

December
2010

Prepare Them in the Gospel

(This article supports our discussions Sunday evenings concerning “Being a Christian Family” and emphasizing the gospel in our homes)

“Lions and tigers and bears, O my!” That’s not only one of the more memorable lines from cinematic history; it’s one of the more recognizable themes in contemporary discipleship. Sometimes fear of the enemies to our faith seems much more pronounced than faith in the object of our faith — the Lord Jesus Christ.

We can ill afford to be naive about the “schemes of our enemy” — the prowling, roaring lion,



seeking to devour ([2 Cor. 2:11](#); [1 Peter 5:8](#)).

Only an abusive parent or an irresponsible church doesn’t seek to protect

the lambs of Jesus. Moreover, we can ill afford naiveté about the glory and grace of Jesus — the Lion of the tribe of Judah. We are called to a discipleship that is proactive rather than reactive — engaging rather than escaping — one filled with faith, not crippled by fear.

So what’s the connection between a concern to protect our kids from the dangers of life in our fallen world and a commitment to prepare them to live as kingdom-servants in that very same world — the world Jesus is committed to renew and restore?

In my first season of vocational ministry, I erred on the side of protection. Influenced by bad eschatology, a pragmatic gospel, a dualistic worldview, and paranoid parents, I thought more in terms of helping graduating seniors survive rather than thrive in their first few years out of high school.

But over the past three decades, a greater grasp of the gospel has led me to invest more

in the preparation end of the protection-preparation continuum. For the sake of brevity, I’ll mention three areas that we parents and local parishes should take seriously as we seek to prepare our young people for life in the real world — God’s world.

A Satisfying Gospel Spirituality

Its one thing for our children to be able to defend the faith against false religion, but quite another for them actually to delight in the faith they defend.

As a young convert and collegian, I depended more on the apologetics of Francis Schaeffer and C.S. Lewis than on the power of the gospel “to get me by.” I felt more of a burden to defend God and the Bible than joy and peace in knowing Him. I objectified my professors as adversaries; ignored Paul’s instruction about being kind instead of quarrelsome ([2 Tim. 2:24](#)); and did very little to make the teaching about God our Savior attractive (Titus 2:10).

While we teach our children to believe in the inspiration and authority of the Bible, let’s make sure they are discovering and savoring Jesus in every portion of the inspired Scriptures. Let’s help them know why Jesus is the only way to the Father, but let’s make sure they are feasting on Him as the bread of life and the giver of the water that slakes our deepest thirst. If the increase of wickedness leads to love growing cold ([Matt. 24:12](#)), then let’s stoke the fires of gospel affection rather than simply lamenting the increase of wickedness (Ps. 63:3–4).

A Robust Biblical Sexuality

The world into which God calls our children is sexually broken. Of course, covenant children need to be aware of sexual temptations as they move into the next season of life. Of course, they need us to be direct with them about the destructiveness of pornography. Yet before there was broken sexuality there was a life of shameless nakedness ([Gen. 2:25](#)). A bigger issue, of course, for this generation is the need to introduce them to the frolicking goodness, the sensual wonder, and the magnificent beauty of the sexuality for which God designed us.

Do our children sense we are more alarmed over the "gay agenda" than we are excited about the biblical credenda for sex? Do our children have any clue that we, their parents, actually have and enjoy sex? What would cause us more fear and shock: Finding obscene sexual materials on their computers or having them knock on our bedroom door when we're making love? Have our kids ever been taught age-appropriate and context-appropriate truths, images, and metaphors from the Bible about the beauty and joy of sex? We must do this well.

Honest, Grace-Infused Community

Relationships, relationships, meaningful relationships. I don't know of any generation more hungry and more in need of substantive, grace-infused relationships than this one. Not only must we wrap the truth of the gospel around their hearts, we must wrap our arms around them and enter into their brokenness, struggles, and longings (see 1 Thess. 2:8).

As parents, do our children see us still needing the gospel? Are they catching the contagion of repentance as a way of life in our homes? As pastors, mentors, and disciplers, do our parishioners and protégés hear brokenness in our prayers? Do they see vulnerability when they are with us? Are we giving them our hearts or just books and advice on moral reform?

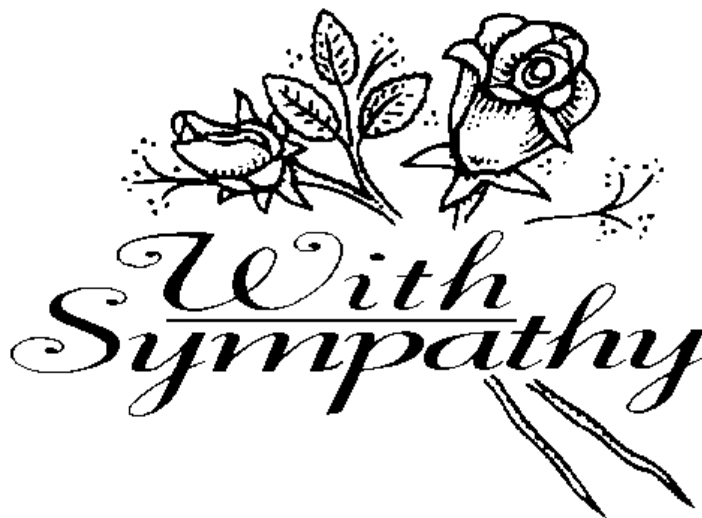
Should the time come when our children find themselves "coming to their senses" in some "far away country," will their inclination be to come and find the welcoming heart of God where we live, or will they avoid the self-righteous elder brother in us?

Maybe the final word is this: Let's protect this upcoming generation of young people by preparing them in the gospel so much earlier and so much more thoroughly than we were. (Emphasis mine)

Scotty Smith is the founding pastor of Christ Community Church (PCA) in Franklin, TN. He now serves as Pastor of Preaching, Teaching and Worship. This article first appeared at the Ligonier Ministries web site and is used with their permission.

In His Service

Pastor Tim



Sympathy is extended to Craig Pugh and family in the recent loss of his father, Wade Pugh.

Here and There at New Sterling!!!!!!!



Lauren Gryder had an accident on I-40 coming home one weekend - Praise no injuries.....**Mark Elliott** has been dealing with kidney stones.....**Marvin Bennett** is back at Fort Brag. He is having some back problems and will have surgery probably after the first of the year.....**Tony Harper, Jeff McNeely and Steve Stewart** were elected as Elders.....**Anthony Brady, Kevin Brown, Barbara McClure and Brian Setzer** were elected as Deacons.....The **Women's Ministry** gave **Kattie Compton Johnson** a bridal shower recently.....**Eddie & Lori Compton, Justin, Hannah, Emma and Jaxon Moore, Roy and Cora Poovey** recently vacationed in Sarasota, Florida.....New Amity ARP Church held a baby shower for **Katy Blevins Campbell** on November 13.....The Community Thanksgiving Service was held at New Sterling.....Ask **Jeanette Hauck** what vegetable starts with the letter "D".....**Kim and David Brady** recently traveled to Belize.....**Stacy Mrazek** is going to be an Aunt!!!!.....**Carolyn Byers** had surgery recently.....When **Cindy McNeely** must clearly state the name of her animal that starts with the letter "A" so there is no mistaking when she has said.....Why does **Kim Elliott's** girls not understand when she tells them to "Go to the truck"!!!!.....**Derek and Julie Winters** celebrated the Big 40 (both of them) with family at a spaghetti supper at **Marcia and Jimmy Winters**. **Julie's** parents celebrated with them.....**Reid and Peggy Gray** celebrated their 55th anniversary in Abingdon, VA at the Martha Washington Hotel and Barter Theatre with the play, "It's A Wonderful Life."



A HEART FOR MARRIAGE: This study will be provided again beginning March 13, 2011 for those who could not attend the first session. It has been a wonderful study for those who participated this last Sunday School session.



Don't forget to notify Pastor Tim of any address changes, phone number changes or if you would like to have your email address and /or cell number added.



THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON

The Sterling Silvers enjoyed a delicious meal on Monday November 7th, catered by Greg's Barbecue. The Fellowship Hall was lovely with the colors of autumn showed in silk flowers and candles. Our meal included turkey, dressing, cranberry sauce, green beans, yams, cornbread, blackberry cobbler and grave which was "especially good" because Dr. Earl drove all the way back to Greg's to get the missing gravy. We had an inspiring program led by Betty Godfrey and Juanita Massey. What a great time of fun and fellowship!



Picture front to back: Mabel Brady, Virginia Brady, Harriet Linderman, Pauline Charles, Meldirene Pope, Minnie Pope, Florence Brookshire, Juanita Massey, Betty Godfrey, Pat Sherrill, Wayne Waugh, Jim Snyder, Frank Emery and Dr. Earl Linderman.



COMING EVENTS

December 2	7:00 pm	Session Meeting
December 5		Ordination and Installation of Officers
	5:00 pm	C3 Practice
	6:00 pm	Children's Play Practice
December 7	6:30 pm	Women's Ministries Salad Supper
December 10	6:00 pm	Youth Christmas Party/Lock-in and Caroling
December 12		Annual Congregational Meeting
	5:00 pm	C3 Practice
	6:00 pm	Children's Play Practice
	7:00 pm	Session Study Group, Chapters 12 & 13
December 13	10:30 am	Sterling Silvers—Bring your own sandwich and a \$10 gift
	6-9 pm	Pack shoeboxes in Charlotte
December 19	11:00 am	Choir Cantata
	7:00 pm	Children's Play
		Newsletter Items due
December 24	7:00 pm	Christmas Candlelight Service
December 25		CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF OUR SAVOIR



December 26 Rada Knife Orders Due



"Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room"

The Old Testament prophets who wrote about the coming Messiah foresaw His coming like we see a range of mountains from far away. They wrote about things that would happen and things the Messiah would do when He came. But from far away, they couldn't understand that Christ would accomplish some of those things the first time He came, and others when He comes again, at a time even further in the future. Many Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah are still awaiting fulfillment. So just as the people of Israel longed for the Messiah to come, we long for Him to come again. Jesus said that the whole world will see His coming on the clouds of heaven with great glory at a time when we least expect it.



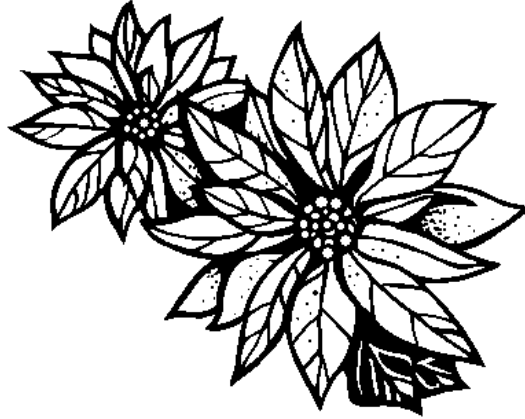
“...and his name shall be called **Emmanuel** (which means, God is with us).”

—Matthew 1:23

As Christmas approaches, let us set aside time in our homes to focus on what God's Word tells us about the promises of Christ. Contact Pastor Tim or a member of the Evangelism and Membership Committee if you need devotional materials. We are wholeheartedly encouraging the families of our church to begin having daily devotions in their homes and will help to provide materials and support as needed. Now is the time to prepare our hearts, and those of our children, for eternal life with Jesus. Revelation 22:7 gives us His words, "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this Book." Is there room in your heart--and time in your schedule--for Jesus? Written by the Evangelism and Membership Committee, with excerpts from the book, Let Every Heart Prepare Him Room, by Nancy Guthrie

DECEMBER BIRTH-

2 Betty Sides
3 Linda Harper
4 Larry Watts
5 Tena Campbell
5 Pressly Reese
5 Betty Thorne
10 Pat Price
12 Barbara McClure
12 Clark Milholland
14 Phyllis Shoemaker
14 Dalton Winters
15 Anthony Brady
16 Dorothy Beatty



17 Doris McNeely
18 Dawn Keller
19 Jim Snyder
22 Craig Pugh
23 Olean Deal
26 Peggy Gray
26 Adrian Jarrett
27 Lori Pope
30 Ed Henderson
31 Juanita Massey

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