

Family & Friends..... September 1, 2021

We have been invaded by the Hummingbirds. They are numerous in our backyard and are chasing one another away from the feeder. There is always a bully in the mix. This little dude is much smaller than the other hummingbirds, but sits guard at the top of the feeder. He would only get off long enough to chase the other ones away. This was his stash of nectar. He might be little but fearless. He had his stake-out spot at a vantage point and meant to defend it. Hummingbirds are very territorial and aggressive. They can't afford to share flowers during times when there are not many blossoms. The aggression is so ingrained in them, they just can't figure out the feeders are a different source. I saw them fly forward, backward, upside down, and hover, but when they spread their wings and glided in for a landing at the feeder, it was amazing. They will soon be headed for their journey home before winter and need lots of fuel to make their trip. We as Christians are also on a journey here on earth to someday be with our Lord and enjoy eternal salvation. The hummingbird is tireless in its pursuit for finding sweetness. They remind us of staying on track for what we want while enjoying the process. I can't think of any journey that would be more worthwhile than the one with my brothers and sisters in Christ, while serving our Lord, and bringing others to Christ! You are an amazing Lord! To God Be the Glory!

This is the day which the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24

Those on our prayer list: Our heartfelt sympathy goes to Robin Spencer and family in the loss of her aunt. Keep those who are recovering from surgery, Andrew Albers, Judith Carmical, Doug Klingman, Lee McCain, Chris Oneal, Phil Ward. Those with Covid need our prayers: Don & Nan's daughter, Dana & her husband, Keith, Ramin Salimi, Conner Evans asked for prayers for his health issues. Bob Musson will have surgery on September 3rd. Pat Musson is through with chemo and waiting for surgery date. Continue to remember and pray for Lou Hollo, Susan Duffy, Robbie Arnold, Donovan Harris, Mike Lacey, Joe Hott, Shannon Hubanks uncle, Zeryl, Bob Douthih, Mary Montgomery, Priscilla Paul, Randall Applebee, Loisell Tyler, our missionaries, our military and police force, our country and president, and a cure for the Covid virus.

A big welcome to our new members, Jack & Tammy Johnson! We are looking forward to getting acquainted with you and serving our Lord together!

The items needed for Fair Haven Children's Home: hot chocolate mix, syrup & pancake mix, canned salmon, egg noodles, and freezer bags. Our Food Pantry for September: oatmeal, spaghetti sauce, black beans, chili beans & chili seasoning, pinto beans, pickles, and ketchup.

Trust God for today---and prepare for tomorrow. 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

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ELDERS

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

DEACONS

Mark Bagwell John Bowman Chris Johnson Bryan Busbee Joe Hott Robert Horton
Randall Hunt Harold Phillips Terry Roberts Aaron Sloan Mitchell Whittington

MINISTERS

Jeff Grisham.....479-531-9135
Parker Willis.....615-587-3208
Selwyn Nel.....Cape Town, South Africa
Javier & Helmer Rosero.....Bogota, Colombia

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Bella Vista

Running the Race

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. (Hebrews 12:1-3 ESV)

The author of Hebrews paints a beautiful picture for us in these three verses. After calling to mind many people who, by faith and with God working through them, accomplished some amazing things, he invites us to imagine these folks as a cheering section urging us on to the finish line. What an amazing picture! Imagine people like Abel, Enoch, and Noah all watching as we make our way toward the goal. Think of Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, all those folks whose stories we know so well rooting for us to make it home. All these heroes of faith, some well known, some not known as well, and some completely unknown, who died without seeing what we have seen (Hebrews 11:13) watching with anticipation for us to finish the race.

It is not just these Bible Heroes. There are others whose names the world may never know, but that are near and dear to each one of us, whose faces we see in our great cloud of witnesses when this passage is read who stand cheering us on to victory. We can almost hear their chants. "You can do this." "We're with you." "Just keep going." "Watch out." "Don't get tripped up." The author suggests that there is another message for us as we continue on this path, "Fix your eyes on Jesus."

HEBREWES



What Does It Take?

The word that is translated “Looking to” (ESV) or “Fixing our eyes on” (NIV) means, “to direct one’s attention without distraction.” Think about the things that tend to distract us. The events of the day - violence, injustice, unrest, disaster, disease, and disappointments – can draw our eyes away from Jesus. Financial struggles, pain, relationship troubles, and the like can distract us from the goal. Sin that seems to constantly nip at our heels can constrict our movement toward the finish line. We are to look past those, or maybe better yet, through those to Jesus. When we fix our eyes on him, what do we see?

We see one who knew first hand what injustice looked like. We see the one who was truly innocent, without fault of any kind, declared guilty by sinful people and executed as a criminal. We see the one who “He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness.” (1 Peter 2:24) We see this One who was rejected by the very people to whom he was sent, but stayed focused on the will of the Father. We see in his example the direction we are to take when all these distractions come our way.

We see one who was no stranger to pain and suffering. From seeing the crowds who were like sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36), to being in the upper room beside the bed of Jairus’s deceased daughter (Mark 5:37-42), to weeping at the tomb of Lazarus (John 11:35), we see a man who in the words of Isaiah was acquainted with grief. At the cross we see the torture and the anguish and hear the cry of “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” We see the one who endured this pain because of his trust in the Father to raise him from death. We see that even in our worst pain and despair, God still has us in his hand.

We see one who endured this for the sake of others. Sometimes it is easy as all the distractions of life come our way to let our focus shift to us individually and what we are facing. That’s a natural instinct. But fixing our eyes on Jesus reminds us that others are watching how we react to the world around us. It reminds us that we are a part of someone else’s “great cloud of witnesses.” Those around us, our families, friends, brothers and sisters in Christ, children, grandchildren, coworkers, fellow students, need to see evidence of the hope we have in Jesus. They face or will face the same obstacles we do in the race that is set before us. Looking to Jesus encourages them to direct their gaze in the same direction. May God continue to bless us and give us strength for the path ahead as we continually fix our eyes on the “author and perfecter of our faith.”

-JEFF GRISHAM

What do a storm at sea, a funeral, and housework have in common? What do those things have in common with a baseball game, a road trip, and your day off? Or what do all of these have in common with nothing to wear, hypocrites, and long-winded preachers? Are you seeing a pattern yet? One more, what do all of the above have to do with who you choose as friends, how to care for aging parents, and your hometown?

The answer is that all of these things can distract you from Jesus. They can blind you from seeing Jesus in the way he needs to be seen. The storm at sea distracted Peter from Jesus and he began sinking into the sea (Matthew 14.30). The death of his father prevented a man from following Jesus (Luke 9.59). Martha was focused on housework instead of Jesus (Luke 10.38-42). Sports often come before Jesus, especially when it involves our kids. So do vacationing, and the need to do things around the house on Sundays, your only day off. You’ve heard many excuses for not going to church – nothing to wear, hypocrites, boring preachers. People chose not to see Jesus clearly because of many different things, such as his associating with tax collectors and sinners (Mark 2.15-17), how to support parents (Matthew 15.1-9), even his hometown (John 1.46).



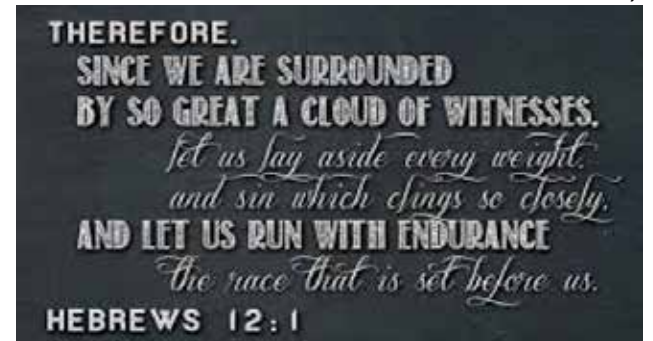
Distractions from seeing Jesus clearly and following him totally come in all shapes and sizes. They did in 1st century, and they still do in the 21st century. Things that cause us to take our eyes off of Jesus are often things that are good in themselves. Doing housework is a good thing. But Martha was told it was not as good as sitting at the feet of Jesus listening to what he is saying (Luke 10.41-42). Dedicating your money to God is a very good thing to do, but not as a means to avoid doing something God commanded (Matthew 15). Sports and vacations are good things. But if these things hinder our focus on Jesus, they become dangerous to our spiritual relationship with God.

The things in this world are for our enjoyment, but if the cares and riches and pleasures of this world crowd out our productivity for Jesus, they become perils to our souls (Luke 8.14).

I know you know these things. I know you know that we are to seek the kingdom of God above all else (Matthew 6.33). I know you know that the most important thing we are to do is to love God with our whole being (Mark 12.29-30). I know you know that we are to turn away from things that distract us and fix our eyes on Jesus (Hebrews 12.1-2). And I also know you know that knowing and doing are not the same (James 1.22).

That’s why we need to be reminded of these things from time to time. That’s why we need to ask ourselves regularly, “What does it take to distract me from Jesus?” Church traditions? Sports? Family? Work? Recreation? Worry? Money? It’s a personal question that only you can answer for yourself. What does it take to distract you?

-JOE CHESSER
Jackson, MO



SUNDAY SERVANTS: 9/5/21

First Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture Dallas Dobbs Song Leader Lee McCain
Greeters Phil Ward, Joe Hott Communion Scripture & Prayer Harold Phillips
Closing Prayer Aaron Sloan
Nursery Workers Jerri Dobbs, Tori Hunt

Second Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture Don Butcher Song Leader Mark Bagwell
Greeters John Bowman, Don Cope Communion Scripture & Prayer Bryan Busbee
Closing Prayer Tom Verkler
Nursery Workers Bobette York, Vicki Lunsford Van Driver Jim Branstetter

September Worship Coordinators

Worship Coordinator Mark Tucker Streaming Coordinator Abby Willis
Audio Coordinator Jim Caylor Video Coordinator Chris Johnson