Feasting on Glory
by Sam Dilbeck

The prolific hymnist, Fanny Crosby, described the assurance of Christianity in her song *Blessed Assurance*. One line always brings cheer to my heart: “O what a foretaste of glory divine.” When we experience overwhelming joy and enriching fellowship with the saints, I often think, “This is just a foretaste of what God wants for me.”

I feel it when Westhill meets for worship. The excited buzz that emanates from the gathering assembly thrills my heart. When the song leader calls us together and people find their place there is a moment, a pause, when the flood of voices and love are held back, waiting to burst forth. Then it happens—the gates open and worship explodes forth. Right then I taste the glory God has prepared for me.

The feeling tingles in me when a lost soul seeks baptism. I nearly float up the steps to the baptistry. I get giddy and chatty as Dickie helps me get my waders on. In mere moments, God is going to make his greatest creation—a Christian. As I step into the waters and assist the dying old man of sin into the waters, I whisper a farewell to him. As that new creature emerges from the water I embrace them with a welcoming bear hug and I taste the glory divine.

Last week sixteen people from Westhill were blessed to attend *Polishing the Pulpit*, a week-long lecture series for preachers, elders, deacons, members, families, children, wives, women, and me. Okay, maybe not just for me, but the lessons seemed tailored to my needs. Some classes promoted evangelism, while others spoke about holiness. One class delved deep into the subject of God using dreams and visions in the book of Genesis. There were classes to assist elders to be better shepherds, and deacons to be better ministers.

As I walked through the halls of the event center, I was greeted by hundreds of people from other parts of the nation. But, the most excited I got was when I saw other Westies in the hallways. They were going to their own sessions to get the spiritual renewal they personally needed. And each time I saw them they glowed with light coming from heaven. In those moments of reunion I tasted the glory.

Then to top it all off, many of the attendees worshiped together in the main hall. About 2000 Christians began gathering in anticipation, and I felt the familiar buzz again. God’s people were about to send up praise, and the gates could hardly contain the flood. Our friend, Andy Baker, walked to the podium and every heart in the room beat against the gates restraining our praise. Then he opened the gates and the torrent erupted. I was home. I was feasting on the glory of God.

Each year we have Christians from Westhill make the trek to Tennessee for *Polishing the Pulpit*. All who have gone have been touched by those glorious moments. Sadly, not everyone can go, but with proper planning, I believe more of us could make the journey. My hope is that Westhill’s presence at Polishing the Pulpit will grow. It blesses Westhill when our hearts are revived. It also blesses people at Polishing the Pulpit to experience the magic and love of Westhill.

Will you make plans to attend *Polishing the Pulpit* 2015?
In the face of impending destruction by the Chaldeans, the prophet Habakkuk questioned how God could use an unrighteous people to destroy a more righteous nation: Why, LORD, do you hold your peace "when the wicked devoureth the man that is more righteous than he?" (Habakkuk 1:13).

Part of the answer to this question is to be found in God's purposes for the faithful. God seeks to correct them (Habakkuk 1:12), and refine them as silver or gold (Ezekiel 20:18-22, Zechariah 13:9, Malachi 3:3). Part of the answer to this question is to be found in God's purposes for the wicked. He will bring them to ultimate punishment (Habakkuk 2).

However, the answer to this question is also found in the attitude of the individual. The world's collapsing around us need not be regarded as God's personal judgment upon the individual. To the contrary, adversity provides opportunity for God's people to shine forth. Difficult circumstances are what just men make of them. And faith is the tool by which one can make difficulties turn out well. Under occasions of distress, and in the face of wicked men, "The just shall live by his faith" (Habakkuk 2:4).

This sentiment uttered by Habakkuk is echoed in the New Testament in Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, and Hebrews 10:38. The single theme that runs through the threads of these contexts is that external circumstances do not dictate the faithfulness of God's people. Whether those circumstances concern the fragile relationship of Jews and Gentiles (Romans), the subversive teaching of Judaizing teachers (Galatians), or the threat of persecution by Jewish friends and family (Hebrews) – regardless the circumstances, “the just shall live by his faith.”

“Faith” in these passages is not merely the personal beliefs of the individual. It includes such. However, in order to have beliefs, one must have something to believe. The individual places his faith in God's message (Romans 10:17), and the message of God can always be believed and obeyed by the individual. Traditions cease; laws change; nations fall, and friends fail, but God does not change (Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8), and His word endures (Matthew 24:35). So long as the world stands, the individual will always have the opportunity to respond to God's word in faith, and in so responding, he will live therein – “the just shall live by his faith.”

In so responding to God's word, the individual proves his own character. He proves himself to be just/righteous. This righteousness, however, is not of his design; it is of God. He submits to the righteousness of God (Romans 10:3), and he becomes what God wants him to be (Colossians 3:10). In so submitting, the individual finds his own salvation (Romans 1:16), and he finds the abundant life (John 10:10). It is a life worth living precisely because it is founded upon that Eternal Rock (Matthew 16:18, 1 Corinthians 3:11), “and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed” (Romans 9:33). “The just shall live by his faith.”

The concern of God's people (Christians today) has never been, is not, and will never be, to bring a person to verbally utter some “magic” formula of words in absentia of a transformed life. The “sinner's prayer” and all other alleged incantations for salvation, are wholly devoid of the kind of faith God desires us to have, because they are not based upon the scriptural premise, “The just shall live by his faith.” This issue of the Christian Worker concerns gaining a broader concept of “faith” than is popularly held in society today. It is our prayer that in studying this material you will so deepen your understanding of the topic so that you may be among those just who live by your faith.
Mission Works
Westhill Works
Benevolence Program - Dickie Russell

Local Works
Cherokee Children’s Home - Delton McGuire, Director
Preaching Student - Joshua Moore, SWSBS
Preaching Student - Corey Jackson, BTSOP
Gospel Radio Network - www.gospelradionetwork.org

Prison Works
La Poynor Prison Ministry - Steve & Carrie Handley

Foreign Works
New Milford, Connecticut - David & Paula Tarber
New Zealand Harvest Missions - James & Emily Cammock

Leadership
Elders
Don Ivy - 903.875.1483
Percell Milton - 903.673.1819
Paul Slaughter - 903.872.1228
Paul Stewart - 903.872.3464
Darwin Thomas - 903.695.0176

Ministers
Sam Dilbeck - 903.229.8415
Russell Haffner - 903.467.8895

Deacons
James Ainsworth - 903.872.1390
Scott Barham - 903.641.0133
David Baumgartner - 903.654.4057
Zach Drain - 903.521.6055

Dan Gibson - 903.641.9587
Joshua Haden - 903.602.9645
Micah Haden - 903.673.1177
James Horn - 903.599.9114
Michael Jones - 214.803.5984
Roy M’Cullough - 903.872.2069
Eddie Moore - 903.673.2803
Greg Olsen - 903.654.1406
James Olsen - 903.874.8918
Rusty Owens - 903.695.0095
Billy Roughton - 903.654.4032
Dickie Russell - 903.874.4457
David Shastid - 903.695.0108
Brent Stewart - 903.641.9052
Justin Williams - 903.875.8288

H.A.N.D.S. & Building Work Day
Saturday
September 13
9:00 AM

Please, let us know if we can help you with a project at your home.

Singing at TriSun
September 14 @ 4:30 pm

5th Sunday TODAY

Youth Activities
Young Ladies’ Devo
Sep. 7 @ 4:30 PM
Jr. High Devo
Sep. 7 @ 7:00 PM
High School Devo
Sep. 21 @ 7:00 PM

SAVE THE DATE!
I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD!” Psalm 122:1

VICTORY SUNDAY
October 19
Toby Soechting

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Prayer List

Billie Thomas will be undergoing pain management treatments or surgery for back problems. Please, keep her in your prayers.

Randy Short has returned home. Keep him in your prayers as he sees more doctors in the coming weeks.

Darwin’s brother, Billy Thomas, is doing better now and the family appreciates your prayers on his behalf.


Announcements

5th Sunday Today! Everyone plan to stay for food and fellowship followed immediately by the second service of the day led by the young men.

Ladies’ Bible Class will resume this Wednesday morning, September 3 at 10:00 AM. Russell will be teaching on 2 Timothy.

The Fall Bible Class Quarter begins next Sunday, September 7. If you have not picked up your material, it is ready in the teacher work room.

Promotion Day is also next Sunday, September 7.

We Need a Teacher for the Sunday morning 2 year olds class. See Rusty Owens.

Jr. High Devo Next Sunday at 7:00 PM in the Outreach Center. Girls bring snacks, boys bring drinks.

HANDS/Building Work Day Saturday, September 13 at 9:00 AM. If you need assistance with a project at your home, call the office or talk to Russell.

There are Still a Few Rooms Available for our Ladies Retreat September 26-27. The cost is $65. If you’d like to go, see Lee Owens to sign up. Payment is due when you register.

Some of the Complimentary 8x10 Portraits from the July sessions have arrived. They are available on a table in the dining room.

Zachory Cabano #1886823
Hutchins Unit
1500 E. Langdon Rd.
Dallas, TX 75241

Birthdays This Week
August 31 - Robbie Jennings, Jaxsen Mahoney, Judy Stewart
September 1 - Millard Dowdle, Jean Murphy
September 3 - Dillan Parrish
September 4 - Mike Wylie
September 5 - Nancy Armstrong

Next Week
Creation
Genesis 1

Records for August 24, 2014
Bible Class ......................................................... 203 (63%)
AM Worship .........................................................321
PM Worship ......................................................145 (45%)
Wednesday .....................................................176 (55%)
Contribution ...................................................$10,469.33

Privileged to Serve

Song Leader
Russell Haffner
Opening Prayer
Nick Hoffman
Communion Leader
David Shastid
Communion Servers
Ty Gibson
Joe Glass
Jim Haden
Don Ivy
Larry Jayroe
Zack Lewis
Jim Milam
Darrell Olsen
Eric Olsen
Tom Raley
Dalton Shastid
Closing Prayer
Bryan Bearden
Nursery
Claire Haden & Lindsay Olsen
PM Song Leader
Young Men
PM Opening Prayer
Young Men
PM Closing Prayer
Young Men
Wed. Song Leader
Tyler Baumgartner
Wed. Devo
Rusty Owens
September Contact Elder
Don Ivy - 903.875.1483