

Family & Friends..... February 8, 2023

What a way to start off the month of February! It was a slick mess! Then the Groundhog, Punxsutawney Phil from Pennsylvania tells us we are goin to have six more weeks of winter after he saw his shadow February 2nd. Phil's predictions have not been so successful since 1887, with only a rating of 39%. Let us give him a break; he might just have it right this year. Most people don't care for the Groundhog because of the digging they do in the yards. They are on a farmer's "Most Wanted List," for what they do to their crops. It is said that they are extremely intelligent animals. They make great architects and build pretty impressive homes. Their underground burrows include multiple rooms with different purposes, including a sleep chamber, a nursery chamber, and a waste chamber (what we would call a bathroom). The entire burrow can stretch from eight to sixty-six feet long. A single groundhog can move up to 700 pounds of dirt when burrowing. God's creation is amazing! I love to study all His creation and enjoy it! Thank you Lord for all You give us each beautiful day. To God Be the Glory!

"So God made the wildlife of the earth according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that crawl on the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1:25)

We give a big welcome to Mason and Lyndsey White who placed membership with our church family. We look forward to getting acquainted with you!

We are always happy to have our visitors: Leticia, Tamera, and Maria Long (Haskell), Sandi Koneman (Garfield), Carolyn Brown, Steve & Lael Ellison, Barb Hedrick, and Ted Irby (BV), Andy & Ashley, John and Mason Sites (Bentonville).

Those on our prayer list: Our deepest sympathies go to Joy Sawyer in the loss of Jamie. Abby McSweeny will have meniscus replacement surgery on February 24th. Mike Lacey has been moved to Ashley Rehab in Rogers and requests no visitors at this time. Continue to remember and pray for Jackie Morris, Michael Hale, Frances Thomson, Eva Phillips, Tim Short, Susan Duffy, Becky Donceel, our missionaries, our military and police force, our country, president and leaders. Also for the people of Turkey and Syria impacted by the earthquake.

Items for Fair Haven Children's Home: Salad dressing, brown beans, spinach, green beans, and cleaning supplies. February Food Pantry: Pancake mix and syrup, mac & cheese, beef based soups, 4 lb. sugar, 5 lb. flour, canned carrots, green peas, spaghetti sauce, Alfredo sauce, beefaroni/ravioli, vegetable oil.

God gives us the seasons of our lives. Love you, stay safe.

Karen

**Bella Vista
Church of Christ**

Highway 71 and County Road 40
989 NW McNelly Road
Bentonville, AR 72712

Return Service Requested

LORD'S DAY	
Early Worship	8:15 AM
Bible Class (Livestreamed)	9:30 AM
Worship (Livestreamed)	10:30 AM
WEDNESDAY	
Ladies' Class	9:45 AM
Bible Classes (Livestreamed)	7:00 PM

Phone: 479/273-2434

www.bellavistachurchofchrist.com

ELDERS

Tracy Bowman.....479-899-3089
Don Butcher.....636-548-0458
Dallas Dobbs.....479-640-49439
Perry Johnson.....913-707-8379
Ray Reiss.....903-908-0203

DEACONS

Mark Bagwell John Bowman Chris Johnson Bryan Busbee Joe Hott Mike Spencer
Randall Hunt Terry Roberts Aaron Sloan Tyler White Mike Martin Jerry Snyder

MINISTERS

Jeff Grisham.....479-531-9135
Parker Willis.....615-587-3208
Cory Spruiell.....501-941-4525
Javier & Helmer Rosero..... Bogota, Colombia

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Have We Met?

There is a somewhat humorous encounter that we find in the first chapter of John's gospel in the calling of Nathanael. Jesus had called Phillip to follow him. Phillip recognized the significance of the call from this rabbi and went to find Nathanael. *"Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."* (John 1:45) Nathanael's response was less than enthusiastic. *"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"* (John 1:46) He did, however, follow Phillip to meet Jesus. We read of their encounter in the next few verses of chapter 1:

Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" Nathanael said to him, "How do you know me?" Jesus answered him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered him, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" (John 1:47-49)

Nathanael's initial reaction may have been one of being thoroughly impressed. "How does he know me? Have we met?" What else went through his mind may have been more disturbing. "He knows me. He seems to have known what I was thinking. He knows what I said about him and his hometown. How much more does he know about me?"

This encounter that John records for us is one that is very relatable, humbling, and deeply profound. It is relatable to us because we have all been where Nathanael was. We have all said things we later regret and have had the things we said come back to bite us in one way or another. We have judged too quickly, and have had that judgment proven wrong and have had to admit to our mistakes.

This event is also very humbling. We see Nathanael standing before Jesus completely exposed and unable to hide. We like to be known by others, but we typically only give them

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information that we want them to know about us. In other words, we only share the parts of ourselves that make us look good in their eyes. We want people to think well of us. We realize in this encounter that we cannot hide anything from Jesus. He knows all about us: every thought, every desire, every careless word, all the dark places where we like to keep things hidden, everything is open to his view (Hebrews 4:13). That is a very humbling and vulnerable place to be.

This encounter is also very profound in that even though Jesus knows all about us, even though there is nothing we can hide from him, he still wants us. Jesus calls people, broken and flawed people, people with ugly pasts and presents, people like us. The depth of his love and desire to be with us are incredible. It is not a new thing. Throughout history, God has called, dwelled with, and worked through incredibly flawed people. The nation of Israel wasn't called to be God's people because they were morally better, more powerful, or more influential than the other nations around them (Deuteronomy 7:6-8; 9:4-7). It was because of God and his faithfulness to his covenant and because of his desire that all nations would have the opportunity to be a part of his people.

The invitation of Jesus is offered to us where we are, but as we learn more about what this call means, we become different people. Nathanael's confession after seeing Jesus is one that leads to a change, a complete change. It is one that communicates that we allow Jesus to lead us and to transform us from the old, broken person we used to be into a new person with new direction, new priorities, and real hope. This encounter in John 1 ends with Nathanael being invited to witness something amazing. Jesus answered him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man." (John 1:50-51)

We are invited on that same journey. When we meet Jesus and see him for who he truly is, when we realize his great love for us and his willingness to be with us, it will change us. When we answer the call to follow him, we get to witness the incredible. As we continue to follow and continue to learn and to trust and obey, we will see our lives changed. We will interact differently with those around us, and invite others to join us in following him.

-JEFF GRISHAM

Praise the Lord

The Christian life that we live before God and our fellowman is to be devoted, in its entirety, "to the praise of God's glory." In Ephesians 1:3-14 Paul sums up beautifully the eternal plan of God in redeeming man by His grace, the method by which His redemptive plan was accomplished, and the results in the lives of those who submit to it. The translators of the American Standard Version chose to translate and punctuate these verses as one long, cohesive sentence. Let us examine carefully this entire text.

"Praise be to the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will, to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding."

God, from the beginning, predestined that salvation would be made available to all those who would come to Christ. It was not an irrevocable, individual predestination that a person could not alter or revoke. Predestination in that sense would destroy the free moral agency of man granted to man in the Garden of Eden.

Paul continues: *"And He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment, to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ."*

This plan of God for the redemption of man was put into effect when, according to God's timetable, the time was right. Paul put it in these words, *"But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."* (Galatians 4:4-5)

"In Him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will, in order that we, who were first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of His glory."

We, as Christians, were not chosen by some arbitrary choice on the part of God, but according to the plan of God, which brings conformity to His will. This plan is explained in the

following verses as the "word of truth, the gospel of your salvation."

"And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of His glory."

Christians receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as a down-payment on the final inheritance in heaven. We are "God's possession to the praise of His glory."

Three times in this long paragraph reference is made to the fact that our life is to "praise" our Father in heaven.

Now, many say: "All of life is worship!" Well, a lot depends on your definition of worship. For me, it is better to say: "All life is holy!" There are so many things that we do in life in our recreation, business transactions, and personal relationships that I would not classify as worship. But, we, at all times and in all these areas of our life, are to conduct ourselves in a holy, Christian manner. By doing so we praise, or glorify, our God. All life, then, is holy. Paul said it well in I Corinthians 10:31, *"Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory (praise) of God."* Once Martin Luther, when watching a maid sweep the floor, commented, "She is serving God; God loves a clean floor." Whenever we do our work well, whatever it is, we glorify God.

"Praise Him from whom all blessings flow." With your lips! With your worship! With your life! "Praise the Lord!"

-CHARLES CASH
(1938 - 2018)

SUNDAY SERVANTS: 2/12/23

First Service

Welcome, Prayer & ScriptureTerry Roberts Song LeaderTyler White
Greeters.....Terry Balentine, Phil Ward, David Saunders Communion Scripture & Prayer.....Roger Arnold
Closing Prayer.....Bill Alumbaugh
Nursery Workers Hillary Porter, Janet Alumbaugh

Second Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture.....Mike Spencer Song Leader Lee McCain
Greeters Terry Balentine, Stephen Hunt, Jerry Snyder Communion Scripture & Prayer.....Chad Dobbs
Closing Prayer.....Perry Johnson
Nursery Workers.....Shannon Mitchell, Robin Kinder Van DriverDavid Ellison

February Worship Coordinators

Worship CoordinatorMike York Streaming CoordinatorAaron Sloan
Audio Coordinator Homer Makinson Video CoordinatorMarquis Elliott