

The Faith Watch

Published by Faith Baptist Church

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Vol 7, No. 2 *Independent, Fundamental, Unaffiliated, KJV 1611* Jun 2007

TOO FINE TO BE FIT TOO GREAT TO BE GOOD

by Pastor Stan Gustafson

God desires His born again people to live lives of tremendous spiritual achievement, transformation and satisfaction. The Christian existence is to be miraculous as the believer moves from wonder to wonder beyond anything he or she thought possible. The very fact that Scripture tells us we are new creatures with all things having become new assures us the possibilities are limitless. Paul's testimony in Philippians 4:13 in which he declares, "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" indicates to us that through the indwelling Savior we can attain anything necessary ... anything!

The greatest obstacle to this Christian success is me. Self has no place in the realm of the spiritual. All of my development is halted when I attempt to help God to help me. God desires to make believers fit for His service, but if any think they are fine within themselves, they can never be made fit. And God wants to make something good of us, but the thought that we already possess greatness means that no divine good will be forthcoming. Any self-glory, self-effort, self-sufficiency means death to Christian growth.

Paul said in Romans 7:18, "*For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh)*

dwelleth no good thing." As an individual I possess nothing profitable within myself that might aid in my spiritual advancement. If no good thing dwells within me, what could I offer the Lord? Could I offer my intellect? The Bible says that my mind needs to be renewed. Might I offer my heart? (Surely I have a good heart!) Scripture tells me it is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. I am my own worst enemy. The only thing for me to do is to get out of the way and completely trust God as my sufficiency. Listen to Galatians 5:22-24, "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance ... And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.*" Let us notice three things evident in this passage:

1. The potential of the Christian life is seen in these qualities.

All believers can and should have them. How wonderful and powerful!

2. This fruit comes from the Holy Spirit, not from the believer.

All desirable traits come from the Trinity to us.

3. To allow this process I must reckon myself dead.

The lusts that dwell within me can only prevent these good things from ripening in my life.

A strange and horrible thing has happened in many ministries. Whereas in times past it was almost universally pressed upon congregations to crucify the fleshly nature, surrender to God and let Him make something of us, we now hear more and more about our basic inherent goodness. Preachers used to stress the biblical concepts of submission and yieldedness. Now the theme is to reach your full potential, to hone the goodness you already have. Listen to some statements from the website of a church here in Moline:

** "Human beings have a spark of divinity within them, the Christ spirit within. Their very essence is of God, and therefore they are inherently good."*

** "Will is your ability to align your personal will with God's will and then to let your powers manifest that good through you."*

** "Life is given to you to manifest the truth and beauty of yourself in God's wonderful universe,"*

A careful check of the wording tells us that this is a perfect example of teaching the self-potential of humankind. Notice: We are all inherently good. Will is your ability to align ... and then to let your powers manifest. You are to manifest your truth and beauty. While these humanistic tenets play well in many places, they are the death knell to genuine spiritual power.

Jesus Christ, in talking to His disciples, spoke in John chapter fifteen about the source of all Christian potential. He uses the illustration of a branch growing on a vine. The believer is the

branch and Christ Himself is the vine. The potent lessons from the passage are as follows:

1. The Christian can not bear fruit of himself. (v4- *As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*) The branch has no inherent potential, but must rely upon the vine for its productivity.

2. The Christian is inherently capable of nothing. (v5- *I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*) It is our relationship with Christ which brings fruitfulness in our lives. We can add nothing of ourselves to aid in this.

3. In the absence of Christ's power we become as refuse. (v6- *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*) This does not represent hellfire but the absolute uselessness of a believer out of close fellowship with His Lord.

This is an ego-busting and pride-killing truth, but ego and pride are sins especially hateful to God. These traits indicate that an individual is self-conscious, self-glorifying and self-sufficient. It is a sure indicator that such a believer is operating under his own power and therefore has forfeited the power of God for growth in his life. We can easily see the damage caused by self-affirming ministries such as the one mentioned above. By leading people into the belief of self-goodness they are led to deny the need of absolute dependence upon the Lord. Genuine growth in grace is

then impossible. To be used of God we must first acknowledge that we are useless. To be of value to Him we must admit to ourselves that we have nothing of value to offer. Listen to Paul again from Galatians 2:20- *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* The death of self is paramount to living for Christ!

Charles Spurgeon gives us a good illustration on this point. "*A blacklead pencil is of no use at all till it is cut; the fine cedar wood must be cut away; and then the inward metal which marks and writes will have fair play. Brethren, the knife of affliction is sharp, but salutary; you cannot delight in it, but faith may teach you to value it.*"

There is a common theme I hear in the many prayer meetings I enjoy with the men of our church. Often I hear others in prayer ask God to help them to get out of the way of His work that they not hinder it. I overhear men ask God to crush them into submission, to work in spite of themselves, to aid in the crucifixion of the flesh. They desire the fine cedar wood of that pencil be cut away (typical of the flesh) so that the instrument which resides inside (typical of the Holy Spirit) can be revealed. This is most encouraging to any pastor. The more in earnest any Christian becomes about spiritual growth, power and usability the less and less he thinks he can do anything about it himself. Thoughts of personal fitness and greatness perish, and there is a desire to fulfill

Mt. 16:24 - If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT...

by John O'Melia

Recently, I have been reading a book that has a collection of theories that some Christians have proposed to show possible scenarios of end time prophecy being fulfilled. This is not science or biblical proof in the way we get to the end, merely a plethora of possibilities that seem to fit into the trend of recent events. Now to what we know: during the end times, the Bible says we will be under the control of a one world order.

In Second Thessalonians 2:10-12 it says: *And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that **they should believe a lie**: That they **all** might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* (Read all of Chapter 2 for context)

In Revelation 13:6,8 it says: *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And **all** that dwell upon the earth **shall** worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

It will be a highly centralized system with one world leader. To many, this may seem like an impossible thing. After all, how could so many people from different ethnic, social and eco-

conomic backgrounds come together in this day and age to have this prophecy fulfilled? The way in which we move "forward" to these end times may be derived from looking back. To answer that question, we have to consider our most basic physiological needs... food, water and shelter. We will focus on the first item listed for this article...food. Who controls the food supply around the world today? For up to and including the last century, we humans have existed by growing, gathering and hunting for the food that sustains us. What you could grow, gather or kill in the area in which you lived (or wandered), would dictate what you ate. While the growing, gathering and hunting are part of God's order in supplying us with our needs, the "growing" has become a somewhat different situation. For years, farmers that worked the land and grew the crops have provided their own seed to begin their new growing season. It was feasible for farmers to go generations without ever having to purchase new seeds. In the US, they would simply reseed in the spring with a fraction of the crops harvested from the previous fall. A recent study showed that 80% of poor and developing countries still use this method as their primary means of starting their crops in the new growing season. This is quite ingenious on God's part to set it up that way.

The Bible states in Genesis 1:11-12 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb **yielding seed**, and the fruit tree **yielding fruit** after his kind, **whose seed is in itself**, upon the earth: **and it was so**. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb **yielding seed** after his kind, and the tree **yielding fruit**,

whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

But the last few decades have seen an explosion of genetically engineered seeds in the marketplace. While these seeds advertise that they offer superior quality, resistance to weeds and insects and add to the farmer's bottom line profits, they **do not** necessarily reseed themselves. (There is plenty of skepticism regarding their other claims as well) Corporations build in to their genetically engineered seeds, sterilization technology called "terminator" or "suicide seeds." That is to say, they only produce once. This requires that new genetically modified seeds must be purchased each year in order to start your next crop.

Now, who **currently** controls this market?

It is controlled by large multinational corporations.

Who, in **end times** will control this market?

You guess! I'll give you a clue...who always wants a piece of the action when it comes to enormous amounts of money and control?

While I certainly do not subscribe to all his beliefs, Alan Durant of the *Socialist Appeal*, issue 77 March 2000 raises some interesting points outlined below. He states that proponents of genetically modified (GM) food argue that this has been practiced for decades, when in reality it is only in the last couple decades that we have taken a leap "forward" by incorporating genetic material from one species into another to

give new or desirable traits to the recipient. While this may sound good on the surface, there are some red flags flying high. Not the least of which is, that genes may control several different traits in a plant. So when seeds are modified, they may also get undesirable characteristics, along with that which was intended. The possibilities for trouble here are nearly endless and too much to go into in this format.

Corporate giants in this arena, including Monsanto (which has acquired smaller seed companies such as Dekalb), Pioneer (which has been acquired by DuPont), DuPont and others claim that this technology will enable them to "feed the world." However, their seeds generally require high-quality soils, an enormous investment in machinery and equipment and an increase in the use of chemicals, pesticides, etc. (which, by the way, is sold by these same multinational companies). This doesn't bode so well for the world, which mostly consists of poor farmers attempting to "eek out" an existence in their villages and feed their own families. It favors the large corporate farms with the resources to handle these large capital investments.

According to Durant, if their true intent was to "feed the world" they would be developing seeds that would:

- 1) grow in sub-standard or marginal soil.
- 2) produce high-quality protein seeds with increased per acre yield without the need for expensive machinery, chemicals, fertilizers or irrigation systems.
- 3) favor small farmers over large farmers. (After all, the greatest need to "feed the world", as these companies claim, is in impoverished nations

and small villages where people die by the hundreds and thousands for the lack of an adequate and safe food supply.)

4) provide low cost seed (or "free" Durant proposes) without licensing and patent issues interfering.

5) focus on crops that feed people. The vast majority currently produced is for feed for "meat" animals.

Another article questioning the intent of these "feed the world" corporations was in *Nutrition Action Health Letter* dated November 2001. According to Doug Gurian-Sherman, when asked if "Miracle Seeds" (a special form of genetically modified seeds) were designed to boost corporate profits or to feed the world he stated that:

"As companies patent genetically engineered seeds, they gain control over the world's food supply. And mergers concentrate that control in even fewer corporate hands. That could narrow the gene pool of the major food crops, leaving them vulnerable to rare disease or uncommon insect pests. And it could allow biotechnology companies to exert pressure on food prices worldwide."

Both Mr. Durant and Mr. Gurian-Sherman bring up some interesting points. By all accounts, the food supply seems to be funneling into the control of a few. This can become a volatile situation. That just leaves "Big Brother" to step in and seize, regulate or take over control. This is a giant leap to centralized food supply. The fewer hands the control of the food supply is in, the easier it will be for the "deceiver" to take over in *end times*.

If you don't believe the devastating effect of a food shortage, man-made or otherwise, cut off or ration people's food supply and you will get to witness pandemonium firsthand. In the aftermath of hurricane Katrina, people were "looting and shooting" each other over the limited food supply remaining. While this hurricane was a devastating event by nearly all standards, it was equivalent to a few grains of sand on a very large beach, relatively speaking, that a worldwide food shortage would create. There is one account after another in the Bible referencing famine and the effects it has on people.

In Ezekiel 5:16-17 it states: *When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for their destruction, and which I will send to destroy you: and I will increase the famine upon you, and will break your staff of bread: So will I send upon you famine and evil beasts, and they shall bereave thee; and pestilence and blood shall pass through thee; and I will bring the sword upon thee. I the Lord have spoken it.*

In Matthew 24: 6(b) - 7 Jesus says: *...for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilence, and earthquakes, in diverse places.*

Of course, we have the entire story of Joseph recanted in the latter chapters of Genesis, and how he distributed the food during the famine in Egypt. My question to you is... Do we have a Jo-

seph today?

George Santayana once stated that "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Well that is pretty good advice. God gave us His Word so you can read about it, know it and take it to heart. If you think the Bible is too "old hat", and "that was then and this is now", just look today at third world countries with the death rate and disease associated with shortages and tainted food. It is difficult for us Americans, who go to their supermarkets with the shelves thoroughly stocked with 90 or more varieties of crackers alone from which to pick, to think of a food shortage or rationing. But, flip that box over and take a look at the key ingredients in those products. Really, while it may be an insurmountable amount of "products," if someone were to control a few "key ingredients," things could change in a hurry. At the risk of making the grocery store manager *VERY* angry, take a cart, (you will actually need several) and walk down any packaged goods aisle and throw everything that has wheat, corn, soy beans *and their by-products* as one of its ingredients into the cart. Get to the end of the row and look back at what's left. There won't be much. You say... that still leaves all the fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meat products. Now throw into the works distribution and/or transportation problems maybe caused by runaway fuel prices, terrorist attacks or some unforeseen activities and see what is left. If someone or something were to garner control of those key ingredients, we could have price fixing, shortages etc. at minimum.

Look at our *own nation* in just the last century. During WWI and WWII there was plenty of food rationing (amongst other products) going on with

the US government, offering stamps for limited amounts of red meat and basic staples and getting ordinary Americans to plant gardens to ease pressures on supply and price to help provide food for our troops. Everyone was encouraged to have a "Victory Garden" where they would grow the things that they needed for their own families and people made do with what they had. During WWII, slogans of the time included, "Sow the seeds of victory", "Plant more in '44" "Our food is fighting". This sentiment echoed throughout our nation, finding about 20 million Americans responding to their call for action. It was considered a morale booster to have so many people doing "their part" for the war effort. Yet, this practice was completely *de-centralized*, contrary to the direction we are heading now. Today, so many of us have gotten away from cooking and being able to make a meal from scratch and what is available, that many of us wouldn't know what to do with the raw ingredients, even if we could grow them. In addition, the patriotic unity of our nation has been so severed and we are now so self-indulgent, that I believe, today we would not sacrifice for the "greater good" as our parent's and grandparent's generation did. Again we need to heed the words of scripture and learn from it:

1 Peter 5:8 states: *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.*

As Paul said in II Corinthians 4:3-4: *But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the*

minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

Is our condition, with the narrowing spigot of the food supply, coupled along with our deteriorating societal responsibilities, part of the plan for the end times? I don't know, but, I'm not going to rule it out just yet. I do believe that we need to keep our eyes open to what is happening around us on *all* fronts, not just on the matter of our food supply.

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SERMON OFFER

All of the messages which are preached from the pulpit of Faith Baptist Church are recorded digitally and on cassette tape. Scores of copies are ordered by our people and many are sent to others as a ministry. The messages offered below were preached on March twenty-fifth of this year in the Sunday morning and evening services.

John Roach Straton (1874-1929)

This Sunday morning sermon highlights the life and ministry of a man who pastored in New York at a time when the clash of fundamentalism and liberalism was at a peak in this country. It contains quotes from Pastor Straton and his accomplishments as one of the mighty voices for God during that pivotal time. It will reassure the present day biblical conservative that the things we believe and preach today were alive and well so many years ago.

The Lost Tomb Of Jesus

The recent supposed discovery of the bones of Jesus made headline news. This find was supposed to turn the religious views of centuries upside down. It didn't. This sermon explores the actual artifacts found and what they mean to bible believers. Those who discovered the tomb said this would cause Christians to rethink centuries of belief in the resurrection of Jesus. Discover what was really discovered.

These two sermons are available on either side of a cassette tape or on CD

for the cost of \$1.00 and may be ordered from the church as listed below.

Faith Baptist Church
520 12th St.
Moline, IL 61265

THE CONTENTS OF THE LETTER NOT THE DESIGN OF THE ENVELOPE

by Pastor Stan Gustafson

While in an office one day a couple of years ago I overheard a female employee telling how she had taken a recent trip to visit family and ended up in church. It was obvious that this girl was not familiar with such surroundings as she told of the mannerisms of the preacher. She was animated as she related his lively style of preaching and how he pleaded for people to come forward and get saved, even holding an altar call. On she went expressing her amusement with the whole show. I thought to myself as she finished, "How tragic this is. She missed the whole thing! A presentation of the gospel was made, eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, and all she took from it was how the speaker raised his voice and waved his arms, etc.."

Even more incredible is the fact that vast numbers of those who are indeed familiar with fundamental church surroundings and who profess to possess said salvation often take little away from a sermon beyond how the preacher did that day. There are as many preaching styles as there are preachers, and it is

easy to get stuck on the superficial and fleshly. Some preach softly and some in a near monotone. Some are very active in the pulpit and some absolutely bombastic. And, while we all understand intellectually that the message is of the utmost importance rather than the letter carrier, it's easy to look upon a sermon as a performance.

In the Old Testament times when a note of warning was to be sounded, sometimes it came from a rams horn and at other times from a silver trumpet. When danger was at hand and time was of the essence, I'm sure no one cared to critique the musical stylings of the watchman. The truth is, the great messages are those that God uses to lift the listener to Himself and His truth in which the messenger and his delivery are forgotten.

Among New Testament preachers, Apollos was known for his oratory while the apostle Paul's reputation was one of weak bodily presence and contemptible speech. The Lord mightily used both. Oh, that more of us could get past the entertainment value of the pastor's pulpitering and beg God to move us with His truth!

A note to preachers:

1. *Hone your command of the Bible, not your performance skills.* The true power of any great message in is the Word, not in your personality.
2. *Beseech God for spiritual might, not for popular appeal.* This speaks to what your real ministerial goals are. Have power with Heaven. You will probably NOT be popular with earth.
3. *Let the delivery reflect the content, do not tailor the content to suit your delivery.* Let your manner be natural.

You can talk smoothly about Heaven and thunder about Hell, but it's best when you don't think about it. If your heart is filled with the truth of the moment, the preaching of it will be natural, not "styled." Don't try to be a preacher, just preach.

BERNETTA'S BABBLES

I am writing this article not to purposely offend or upset anyone. I am merely writing it to get the facts out about true Christians. We have been studying on Wednesday nights on tattooing and piercing. I took some of that knowledge with me to work and began to have a discussion on it with some friends of mine. I work with a gentleman who claims to be a Christian and a preacher of a community church. Now I am not completely blaming him of his ignorance as to what the Bible says, because he doesn't even use the Bible. He uses the NIV. After all, the Bible talks about being ignorant of the Word.

2 Peter 3:5 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water:

The Bible also talks about having compassion on them.

Hebrews 5:1-2 For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of

the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity.

He goes on to say that if I am referring to Leviticus 19 that I need to re-read it. Well, from what I read it is pretty cut and dry as to what we should or should not do. He says that I am jumping to a wrong conclusion because I didn't even hear what his tattoo would be about. It was going to be a barb wire made of crosses and the words "Jesus Saves", or something like that. He then asked what would be wrong with that because wouldn't that be a great conversation starter? I replied with the fact that if you need a tattoo to start a conversation that you should be doing anyway, then you have a real problem. Are we not told in Matthew 28:18-20:

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye there re, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world Amen.

So my question is, why would you need to get one? If you are truly born again, then you don't need one to start a conversation. The Holy Spirit does a work in your life that makes it easier to talk to people about eternal things. We are to come out of the world and be separate from these things. After all, we cannot serve two masters.

Matthew 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate

the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

So in conclusion, let me leave you with all you will need to start a conversation about Christ. First of all, ask yourself, do I have a time and place where I purposely accepted Christ as my personal Saviour? If you answered no, then this is for you also. Secondly, if you died right nor, this very moment, are you 100% positive without a shadow of a doubt that you would go to heaven? If you still answered no, then it is time to listen up. All you have to do is read and understand what Christ did for you on the Old Rugged Cross. Now some of you might say that you are good enough. The Bible tells us different.

Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

So you need to realize that there is nothing good in you. Next you have to understand that there is the fact of sin. So who has sinned? The Bible tells us all have.

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

So you need to realize that you are a sinner. Then you have to understand that God sent His only begotten Son to die for our sins, and that there is a pay day coming. Death.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

So you are going to die a physical death and a spiritual death. The good news is yet to come. In Romans 5:8, there is a way out of your sins. That is the fact that Christ paid for ours sins. All of them.

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Now here comes the best part. You can be sure of a home in heaven right this very moment. All you have to do is believe in you heart that Christ died, was buried, and rose again, and confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, that is Christ, then the Bible says ye shall be saved.

Romans 10:9-10 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10: 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved

So you see you don't need a tattoo to start a conversation. We did all right here. May the Lord bless you and keep you in His will. If you have been born again through this letter, please write us at:

Faith Baptist Church
520 12" Street
Moline, IL, 61265

Love through Christ,
Sara L. Shipp

FAITH BAPTIST TEENS

"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23

This is my favorite verse because it has inspired me to strive not to sin.

Hawk T. Gustafson

* * *

"A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace." Ecclesiastes 3:8

I like this verse because it states a time and place for everything. We will still love a person, but the time of hate is present with the person's action. So it means we can still love someone for who they are, but we can despise an action they have committed.

Natalie Baugher

* * *

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16

This is my favorite verse because I

have known it since I was little.

Olivia Fox

* * *

The blessing that happened to me this week is that my mom got a job at a college that will give our family extra money and time to hang out together. That will also let my dad have more money to go golfing.

Nate Baugher

* * *

It is amazing how times flies. This year the youth group has gone through some changes. We have painted and spruced up the teen room. We have also changed our name from the Faith Baptist Eagles to the Faith Baptist Fishers. Our group verse is Matthew 4:19, "*And He saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.*" We decided as a group to change because we felt the need to focus on our Christian witness. We as a class spend time both in the Bible and the concordance.

We have had a great youth group and Rubie and I are both looking forward to another great year. Please feel free to come down to the teen room and take a look at all the changes.

Also, please remember that if you have a teen that you would like us to visit, please contact us or a member of our teen group and we will schedule a visit.

Ben Fox

* * *

My Salvation Testimony

I got saved in June of 2001. I was sitting in Church when the pastor was giving a salvation sermon and turned to my mom and asked her if she would pray with me and I got saved!

Brandon Gustafson

* * *

I wanted to say thank you to all the Sunday school and Heritage Kids teachers my children have had over the years at Faith Baptist Church. The church has been a part of my children's lives for over ten years.

Olivia has been going to church here since she was three and she is now thirteen. Alex has also been raised in the church since she was very young. She was just over a year old when we came to Faith Baptist Church. Both girls were saved at a young age.

My heart has also been burdened for my son Sam to get saved early in life. This spring my prayer was answered. Sam understood the fact that he was a sinner and needed Christ to wash his sins away so that he could go to Heaven.

We have striven to raise our children in a Godly home, with Christian examples and keep them separate from the world. The wonderful and loving teachers that my children have had over the years have contributed greatly to their early understanding of salvation.

So to the people who have dedicated their time to serve the Lord and teaching my children, praying for them, and keeping them in their hearts, I thank the Lord for you. Thank you for helping to teach them and raise them to be Godly Christians.

"Lo, Children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward." Psalm 127:3

Rubie Fox

* * *

A very close friend of mine has just found out that both of her Grandpa's have cancer and one probably won't live much longer. He lives in Florida. Her mom and some other relatives are going down to move him back up here. Friends are betraying her, starting lies and rumors that are false. She needs help from her friends to keep her strong enough to deal with all the stuff she is dealing with. So her friends need to be strong and close to God to be able to help in the way she needs. My friend goes to a Baptist church. I ask that you pray for her and her family.

Eric E. J. Gustafson

RICK WARREN'S SUPERCHURCH

Dr. Rick Warren is pastor of Saddleback Community Church (Calif.) and director of "Building a Purpose-Driven Church" workshops. Last Jan., Dr. Dennis Costella attended one of these seminars where Warren taught that the following must occur to transform a traditional church into a dramatic growing church : 1) A contemporary-styled, non-threatening "Seeker Service" must replace the traditional Sunday worship service. 2) The dress must be casual. 3) The music must be contemporary. 4) The message must be only positive so saved and unsaved alike can feel better about

themselves after a message that often mixes psychology and an uplifting Scripture text. 5) Church ministries must be geared to meeting needs, with support groups for depression, eating disorders, infertility, homosexuals' family/friends, post abortion, and marital separation. Warren scoffed at the idea of passing out tracts or going door-to-door since the typical "Saddleback Sam" is offended by such old-fashioned evangelism. 6) Doctrinal instruction is not given to the church as a whole on Sundays, but is available in sub-groups apart from services. 7) A spirit of pragmatic compromise must prevail. Warren was trained as a Southern Baptist, but said "It really doesn't matter your denomination, folks. We're all on the same team if you love Jesus." Such a worldly ecumenical "seeker" church may please PEOPLE, make them feel comfortable and entertained, but is unscriptural and thus displeases God.

Calvary Contender

Both Popes Can't Be Infallible

Pope John Paul II rejected the reality of hell being a literal physical place of eternal torment. But Pope Paul VI in the 1970s termed hell a reality and reminded people of the "terrible truth of a possible eternal punishment called Hell, about which Christ minced no words." Canadian Revivalist editor Dr. Frank McClelland comments: "It is obvious that there is a world of difference between Paul VI's view of hell and that of the present pope." Will the real infallible pope please stand?

Calvary Contender

ROLL CALL IN HEAVEN

James M. Black of Williamsport, Pennsylvania impulsively cut through an alley to save time on his way to the post office. As he hurriedly walked down the alley, he passed "a young girl sweeping the porch of a ramshackle house. She was dressed oh, so poorly, and in her young face were already the graces of worry and neglect.

Black asked the girl, whose name was Bessie, if she went to Sunday school.

"No, sir," the girl replied. "I'd like to but I don't have anything fit to wear; but sir, How I'd love to go!"

Black and his wife and friends promptly brought the girl some "church clothes," and she began faithfully attending both Sunday school and the young people's meetings. Each time there was a roll call; she was there to respond.

Then came the day when Black called the roll and Bessie failed to answer. Black looked up from the attendance book surprised. He called her name again, but she was not there.

After the service he hurried to the alley, worried that Bessie's drunken father had forbidden her to come or that he had beaten her so severely she was unable to make her way to church. Instead, he found her dying of pneumonia. He summoned his own doctor to treat her, but all efforts failed to save her.

Black couldn't shake off the feeling he'd first experienced when he called the roll and Bessie didn't answer. He thought about how there would be "a roll call in heaven and oh, the sadness there would be for those whose names are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

A song leader, Black longed for a song that would "impress this truth upon

the hearts of the young people in his Sunday school class. But he couldn't find one. Later that day he was inspired to write one himself.

He went into the house and sat down at the piano. Without any effort at all the words seemed to tumble from his mind. The tune then came in the same manner. He felt that he was only the transcriber - he dared not change a note or a word.

The song was first sung at Bessie's funeral after Black explained the circumstances leading up to it. He never would forget the effect it had upon the large audience of friends who had come. The Lord had taken little Bessie home, but in her place He had given a song to keep reminding all of use to be ready for the great roll-call day.

When the trumpet of the lord shall sound, and time shall be no more, and the morning breaks, eternal, bright and fair; when the saved of earth shall gather over on the other shore, and the roll is called up yonder, I'll be there.

JONAH SWALLOWED?

Of all the miracles in the Bible, none is better known or has raised more eyebrows, than this one.

There are actual reported cases in more recent times of men who have survived the ordeal of being swallowed by a whale.

The *Princeton Theological Review* (Oct., 1927) tells of two incidents, one in 1758 and the other in 1771, in which a man was swallowed by a whale and

vomited up shortly thereafter with only minor injuries.

One of the most striking instances comes from Francis Fox, *Sixty Three Years of Engineering* (pp. 295-300), who reports that this incident was carefully investigated by two scientists (one of whom was M. DeParville, the scientific editor of the *Journal Des Debars* in Paris).

In February, 1891, the whaling ship, *Star of the East*, was in the vicinity of the Falkland Islands, and the lookout sighted a large sperm whale three miles away. Two boats were lowered and in a short time, one of the harpooners was enabled to spear the creature.

The second boat also attacked the whale, but was then upset by a lash of its tail, so that its crew fell into the sea. One of them was drowned, but the other, James Bartley, simply disappeared without a trace. After the whale was killed, the crew set to work with axes and spades removing the blubber.

They worked all day and part of the night. The next day they attached some tackle to the stomach, which was hoisted on deck. The sailors were startled by something in it which gave spasmodic signs of life, and inside was found the missing sailor, doubled up and unconscious. He was laid on the deck and treated to a bath of sea water which soon revived him.

At the end of the third week, he had entirely recovered from the shock and resumed his duties. His face, and neck and hands were bleached to a deadly whiteness and took on the appearance of parchment. Bartley affirms that he would probably have lived inside his house of flesh until he starved, for he lost his senses through fright and not through lack of air." (A Survey of Old

Testament Introduction), p. 302.

See also Harry Rimmer's book called: *The Harmony of Science and Scripture*. In this book is the story of an English sailor who fell overboard, and was swallowed by a fish. A couple of days later a fish is seen floating on the surface and was taken ashore. When it was opened, the sailors, to their amazement, found their shipmate alive.

He survived the experience, but his skin had turned a chalky white and remained so for the rest of his life. Dr. Rimmer talked with him and learned the details of his experience. It was clearly verified. There have been other accounts like this, probably half a dozen altogether. It has happened to others besides Jonah.

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USA Today reported last week on the outcome of a quiz given by Stephen Prothero, chairman of the religion department at Boston University and author of *"Religious Literacy, What Every American Needs to Know,"* which shows 60% of Americans can't name 5 of the 10 Commandments in the Bible, and over half of high school seniors think Sodom and Gomorrah were...married.



FAITH BAPTIST WATCH

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*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves:
it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast.*

Ephesians 2:8-9