

Family & Friends..... August 3, 2022

What do transitions mean? Some people call them "Lifequakes." They may happen three to five times in each person's life or more. It's the process of changing from one state or condition to another. It may happen because of a new job, getting married or divorced, illness, loss of a loved one, birth of a child, loss of a job, or retirement, just to name a few. Life's transitions are usually times that involve significant changes in our life. They are challenging because they force us to let go of the familiar and face the future with a feeling of vulnerability. I'm sure you can think of transitions you may have been through or others you know that have. It can affect us in many ways, sometimes emotionally and physically. I think for me it was losing my husband after fifty plus years. I have had lots of help, love, and encouragement from family, friends, and from my church family that has made it easier for me to adjust. I am learning to expect the change as a normal part of life which is often hard for us to do. We may also face transitions in our spiritual Christian walk with God. We have God's Word to help us through any transition we may face. Our Christian faith and trust in God helps to keep us on the right path, to make the most important transition of all, being with our Lord someday! To God Be the Glory!

Let the word of Christ dwell richly among you, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. Colossians 3:16

We are always blessed with our visitors: Judy Hackworth (Moore, OK), Jack and Parker Spaw (Harrison), Sandi Koneman (Garfield), Gary & Karen Oliveira (Centerton), Craig & Patti Bertschy (Hiwasee), Addie and Alivia Bockholt, Nathanael, Genesis, and Micah Green, Jared & Andrea and Jackson Olmstead, Sally Price (BV), and Ben & Jean Harris.

Those on our prayer list: Pat Musson has been moved to Johnson Medical Center in Clarksville. Remember Monica Klingman's sister, Penny Huskey as she starts chemo, the Hunts's daughter in rehab after her car accident, David & Renee Reeves with their health problems, Becky Donceel after her recent fall, and Charles and Glenda Jones continue to need our prayers. Mike Martin had hernia surgery last week. Please pray for Sue Gartrell's friend, Rosemary Stoll, who has cancer and will also undergo gall bladder surgery. Continue to remember Loiselle Tyler, Sheila Reese, Bob & Vicky Douthit, our missionaries, our military and police force, our country and president.

We give a big welcome to a new member of our church family, Jessie Greer. Jessie placed membership last Sunday. Seek her out and get acquainted. We love you Jessie!

Items needed for Fair Haven Children's Home: Salmon, paper plates & cups, spaghetti, mustard, and black-eyed peas. August Food Pantry: Canned vegetables, beans- dry and canned, rice, peanut butter, jelly/honey, oil- vegetable, canola or avocado.

God uses suffering to strengthen our faith. 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	8:15 AM
Early Worship	9:30 AM
Bible Class (Livestreamed)	10:30 AM
Worship (Livestreamed)	
WEDNESDAY	9:45 AM
Ladies' Class	7:00 PM
Bible Classes (Livestreamed)	

Phone: 479/273-2434

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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
Randall Hunt Harold Phillips Terry Roberts Aaron Sloan Mitchell Whittington

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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Who Is First?

As we follow the life and ministry of Jesus, we see and hear some really extraordinary things. In his teachings we hear some things that are difficult on several levels. Some of the things he instructs are just difficult to do. Things like, "if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles." Or, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." (Matthew 5:41 and 44) Some of the things he says were just hard for people to understand. In John 6, after Jesus had spoken of his being the bread that came down from heaven, many there that day said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" (John 6:60) Others are just difficult because we see them as maybe a bit harsh, or just plain unexpected to hear from Jesus. One example of this is found in Luke 9.

As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." And Jesus said to him, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." Yet another said, "I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home." Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:57-62)

Here we see three people expressing a desire to follow Jesus, and his response to each of them. The first person's declaration of intent to follow seems to be a spontaneous declaration in response to seeing Jesus. The response this person gets from Jesus may not be what was expected. It seems as though Jesus wants this person to know that the path of discipleship is not an easy one. He wants to give that person an idea of the

DISCIPLES



commitment that is being made. After all, a commitment to live the life of a disciple made without what that entails is a one that may very well be abandoned when difficulty comes.

The responses to the next two people are the more puzzling. Responding to the call of Jesus to follow, these two seem to respond well. Each expresses a desire to follow Jesus. Each has what certainly seem to be reasonable requests prior to devoting their lives to discipleship. One would like to go and bury his father, and the other just wants to say goodbye to family. The responses given by Jesus to these two individuals seem a bit harsh. To the first Jesus says, "Leave the dead to bury their own dead." And to the second, (if you will allow the paraphrase) "You may not be fit for the kingdom." These seem a bit abrasive and maybe even a little unfeeling. That is hard to reconcile with what we know about Jesus from his entire life and ministry. So, why does he respond they way in which he does in this narrative?

One reason may be that these are commitments made to follow Jesus at a later time, in the future. The message of Jesus, the message of the Kingdom, was and is urgent and important. The good news that God has acted, that he has sent his Son so that we can be reconciled back to him and have life, is so urgent, so important, that it should motivate an immediate change in direction. Putting off devoting our lives to following Jesus is dangerous. The more we delay, the more likely it is that other things will crowd in ahead of making that decision.

This is found not only in making the initial decision to follow Jesus, but also in working within the Kingdom. We may think, "I really want to get involved and do more. I would like to get involved with a ministry and really get busy. But first....." We may have a lot of things that fill in that blank. The reality is that when we begin to think of the things we "need" to do first, that list often gets longer and longer, and more things keep us from putting our hands to the plow.

The other reason for the response Jesus gives to these two may be found in the initial response to his call to follow. Luke tells us that each said, "Let me first." Following Jesus and "Me first" are not compatible. Jesus wants first place in our lives. It is not because he is egotistical; it is because he knows that life works better if he is first. Humanity has tried the "me first" way. It didn't lead to a good place. It still doesn't lead to a good place. In order for life to be what God meant for it to be, life as it was intended, with a relationship with God, we need to make Jesus the priority. Will we step off the throne and let Jesus reign? Or is there something we would like to do first?

-JEFF GRISHAM

Spirit-Led or Self-Led?

When the Spirit is mentioned we get nervous. Preachers shun the subject. When we do speak, we are cautious. Relax! If we can feel comfortable with God and Jesus, we can be comfortable with the Spirit. They are one. To be Spirit-led is to be God-led, Christ-led. God dwells in us. Jesus once said, "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them." (John 14.23) Paul writes to Timothy, "Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us." (2 Timothy 1.14) Consider this scripture carefully: "You are controlled not by your sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness." (Romans 8.9-10/NIV) Without bias, just accept these scriptures for what they say in the context from which they are found.

Who controls your life and mine: God or the world, the Spirit or the flesh, His nature or our own sinful nature? Are we Spirit-led or self-led people? Let's note what it means to be Spirit-led. We will use one of the most familiar chapters in the Bible, the twelfth chapter of Romans.

Spirit-led people are non-conformists. Be not conformed to this world. (Romans 12.2.) James tells us that conformity with the world is enmity with God. (James 4:4) John tells us that if we love the world, we cannot love God. (John 2.15-17) Here is the answer to our dilemma. We must conform to the Holy Spirit rather than our spirit. It must be what He wants, not what we want. Paul says we can accomplish this difficult task by mind renewal, allowing God to transform our minds. Are we willing?

Spirit-led people are not into pride. Spirit-led people do not think of themselves above what is reasonably right, but rather see themselves in light of God's gift. "For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think in sound judgment as God has allotted to each a measure of faith." (Romans 12.3)

Pride, number one-ism, is consuming the church. Instead of being people of the towel, serving; we clamor for thrones. In Romans twelve no one gift is elevated above another. The preacher (prophet) is no more important than the giver, the teacher, leader, the encourager or those who show mercy. Scripture tells us that as the body of Christ, no one part of the

body is to be elevated above the other, or it loses its ability to function properly. We may not want to admit it but Spirit-led people are those who let go of their pride, find their place in the body, and go to work with their God-given talents.

Spirit-led people hate evil and love good. Abhor what is evil; cleave to what is good. (Romans 12.9) How do we always know what is right and wrong, good and evil? This is one of the works of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit has given us the Word, the Bible.

Jesus promised His apostles that the Spirit would guide, lead them into all truth. (John 16.12) He does no less today. No, not through new and miraculous revelations, but through the Word. Preachers do not determine truth, parents and grandparents do not determine truth, the church or some council cannot determine truth, Elders and Deacons do not determine truth. The Holy Spirit does! Spirit-led people are genuine Bible students with a hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Spirit-led people love peace and unity. When differences and hurt come, we must become more like Jesus (Turn the other cheek!) Spirit-led people are not into revenge. They never pay back evil for evil to anyone. (Romans 12.17) Paul concludes by saying that we should make every possible effort to live at peace with all men. But then you see, the Jesus in us would not allow us to act in any other manner, would it?

Spirit-led or self-led? I hope the next time someone asks us, "Is the church where you go a Spirit-led church? Are you a Spirit-led Christian?" that without any nervousness or hesitation, we say, YES!

-RANDALL CASELMAN

From *Lifelines*, April 18, 2007

SUNDAY SERVANTS: 8/7/22

First Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture Bill Alumbaugh Song Leader Sammy McCain
Greeters David Saunders, Terry Roberts Communion Scripture & Prayer Joe Hott
Closing Prayer Aaron Sloan
Nursery Workers Amy Metheny, Shannon Hubanks

Second Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture Cory Roberts Song Leader Lee McCain
Greeters John Bowman, Mike Johnson Communion Scripture & Prayer Mitchell Whittington
Closing Prayer Mike Martin
Nursery Workers Karla Winslow, Vicki Lunsford Van Driver Jim Branstetter

August Worship Coordinators

Worship Coordinator Harold Phillips Streaming Coordinator Kyle Dillard
Audio Coordinator Homer Makinson Video Coordinator Marquis Elliott