

THE NEWS
of
East Washington Heights Baptist Church

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THE NEWS

The Pastor's Message

"Be Patient"

"Dear brothers, is your life full of difficulties and temptations? Then be happy, for when the way is rough, your patience has a chance to grow. So let it grow, and don't try to squirm out of your problems. For when patience is finally in full bloom, then you will be ready for anything, strong in character, full and complete." (Proverbs 17:22)

When I was a kid my mother would always tell me, "son be patient because patience is a virtue." However, I never really understood what she was talking about!

But now after growing up and living in a microwave world where everything is a mad rush -- we rush to work, hurry to make it home, want fast career promotions, instant relationship fixes, quick internet connections, and food served in a jiffy -- I understand!

Patience is a virtue. It is admitting that even though things are not as they should be you can wait for your change to occur. Patience implies doing whatever is necessary to get where you want to be without despairing that you are not there yet. This is the difference between patience and resignation. Patience means to settle for the moment until what is sought can occur. Resignation, on the other hand, means to do nothing to bring about your change.

Yes, I now know what patience means, but every now and then I need to be reminded about it! Maybe you're the same way too. So let us be patient. God is working everything out. It could be that God is using whatever crisis we find ourselves in now to build up our patience. Maybe patience is the very fuel that we'll need to make it sometime later in our travel down the highway of life. So hold on and don't lose hope! Be patient. Help is on the way!

Peace and Love. __Pastor Kip Banks, Sr.

Blind faith

Eighteenth-century British evangelist George Whitefield once asked a coal miner what he believed.

"I believe what my church believes," the man answered, respectfully and confidently.

"And what does your church believe?" Whitefield followed up.

"The same thing I believe," the man said.

"And what do both of you believe?" the preacher asked again.

"We both believe the same thing," the man assured Whitefield.

Belonging to a Christian church, and knowing exactly what it teaches, is vital but doesn't guarantee salvation. That's between each individual and God. As Romans 10:9 (ESV) says, *"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."*

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Ruth, a Pentecost story?

The disciples were celebrating Pentecost, originally a Jewish festival, when the Holy Spirit descended on them and birthed the church. Pentecost, which began as a harvest festival, had come to commemorate the giving of the law. The book of Ruth became integral to festival worship.

Why Ruth? This short story doesn't mention the law, let alone God giving it to Moses. Yet in Ruth's devotion to her mother-in-law (*"Where you go I will go Your people will be my people ... "* Ruth 1:16, NIV, she fulfills not just the letter but the spirit of the law: loving-kindness, which is all the more remarkable because she's a foreigner. Boaz, also demonstrates exorbitant kindness to Ruth.

As Christians celebrate the Spirit bridging differences in Jerusalem, uniting all nationalities by making the gospel message intelligible to all people, we too can remember Ruth's story. For in it, God unites two enemy peoples for his grand purpose: Boaz and Ruth's marriage leads to King David and, ultimately, to King Jesus. Today, the Holy Spirit continues to unite all categories of people under Christ's reign for the good of the world.

Special dates in May

- Ascension of the Lord, *May 5, 2016*
 - National Day of Prayer, *May 5, 2016*
 - Mother's Day, *May 8, 2016*
 - Pentecost, *May 15, 2016*
 - Armed Forces Day, *May 21, 2016*
 - Trinity Sunday, *May 22, 2016*
 - Memorial Day, *May 30, 2016*
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Always with us

Forty days after Easter, we celebrate Jesus' ascension into heaven. This occurred 10 days before Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus' followers, as he had promised.

Jesus' ascension reminds Christians that although his body couldn't remain present everywhere, we can universally experience his spiritual presence. In fact, Jesus' final words to his disciples — and to us — contain this key promise: *"I am with you always, to the end of the age"* **Matthew 28:20, ESV.**

The gladdest thing

Turn around and believe that the good news that we are loved is better than we ever dared hope, and that to believe in that good news, to live out of it and toward it, to be in love with that good news, is of all glad things in this world the gladdest thing of all. — **Frederick Buechner, *The Clown in the Belfry***

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A taste of God's love

In *Lost in Wonder, Love and Praise* (Abingdon Press), John Killinger describes a mother's love, and how it offers a tiny foretaste of God's love:

"It is stronger than steel, softer than down and more resilient than a green sapling on the hillside. It closes wounds, melts disappointments and enables the weakest child to stand tall and straight in the fields of adversity. I believe that this love, even at its best, is only a shadow of the love of God, a dark reflection of all that we can expect of him, both in this life and the next."

Close to God

I can take my telescope and look millions and millions of miles into space. But I can lay it aside, go into my room, shut the door, get down on my knees in earnest prayer, and see more of heaven and get closer to God than I can assisted by all the telescopes and material agencies on earth. __Isaac Newton

Chapter and verse

In its original format, the Bible contained no chapter and verse divisions or numbers. Those are entirely a human convention, intended to make reading easier.

The first modern system of dividing Scripture occurred in the 13th century. Interestingly, the New Testament was first separated into verses in 1551 — by the son of a French printer, as he rode on horseback!

Disciples needed

The greatest issue facing the world today, with all its heartbreaking needs, is whether those who, by profession or culture, are identified as "Christians" will become disciples, students, apprentices, or practitioners, of Jesus Christ, steadily learning from him how to live the life of the kingdom of the heavens into every corner of human existence. __Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission*

Happy Birthday to all who were born in May!

Happy Anniversary to all who were married in May!

"Mothers write on the hearts of their children what the world's rough hands cannot erase." __Author unknown

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Expanded lives

In a fascinating, kid-friendly science experiment, a bar of Ivory soap heated in a microwave writhes and expands into a unique, billowy shape. The change is due to Charles' Law, which describes how a gas, such as that contained in pockets inside a bar of Ivory, expands as its temperature increases. The soap can still be used as normal, though it's now fragile and flaky.

When the Holy Spirit enters us, we expand as well. Our Spirit-enlarged lives may seem misshapen to some, no longer conforming to the world's expectations. But our uniqueness reflects the creativity of our Triune God, who reveals himself to people in many different ways.

Our hearts expand and soften too, opening to other people's needs and concerns, while our God-created purpose remains: to be a force of love and care — of cleansing and renewal — in the world.

Life lessons

Late-night comedian Stephen Colbert, a practicing Catholic who teaches Sunday school, faced tragedy at age 10 when his father and two of his brothers died in a plane crash. As Colbert told *The New York Times*, his mom helped him avoid bitterness about the loss:

“She taught me to be grateful for my life regardless of what that entailed, and that's directly related to the image of Christ on the cross and the example of sacrifice that he gave us. What she taught me is that the deliverance God offers you from pain is not no pain; it's that the pain is actually a gift. What's the option? God doesn't really give you another choice.”

Procrastinators

A pastor waited in line to have his car filled with gas just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but many cars were ahead of the pastor at the service station. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump.

“Sorry about the delay,” said the young man. “Everyone seems to wait until the last minute to get ready for a long trip.”

The pastor chuckled, “I know what you mean. It's the same in my business.”

Faith and love

The two chief things are faith and love. Faith receives the good; love gives the good. Faith offers us God as our own; love gives us to our neighbor as his own.

—Martin Luther

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"God Is the Fountain"

God is the fountain whence
ten thousand blessings flow;
to him my life, my health and friends,
and every good, I owe.
The comforts he affords
are neither few nor small;
he is the source of fresh delights,
my portion and my all.
He fills my heart with joy,
my lips attunes for praise;
and to his glory I'll devote
the remnant of my days.
—Benjamin Beddome

Of greatest worth

Not what I get, but what I give,
this be the gauge by which I live.
Not merely joys that come my way,
but the help I give to those astray.
Not the rewards of money and fame,
but the loads I lift in mankind's name.
This be the pay at the end of the day,
not what I keep, but what I give away.
—Author unknown

The birth of the Church

Fifty days after the Resurrection, the first Christians, most of them Jews, gathered to celebrate the Jewish harvest festival known as Pentecost.

At that gathering something happened that was so awesome and indescribable that when writing about it, St. Luke could only use metaphors. A sound like the rush of a violent wind seemed to fill the entire house where they were meeting. Something like tongues of fire appeared among them ... a tongue rested on each of them.

It was then that they "were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability" (Acts 2:4, NRSV). The crowd that gathered outside was amazed and perplexed. They wanted to know what it meant. Some observers thought it was a gathering of drunks.

But Peter interpreted it all correctly to anyone who would listen. He told of Christ, his life, his mission, his death and his Resurrection. Most importantly, Peter explained that God had made Jesus both Lord and Messiah. The proof of that was the Resurrection.

Three thousand people were so moved by Peter's words that they were baptized that day and "*devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers*" (Acts 2:42, NRSV). "*And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved*" (Acts 2:47, NRSV). The Church was born that day.

A gift for Mom

The three young children told their mother that she wasn't to lift a finger on Mother's Day. They were going to do all the cooking. So, they got out three pots, two frying pans, six measuring spoons, three mixing bowls, a double boiler, a chopping board and eight serving dishes. Mom said it was the best Jell-O she had ever tasted!

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Thoughts on Memorial Day

“There never was a good war or a bad peace.” __Benjamin Franklin

“Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount.” __General Omar Bradley

The Price of Freedom

In “What Did He Die For?” Twila Paris reminds us why we observe Memorial Day — and why we worship Jesus as our Savior. The first verse tells of a 21-year-old soldier fighting for America’s freedom during World War II. The second verse recalls another young man, many centuries prior, sent by his Father to win eternal freedom from sin for the entire world. The chorus offers this challenge:

“What did he die for when he died for you and me,
Made the sacrifice so that we could all be free?
I believe we will answer each to heaven
For the way we spend a priceless liberty.
Look inside and ask the question, “What did he die for?”

Memorial Day challenges us to live so as to honor the sacrifices made by members of the military. We value our freedom because of the heavy price people have paid for it. Likewise, every day we’re challenged to live so as to honor Jesus’ supreme sacrifice. He calls us to spend our “priceless liberty” using our blessings to bless others.

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DAY of PRAYER



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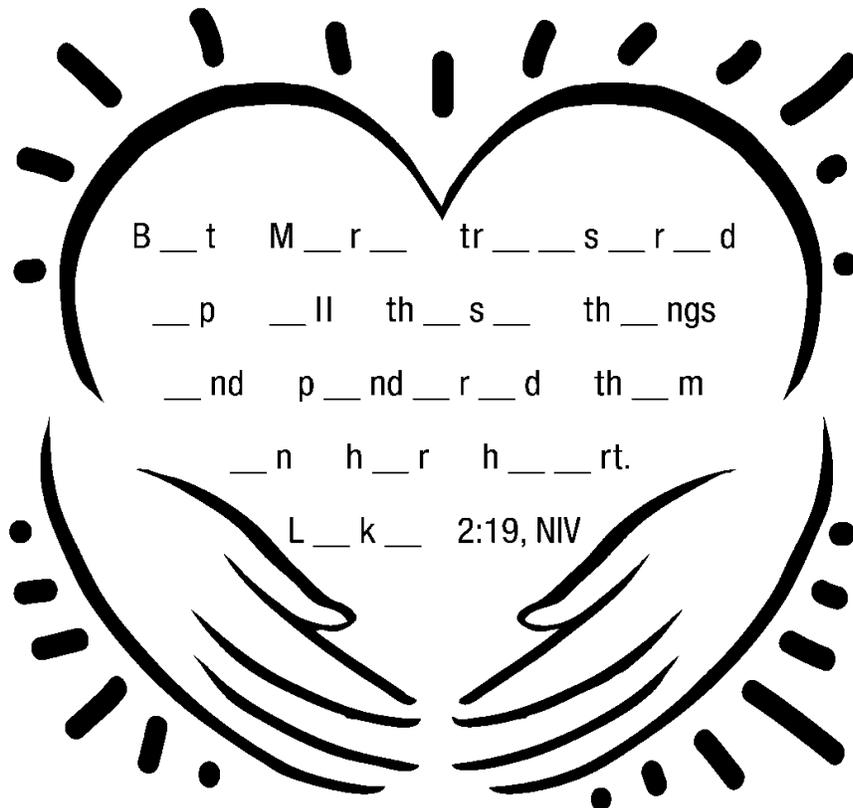


A mother's love

At age 12, Jesus was left behind in Jerusalem.
His parents later found him in the temple, discussing Scripture.
What did Mary, Jesus' mother, think about this?

Directions: Fill in the blanks with the correct vowels to complete the Bible verse.

A E I O U Y



Answer: But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. Luke 2:19, NIV