



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FAIRDALE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

JUNE / 2023



It has been nearly six months since we started using Psalm 67 as our Call to Worship during our Sunday morning service. If you have been here most Sunday mornings of 2023, there's a good chance you have this psalm memorized. Even if you don't have it memorized, the hope is that the Holy Spirit has used the truths found in this passage of Scripture to mold your heart to be more like the heart of God.

As mentioned in our January newsletter, one of the key themes of this psalm is the desire for all people to know and exalt God. This desire was not only for the Jews who had been known as God's people for centuries, but also for "the nations" – people, in the words of Revelation 7:9, "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages." All the way from Genesis, through the Psalms, to the New Testament, God reveals to us that his salvation is for all people.

Additionally, God invites us as followers of Jesus to be a part of this plan of salvation for all people. At the end of Matthew and then again in Acts, Jesus commands his followers to make disciples "of all nations" and "to the ends of the earth." In 1 Peter 3, believers are instructed to be "prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks...for a reason for the hope that is in [them]" and Paul instructs in 2 Timothy to "preach the word; be ready in season and out of season."

Our church participates in this mission of God in a variety of ways. Individually, we often hear stories of our church members sharing the gospel with their coworkers, friends, and neighbors. As a church, we support missionaries and church planters both locally and abroad through our giving. One of our pastors, Josh Wamble, works full-time with Reaching and Teaching International Ministries to help educate and support pastors and churches

around the world. Marcus and Rachel Leman were sent out from our church to help translate scripture into local languages through Wycliff Bible Translators. We have several other families in our church who are in the process of moving towards full-time international ministry.

Finally, we have our team leaving for Ecuador in just a few weeks. For a variety of reasons, we have been unable to send a team since 2019 and we are highly anticipating a return to Camp Chacauco and the people of Ecuador. Please pray for the health and unity of the team, safety during travel, and political and social peace in Ecuador. Pray that the Holy Spirit would be preparing hearts to hear and respond to the gospel and that God would strengthen those who have made preaching the gospel in Ecuador their lives' work. Above all, pray that God's "saving power among all the nations" would be known by all people.

Don't Waste Your Summer

Josh Wamble | Pastor

This time of year always brings excitement with it! Schools are dismissed for the summer. Families plan and take vacations together. Family and friends often spend time enjoying the lake, camping, cooking out, going to the pool, golfing or playing sports. Even for adults, it seems like some responsibilities ease up a little and there is more time for fun and relaxation.

Unfortunately, at the end of summer, we sometimes find ourselves wondering where the time went. Each year, it seems like the summer break for kids gets shorter and shorter. Before long, the next school semester will be starting, we will be putting the grill up for the season, and life will be back to the regular routine. If you are not careful, you may find yourself asking what happened to all the free time and why you were not more productive.

I want to encourage you to not waste your summer. Of course, spending lots of good quality time with your friends and family is not a waste of time at all, and I don't want to suggest that it is. However, in addition to the time spent with family and friends, the leisurely days and weeks of summer present a prime opportunity for spiritual growth as well—for individuals but also for families. There are lots of ways that you could plan out your summer so that you can have all the fun and relaxation that we look forward to and also spend some deliberate time growing spiritually as well.

- You could get to know neighbors by inviting them over for a cookout or backyard games. You could allow your kids to play with other kids in the neighborhood and develop relationships with those who live around you. In addition to making new relationships or strengthening

old ones, pray that God would open opportunities for you to share your faith with those who live near you.

- You and your family could spend some time serving others. Our church's food pantry ministry provides lots of opportunities for adults and kids to serve on Tuesday morning or Wednesday afternoons. This wouldn't have to be an ongoing commitment, but even helping out one or two weeks during the summer would be beneficial. You could also commit a day or part of a day volunteering at a homeless shelter or pregnancy resource center. There are lots of ways that you and your family could serve your church and your community together.

- You could deliberately read a book of the Bible together as a family or memorize scripture together.

- You could choose to read another book together as a family or have different family members read different books and then share what they learned with the rest of the family. Short biographies of historical Christian figures are great for this.

- The summer would be a great time to start a new nighttime or morning routine with your family—praying together, having a family devotion, family game night, watching wholesome movies together, or a combination of these things.

However you end up spending your summer, we hope that it will be a good one for you and your family. Whatever things you do together, we hope that you will not waste these next few weeks and months.

BEING A CHURCH THAT PRAYS

This month, let us pray for the men in our church.

Pray that:

- they would know Jesus as Lord and that they would be growing to be more like Him.
- they would grow in their understanding and knowledge of God's word.
- that they would grow in their prayer life and dependence on God.
- our church would equip men to do the work of the ministry.
- men who are married would love their wives.
- men who are fathers would care for and discipline their children.
- men who are mourning would be comforted.
- all men would "have strength to comprehend...the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ." (Eph. 3:18-19)

Strength in Weakness: Hope for our Humanity

Mary Catherine Anderson | Director of Nursery

As many of you know, the last 18 months have been a time of transition in our family. In January of 2022, I took on an expanded role at church beyond just nursery responsibilities. Then in August, after 6 years of homeschooling, our girls enrolled in traditional school for the first time. Overall, these changes have been wonderful for our family. I love being able to use my gifts and talents to serve our church and the girls have thrived in the classroom setting. But as with any good change, there have been challenges. We are learning to balance a busier calendar than ever before and figuring out how to manage our home when we're not there nearly as often. One thing I'm learning more than ever is that I can't do it all.

This is not the first time I've had to learn this lesson. The newborn days very distinctly stand out in my mind. But as with most truths, we tend to forget. We may forget God's goodness during a particularly hard season of suffering. We may forget the forgiveness and righteousness of Christ when we are struggling with a particularly besetting sin. We may forget the hope of our future glory in the new heavens and the new earth when we see so much evil around us. Or like me, we may let pride in our own strength creep in and forget our own limits and the omnipotence and omnipresence of God.

When life is busy and we have many requests and demands for our time, we think that if we can just figure it out – create the right routine, find the right calendar, get up at the right time - then we can get it all done. Or maybe we do have the skills and the stamina to manage it all – most of the time – but then sickness or exhaustion or an emergency happens, and all the spinning plates fall. We forget that unlike God, we are not all powerful and we can't be everywhere all the times.

Humans are made in the image of God and share several of his attributes (if in a more imperfect, finite sense) – we can love, we are creative, we have a sense of justice, we can show mercy and forgiveness, just to name a few. However, there are many attributes of God that we can never share in – omnipotence and omnipresence being two examples. God has power over all things in all ways. This is his omnipotence. He is present everywhere. This is his omnipresence. As humans, we are not omnipotent or omnipresent. God has created us and given us limitations. Certainly there may be times that these limitations are frustrating and they are often exacerbated by the sin and fallen nature of

the world, but I have learned during this season of life that, just like everything else in our lives, these limitations are for our good and God's glory.

First these limits help us learn more about God and who he is. As I mentioned, when we recognize our own lack of unlimited strength and ability, we can see even more clearly the greatness and magnificence of our God. Isaiah 40 is an excellent passage illustrating this concept. The passage starts by speaking of Israel's need for comfort, then points out the weakness and finite nature of humanity - "all flesh is grass and all its beauty is like the flower of the field...the grass withers and the flower fades..." (vs. 6 & 8). It doesn't just end there though – Isaiah then declares that "the word of our God will stand forever" (v. 8). He speaks through the rest of the passage of God's mighty power over all creation and towards the end declares, "Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable." (v. 28). When we know and understand God more fully, we can praise and glorify him more fully.

Our limitations teach us about God, but they also help us to depend on him. After meditating on the frailty of humanity and the greatness of God, Isaiah reminds his audience that "they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." (v. 31). When we recognize our own weakness, it allows us to acknowledge our need for God. This goes beyond just our physical endurance, but more importantly to our souls. We must recognize our own inability to live up to and obey God's commands perfectly. When we wait on the Lord and look to Jesus, we can trust that his power and might will save us, not our own strength.

So when you are tempted to be frustrated by your own human limitations and the effects of the fall - the inability to get everything done, the need for rest, the forgotten appointment, the chronic illness and pain - remember that, "As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust" (Psalm 103:13-14). He created us with limitations and only he can sustain us through the difficulties and frustrations of life. Only he is able to save us when we fail to measure up. Praise God - for when we are weak, then He is strong!