

KEEPING THE FOCUS

Amid the turmoil of our current culture, it is easy to lose sight. The political climate is a mess, the socioeconomic fractures are widening, inflation is taking its toll on every household, crime is at a high, and even the condition of our Southern Baptist Association is certainly less than acceptable. With all this, it is an arduous task to maintain a forward focus of joy and hope in the steadfastness of God. But take heart, we are not in any new circumstance. Three recorded persons in Bible history can certainly empathize with us in this season: Peter in the storm, Paul in affliction more than once, and John isolated on the island of Patmos; each contains in themselves and overlaps one another the greatness of God through all of this.

Peter was a man of boldness (Thanks, Tony B.), a fisherman with skill with a knife. He probably had stories of storms he had endured as he propped up on the boat's bow, overlooking the day's catch. Imagine a day in a fishing tournament or at the hunting lodge when you were on top. Peter knew these days, I'm confident, because fishing was his life; when the Savior had been crucified, and his hope waned, it was the very comfort he returned to. (Jn 21:3) He was a man's man, tough, bold, and even a little arrogant; never was he known to be afraid of a little storm. But this particular evening, as he and the others were crossing to Capernaum, they were in a strong storm, a fearful storm, and Jesus, the one who has authority over wind and water and all things, came walking across this terrible sea, revealing who he was as the Son of God. In his boldness, Peter called out, believing that if Christ willed, as God, Peter too could walk on water. You know the rest of the story; as long as Peter kept his eyes on the Master, he was secure, but as he was dismayed by the chaos around him, he began to sink. Does the world have your attention?

Paul likewise endured many trials: shipwrecks, beatings, starvation, coldness, the memory of his past, imprisonment, some unknown "thorn in the flesh," and sickness. Yet he endured all this, keeping his eyes focused on the eternal reward placed before him. As a runner with his vision on the finish line of a marathon or a shipwrecked sailor with an island in the distance who, as his body fails and fatigue sets in, finds within himself the strength to press on, Paul endured all that the world, the enemy for the Christian, had to throw at him. Perhaps you are fighting a battle of health and see no path of healing, yet the Father knows your every thought and affliction; in Christ, he is molding you into perfection. Keep your eye on the ball!

John also, the only Apostle to die of old age, found himself isolated on Patmos, unsure of what lay ahead. He had been beaten for Christ, poisoned for preaching, and banished to an island of criminals, left to die. This season, John received the glorious vision of the Son of Man's triumphant return in full glory. When he was the most isolated, and helpless in his own strength to change, God revealed himself and unveiled what lay ahead. I know some of us are in the season of aloneness; death has taken your mate, a close friend, a parent, or possibly a child, but you don't have to be lonely. Jesus promised to never leave us.

The joy of the Lord is not conditional of life's ebb and flow. In the midst of all of these aforementioned trials and whatever you find yourself in, the faithfulness of God never wanes, he is the epitome of faithfulness. I close with Psalm 30:2-5, *O LORD my God, I cried to you for help, and you have healed me. O LORD, you have brought up my soul from Sheol; you restored me to life from among those who go down to the pit. Sing praises to the LORD, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name. For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.* Great is his faithfulness! Keep your eye on Him.

NHBC SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER



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September 1st, 2023



Sunday Schedule

8am Men's Prayer
8:45am Sunday School
10am Worship
5pm Men/Women's Bible Studies

Wednesday Schedule

5:45pm Dinner
6pm Bible Studies

Office Hours: Tue-Thurs, 9am-3pm

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New Home Connections

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Romans 15:4-5

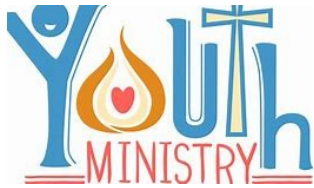
4For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. 5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus,

We all get caught up in the snare of letting the busyness of life distract us from what is important. We get focused on anything and everything but God's word. We have our Bibles (or an app on our phones) when we are at Church, and then lay them aside the rest of the week.

Our focus for the summer and at Camp, has been to get the Youth to build the discipline of reading their Bible daily, not just opening them on Wednesdays and Sundays while someone else reads to them. As someone who has never really liked just sitting down reading, I understand the struggle. The thing that made a difference in developing a daily reading discipline was others involved to hold me accountable. But I have also learned that it has to be intentional. I have to think about it each day and when I do, I have to act and not put it off. I wish I could say I have a set time for this, but I am not there yet. Read, meditate, pray. Satan will distract us any way he can to keep us from this practice.

It has made a difference in my life, and I know it will also impact the lives of the Youth. So in closing I would like to encourage parents and grandparents to help them build this discipline at home. Most of us will never develop disciplines like this on our own. It might even help you build or strengthen your discipline as well. And ask them to hold you accountable in helping them as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve your family!



Women's Ministry

Hello Ladies and Happy September!! It's my favorite time of the year again!! All the -ber months!! And I am so excited they are finally here!! I just love all things fall!! It really is beautiful!! Oh the cooler weather cannot get here fast enough and the leaves changing colors are so beautiful! I do believe every season is a reminder of our Creator and how AWESome He is, but fall is my favorite!! Thank you Jesus for the beauty in fall!! Can you tell I'm excited!?

With all that being said I am excited to start making plans for our annual Fall Festival!! It is set October 28th, from 9 am to 4 pm at the Sewell Property but we need to start planning now!! Please be in prayer about what you can do to help it be a great outreach for our community for the glory of God!! We will certainly need all hands on deck for this event. Please let me know if you are interested in volunteering your time and/or talents!!

I would also like to invite all of you to attend our monthly Refresh Women's Ministry meetings!! We meet the first Monday of each month (the month of September we will meet the second Monday of the month due to the Labor Day Holiday) and fellowship and talk about ways we can encourage and love on one another as a church family. We eat dinner, we have announcements of things going on in the church that we need to be a part of, we have discussion of things that we need to act on, and sometimes we throw in a craft or a game night as well!! It really is a great time of fellowship with our sisters in Christ!!

We have also started a Blessing Basket outreach where we put together gift baskets for those in need of a pick me up, a blessing!! It, for me, has been a blessing to give a blessing to Sister's in Christ. I hope it has been for all those who have been involved as well and I thank you for your involvement, which is also a blessing. If you know of someone in need of a blessing, please do not hesitate to let me know!!

And last but surely not the least, I want to invite you all, from the youngest to the oldest, to Bible study on Sunday nights at 5 pm. The ladies meet in the Family Life Center. We are studying in the book of James currently. I myself love to study the Word of God with other believers!! It makes my heart glad to learn together and to grow spiritually together and to share what God has taught us through the study of His Word together, and I hope it makes your heart glad too!! Please join us!! We would love to see you there!!

Please feel free to contact me anytime at 334-451-2347 with any need or concern you may have and I will be happy to do my best to help, encourage, and love on you!!

Happy Fall Ya'!!!

Blessings to you and all for His glory,

Carmen Nixon