



## Family Choices

Church and family are not meant to compete with one another. Unfortunately, that is exactly what is happening these days. The nuclear family has changed in dramatic ways over the decades and the result is that people are having to choose between Christ and family, an unfortunate truth of which Jesus was aware when he said, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple." Jesus is not preaching a message of hate; he is teaching a truth about priority. If Christ does not come before all else, even family, it will be impossible to follow Him. The truth is that among broken homes, situations where only one parent is a believer, or simply a lifestyle where family is nothing more than shuttling kids between activities, our children will soon have to make a choice: Christ or family.

Television does not help the situation. It portrays family as being something contrary to the gospel. In 1957 the picture of the nuclear family in Hollywood was *Leave It to Beaver*, a television show about an innocent family with a moral center. Although Beaver found his way into a little trouble now and then, the family all came down on the same side of morality and everyone knew who the authority figures were. Today the picture of the family coming out of Hollywood is the *Simpsons*, a cartoon family in which the only authority figures are the children, providing greater wisdom than the ill-fated father, Homer. It is also a family where morality (along with everything else) seems to be nothing more than another perspective subject to sarcastic scrutiny.

Fortunately, the Father has a different understanding of what family should be. Family is a training ground, teaching our children what faithful Christian community looks like. Community starts with family and then proceeds on a larger scale in our church "family." It is a place to shape souls not just by preventing them from engaging in sinful ways, but by actively engaging in kingdom ways. Invite your children to be part of a family ministry where they can see Christ moving in your lives rather than simply telling them to avoid sinful behavior. The result will be that our children won't have to choose between family and Christ. Rather they will enjoy the benefits of both a nuclear and spiritual family.

~Dan

***Our vision:  
Knowing Christ, Making Christ Known***

## Elders' Notes

Greetings. Many changes have occurred in the wake of the Crowe's re-assignment in the Lord's work. One of them is right here in the bulletin. As Dan has taken on the writing of the front-page article, the elders have taken on the writing of this side bar. We will use this to update you on various congregational activities such as our minister search and SHAPE progress.

You are already aware of many of these changes. We have hired Cody Sipe to serve as preacher. He will prepare the order of worship and present the sermons at our Sunday morning assemblies. Max Houlton has stepped in as Life Group leader coach, handling the leaders' meeting and making sure other aspects of the groups run smoothly. So as far as regular activities, we seem to be in good shape through May.

We are assembling a search team to help the elders with the activities of finding the next pulpit minister for this congregation. We will let you know who those people are when the team is completely assembled. It will be chaired by Bill Bell. We are using the services of the Churches Support program at Abilene Christian University. This is a program created by Dr. Charles Siburt that provides all kinds of support services for churches. Among them is an elder conference called Elder Link which I have attended. They also provided a guide book for churches seeking to hire a pulpit minister and for those looking for such a position. We have this guide book and will be using it to frame our search. We do not know how long this will take. It could be a few months or as much as a year. We are committed to locating the man that God has prepared for us, and it is about this that we have already begun to pray. We ask you to do the same.

~Bill Bell

Pray for Gayle and Lisa. Thank God for all that they have done for our congregation over the last 20 years. Pray that God will continue to bless them in their new ministry as he has blessed them in this ministry.



## Focus on the Family Programs

Upcoming **Focus on the Family** programs are heard on local radio, WHPL-FM 89.9 at **2:00 PM Monday-Friday.** (*Note time change for this program.*)

- Feb. 7, 8, 9 **When You're In Love**—Author Joshua Harris offers advice to young singles about dating, courtship and relying upon God's guidance to find a spouse. (Parts 1, 2, 3)
- Feb. 12, 13, & 14 **What Men Need to Know About Women**—Jeff & Shaunti Feldhahn offer marital advice to husbands in a discussion of their book **For Men Only: A Straightforward Guide to the Inner Lives of Women.** (Parts 1, 2, 3)
- Feb. 19 & 20 **What Parents Need to Know About Video Games**—Panelists discuss the negative influences and addictive nature of video games and what parents can do to protect their children. (Parts 1 & 2)

## Those Who "Fall Away"

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Question: *"We had vigorous discussion in Bible class regarding God's sovereignty and human responsibility. What do you make of Hebrews 6:4-6, which speaks of 'those who have fallen away' and cannot repent?"*

The passage you mention contains a fearful warning. It envisions some who once walked among believers and gave every appearance that they were Christians. Yet, although they "tasted" God's benefits and blessings, they now consciously and deliberately renounce Jesus Christ and his sacrifice for sin (Hebrews 6:4-6). "It is impossible to renew them again to repentance," says the author, for they specifically reject the very gospel truth which alone brings repentance in the first place (6:0). They have crossed the point of no return. Their "end" is to be "cursed" and "burned" (6:8, see also Hebrew 10:26-31; 2:29).

"Those who have fallen away" have rejected Jesus' sacrifice—consciously, willfully and intentionally. So far as they are concerned, Jesus ought to be nailed to the cross, and they will walk away and leave him hanging there (6:6). They despise the shed blood and disdain it as filthy, and they mock every pleading of God's gracious Spirit (10:29). They are not beyond forgiveness if they repent, but they are beyond the repentance which seeks to be forgiven. In the end, there is no danger confusing these apostates with genuine believers.

Those who profess saving faith must fear like the plague all spiritual lethargy, any hardened conscience and indifference to sin, any casual attitude toward Christ's atonement. For these are not "things which accompany salvation." They are indicators of superficial faith, warnings that profession does not match reality. They are bright road markers along the path to destruction.



Lorraine Weckerly's aunt, **Martha Bolin**, 80, of Sidney, Ohio, died Monday. She was a sister to Lorraine's late father, LJ Cagle. Lorraine and David will attend her funeral in Ohio on Friday. Our sympathies to Lorraine's family.

## Photography on display



An exhibition of **Elaine Crowder's** photography is on display at the West Lafayette Public Library from **Feb. 5 until March 31.** An opening reception will be held this **Thursday, Feb. 8 from 5:30 until 8:00 PM.**

## Coming this month....

In a long-awaited two-night series, **Joe Ruhl** will present his reflections on **"Why I Believe"** at the 6 PM worship on **February 25 and March 4.**

**February 4, 2007**

*Class: 177 Worship: 250*

*Contribution: \$7,723*

*Budget: \$8,550*

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Winterfest – February 16-18  
Gatlinburg, TN  
"The Prize"

Believe it or not, Winterfest is less than two weeks away! We are really excited about this year's trip as we have several first timers and several guests. You may remember that Josh Boyd wanted a part of the Outreach budget to go toward the Winterfest experience. A couple months ago, Josh came over to the house and made the offer to the teens and several have taken him up on the opportunity. Please keep our group in your prayers as the date approaches. Sometimes, schools are reluctant to work with us in excusing the students' absences; we have to leave early in the morning on Friday to make it to Gatlinburg in time for the evening activities. Pray also that our group will stay well. There is nothing worse than planning for a big trip like this, only to come down sick and not be able to go. Pray also for open hearts and minds. Several of the teens going with us are not Christians and are looking for a relationship with Christ. Winterfest is a great environment for people to make a commitment to Christ...most of the hotels even know that their pools may be used as baptisteries during the weekend. Begin now to pray for our safe travels. We will be traveling in several vans and we want the trip to be as uneventful as possible.

Have you ever wondered what Winterfest is like? It is a great experience learning, worshipping, fellowshiping and just hanging out with ten to fifteen thousand other Christians. Maybe this is your year to come check it out. It isn't too late...you can still go with us. We have a couple places left in the rooms we have reserved at the hotel. We are especially in need of a couple more male chaperones. If you might be available, please let me know as soon as possible.

**Midwest Leadership  
Training for Christ**

The big convention is April 6-8, 2007 at the Marriott East in Indianapolis. Practices have already begun and will continue to intensify as the date draws near. The scrap-book is coming together and students are beginning to study the book of Acts so they will be ready for the Bible Bowl event. Students, you can still participate; see Phyllis Simmerman, Barb Tilley or me. Adults, please remember that everyone who attends the convention must register. If you have not already, please go to [www.mwltc.org](http://www.mwltc.org) and click on the Observer Self-registration link in the middle of the page...it's easy and free.

- Lee



**Roy Stafford**, John's father, had gall bladder surgery on Monday....**Juanita Bird**, Mark Bird's grandmother, consults with doctors this week for treatment for cancer that is now in her lymph nodes....**Virginia Webb**, friend of Annie & Elaine Crowder has been hospitalized.... Continue praying for **Henrietta Frampton, Seth Mullen, Willard Farmer, Annie Crowder, Paul & Argie Verett, Beth Holt, Kaden Koebecke, Linda Smith, Marcia Swails, Lynn Robinson, Delpha Allen, Anna Dale, Minnie Scott, Carrie High, Irene Fox, Ruth Marks, & Burnell Gulden.**

Serving in our military: **Jeremy Crable & Michael Bryenton** (Afghanistan); **Brian Guthrie** (Qatar, Persian Gulf), **Philip Devine & Robbie Mullinax**, stateside training; **Jon Kiefner** (Amanda Guthrie's brother in Iraq); and **Amanda Martin** (South Korea:).

**Good \$ense Budget Class  
this Wednesday,  
Feb. 7, 6 PM**



Beginning this **Wednesday, February 7**, and running for 7 weeks, the **Good \$ense Budget Class**, taught by Janet Boston, will meet at 6:00 PM (*please note time is one hour before Wednesday night Bible classes*). The class is limited to 24 people. You may sign up in the Farris foyer. Questions may be directed to Janet at 477-7668.



- February 7, 6 PM**...Good \$ense budget class
- February 7, 7 PM**...Bible Classes for all
- Feb. 11, 6 PM**...LIFE Groups
- Feb. 16-18**...Teen WINTERFEST in Gatlinburg, TN
- Feb. 25 & March 4, 6 PM**...Joe Ruhl shares "Why I Believe"

*Read:*  
 Psalms 1-21;  
 Acts 1:1-5:16

# 2007 Spiritual Adventure

## Week 8: February 19-25

Part of the reading for this week comes from the first five chapters in the letter of the Acts of the Apostles. There are several themes running through these chapters (e.g. the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the geographical progression of the gospel, and the parallels between Jesus' ministry and the apostles' ministry), but this week I would like to focus on one more theme that runs through these chapters: community.

Have you noticed how the first few chapters really center around community? After the ascension of Christ, we find the followers of Christ huddled together in an upper room and every story thereafter through chapter 5 only increases in intensity regarding community. In chapter 2 community is that which sustains the fledgling church's faith; the followers of Christ have "everything in common" and meet daily. In chapter 4 community becomes a safe haven and empowering force; threatened by outside forces (i.e. the arrest and subsequent threat of Peter and John), the apostles turn to community for support and bold prayer time. Chapter 4 ends with community providing physical sustenance for the people; "all things were common property to them" (v.32). Chapter 5 is also about community. It may not look like it at first glance, but it is. Ananias and Sapphira's punishment was swift and deadly precisely because they were the single greatest threat to the Christ-like community up to that point. All other threats were external, but this one was internal. This fledgling church and her Spirit-empowered community had no room for internal corruption. It had to be dealt with before that corruption spread through the community like a brush fire.

~Dan Cooke

 Weekly Schedule	 Elders	 World Missions
<b>Sunday</b> Worship 8:00 a.m. Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Life Groups 6:00 p.m. <b>Wednesday</b> Bible Study 7:00 p.m.	Bill Bell 463-1139 Joe Matthews 474-8369 Rick Swensen 463-6822 Don Vice 471-8653	Kevin Chambers World Christian Broadcasting Anchor Point, Alaska 99556  Loren and Penny Hollingsworth Phuket, Thailand 83000  City of Children Ensenada, Mexico  Bren and Cheryl White P.O. Box 245 New Market, MD 21774
<b>Elmwood Nursery School &amp; Pre-K</b> Preschool: Tues-Thurs 9-11:30 am Pre-K: Mon-Thurs 9-11:30 am Director, Susan McClain 447-2874	<b> Staff</b>  <b>Ministers</b> Gayle Crowe 447-6940 Lee Porter 463-6993 Dan Cooke 543-7469 <b>Office Manager</b> Sherry Marks 447-2874	

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