ we need to understand the question: if God is all good, and He is, and if God created everything that exists, and He did, then where did evil come from? The answer is we do not know. The Bible never gives us an answer to the problem. We don't even know why scripture doesn't deal with the topic. So, what can we say that can help us?

First, we must and do affirm that God is all good. In Romans chapter nine we read that God loved Jacob but hated Essau. And whatever is meant by His hatred of Essau, that hatred will see Essau in the lake of fire for all eternity. Verse fourteen reads, *What shall we say then, there is no injustice with God is there? May it never be!* That last sentence in the verse translates a very strong Greek phrase, which is why the New American Standard translation puts an exclamation point at the end of the sentence. The King James translators in trying to get the strength of that expression across chose to paraphrase it with the idiomatic expression *God forbid!* The word translated injustice can also be translated unrighteousness. What that means is that God cannot be the source of evil. Just the opposite is true. The one true God is the source of all goodness and righteousness.

Second, we want to discuss what evil is and what it is not. Evil is the result of you or me doing wrong. It does not have being in and of itself. That is, evil is not a thing. Historically evil has been defined with the words negation and privation. Negation is a way of defining things by what they are not. For example, the council of Chalcedon (451) in response to the Monophysite and Nestorian heresies defined Christ as one person with two natures. Those natures are without mixture, without confusion, without division and without separation, each nature retaining its own attributes. By the way, the results of that council are still considered to be the last word on understanding the person of Christ. We define evil in opposition to that which is good. So, we can say something is ungodly or unrighteous. Injustice is another word that helps us understand what evil is. The other word privation describes something that is lacking. If you do not get something that is necessary then you have been deprived of not just what you want but what you have to

have. Sin has been defined in the historic confessions of the church as any lack of conformity to or transgression of the law of God. In addition the 16th century reformers added that though evil is defined by the ways of negation and privation it is nevertheless real. When we violate God's law we commit acts of evil. This is something we all understand because we all sin. We were born sinners and because we were born sinners we sin. That is we sin because we are sinners, we are not sinners because we sin.

Though we have already said that there is no answer to the question of the origin of evil there are some things that can and should be said. It is simplistic to say that it was Adam's free will choice to eat of the fruit of the tree. Because before a choice can be made there must be some inclination to make the choice. Otherwise no choice could be made. If you come to a fork in the road, in order to take one of the forks you must have a reason for doing so. Without a reason you would just stand there forever. And in the case of Adam there are moral consequences to his choice, consequences that God told him would happen if he ate. Consequences that God also told Eve. So, neither of them could appeal to ignorance for the reason for their acts. When I was a young boy I was up to bat in a baseball game at school. The count was three balls and no strikes. One of my teammates whispered to me that I should take the next pitch. So, I took it and hit it and made an out. I was ignorant that to take a pitch meant to let it go by. But neither Adam nor Eve could make that claim.

Another suggestion is that because God is the only perfect being and we are mere creatures we will inevitably sin because we are finite beings. Aside from the fact that nothing in scripture says or even suggest this, there is the insurmountable problem that if that were the case we could not be held morally culpable for our sin. But the Bible tells us that we are culpable when it says that the wages of sin is death. And God has put within us a conscience that tells us when we do wrong and that we deserve whatever punishment we get for our deeds.

What can we then say about the existence of evil. First, evil is not good. Second, it is nevertheless good that there is evil or God would not have allowed its being. Joseph in Genesis chapter 50 responds to his brothers "*As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive.*" An even greater example is Christ on the cross. The greatest evil there will ever be resulted in our salvation. One other thing is that the existence of evil points to the fact that there is good. Evil is only revealed as evil in contrast to good. Brothers and sisters we know that our sovereign Lord works all things for good for those who are called according to His purposes (Romans 8:28). And when Christ returns He will rid the universe of all evil, forever. There will be no more pain, no more sorrow and no more sin. Hallelujah, for the Lord our God the almighty reigns!

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES AT FSBC

February

- 4 Potluck Fellowship (12:45 p.m.)
- 5 Church Council (6:30 p.m.)
- 10 Walk Through The Bible @ CVBC (9:00 a.m.)
- 19 Presidents Day Offices Closed No MDO
- 25 Business Meeting (5:30 p.m.)
- 27 Sunday School Teachers' Training (6:30 p.m.)

March

- 1-2 Awana Youth Expedition Weekend
- 3 Pot Luck Fellowship (12:45 p.m.)
- 3-10 Week of Prayer for Annie Armstrong
- 10 Daylight Savings Starts
- 11 Ladies' Ministry Team Meeting (6:30 p.m.)
- 19 Sunday School Teachers' Training (6:30 p.m.)
- 24 Palm Sunday
- 25-30 No School Spring Break, No Awana, No MDO
- 29 Lord's Supper
- 31 Easter Sunday

What is Love?

We regularly read about God's love in scripture, and we hear about it all the time in sermons. It must therefore be important to know what love actually is. It is very easy to mix ideas from our culture with what God says and obtain an incorrect understanding of love. Love is not a feeling or an emotion. Feelings and emotion may accompany love and often do but they are not the measure of what love is. Love is an action that benefits someone else regardless of the cost to the one who has the love. The Bible does not define love by saying that God has warm feelings for us. It says, *God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten son that whosoever believes in Him might not perish but have everlasting life.* Though our love can never rise to the level of the Lord's it can have the idea of sacrifice to benefit someone else. Saying you love someone is only meaningful and true when you actions demonstrate your love.

Music Ministry

Over the past several months, many youthful members of our church have faithfully participated in our Sunday morning worship service. Some are singing with the Praise Team, some provided dramatic readings during our Christmas service. Recently we were also highly blessed to have Elijah Grohs play in the place of Diane Noland as our only worship accompanist. On that Sunday, Diane and Steve were traveling and, as it happened, Sarah Gregory was taken ill that Sunday morning and could not come to church.

Elijah came to our rescue and amazed us all with his calm and confident talents. He will be providing accompaniment in March of this year again. Although it is fitting that we recognize Elijah for helping us on an extraordinarily short notice, we must also recognize all those who have become fixtures in our worship time. I'd like to ask our membership to go out of their way in the coming weeks to thank all of our youth who lead us in worship on Sundays. I also want to thank the parents who are encouraging their children and teens to be a part of our worship in "spirit and in truth."



Garry Harper
Music Minister

Hostess Committee

We have 4 volunteer ladies and 3 others that do flowers, decorations and clean-up on our committee. We are responsible for all potlucks, funeral dinners and when asked on any other special occasions that may arise.

We do request that all foods provided by our church family be completely ready to serve when brought. Also, we ask that EACH piece of your serving dishes be marked with your name.

We will provide note cards to list main ingredients if needed. We are happy to volunteer in this special way to provide a blessed time of fellowship and getting to know each other better!

Thank you ALL who provide such a delicious bounty!

Carol Ellis, Committee Chairwoman



Joke of the Month (Comedy) Corner

An impoverished old man applied for membership in a wealthy church. The pastor tried to put him off with all kinds of evasive remarks. The old man became aware that he was not welcome there and finally told the pastor that he would pray about it. After several days he returned. "Well," asked the pastor, "Did the Lord give you a message?" "Yes Sir, He did" was the old man's answer. "He told me it wasn't any use. He said, "I've been trying to get in that same church myself for ten years and they won't let me in either."



February Birthdays

1 Annabelle Brooks
3 Sophia Postelnick
3 Chad Zachary
4 Mark Barnes
4 Doris Laffoon
7 Jaydin Blair
9 Cortana Farnham
9 Daniel Kelley
9 Molly Weaver
10 Gavriel Nagel
10 Don Nesbitt
10 Grace Ferch



12 Callandor Franham
13 Holly Phillips
13 Brent Miller
14 Amber Blair
17 Patrick Holt
17 Roland Simler
19 Vincent Brooks
21 Rebecca Martinez
22 Wesley White
23 Margaret Berry
26 Rita Kanady
28 Michele Ring

March Birthdays

9 Aurora Farnham
10 Elayne Baszler
11 Nicole Clark
17 Blake Rosenbaum
18 Bunni Farnham
23 Rebecka Anders

23 Ryan Strong
27 James Gregory
27 Fernando Solis
28 Manuelito Brooks
28 Tasha White
28 Louise Carroll

Anniversaries

14 David & Linda Heath
19 John & Shannon Crowe



3/5 Gerry & Betty Finley
4/1 Victor & Samantha Nostrom