

Family & Friends..... September 22, 2021

Is It True It Once Rained Cobwebs? Well, yes it did. The great Cobweb Storm in October of 1881 was seen by many people. It happened from Milwaukee to Sheboygan, Wisconsin, along the western shore of Lake Michigan. The people saw strong white strands (called silk) which varied greatly in size from a mere speck to 60 feet in length. It filled the sky thickly as high as the eye could see. This is also known as ballooning. The spiders climb to some high area and produce the silk. The silk gets caught in the wind and the spiders tag along for the ride as the wind carries them away. They like to do this when migrating. They can travel a great distance with little energy. Scientists say it happens almost everywhere, except usually just one or two spiders. What happens when there are millions of spiders, long trains of silk floating in the air, and land in colonies in one area? Your town might look like a scary spider movie! This happened in Australia in 2012. The entire town was covered with a layer of spider webs. Oh, me! So yes it can rain cobwebs. We might and we might not see this event here, but we can see some beautiful cobwebs along the roads. We saw many last year after we went through Roaring River on the fences that ran along the road on a cool morning. Our Creator is so amazing! God is good!

Whose confidence is fragile, and whose trust is a spider's web.
Job 8:14

We are happy to have our visitors each week: Aileen Gregoire (Bentonville), Brad & Kelli Homeyer (Bella Vista). It was good to have John Hayes & family with us and Charles & Cindy Harvey and Jacob & Caitlyn.

Those on our prayer list: Pat Musson is scheduled for her surgery on September 29th. Vickie Schuster's parents are both improving. Don & Nan's daughter, Dana, and husband are now well and over Covid. We love good news! Shirley Hales's niece and her husband, Dave & Sara Vogelchanz, are fighting Covid. Gay Lynn Weldon's sister-in-law, April, has been in the hospital with an obstruction. Continue to remember those who have recently lost loved ones: Monica Klingman, in the loss of her cousin, Brenda Robinson, Wanda Coffee's cousin, Brent, Carylon Watson's sister, Judy, Joyce Hurst's uncle, Hugh Sawyer. Ava Sailors lost a sister. Continue to remember and pray for our missionaries, our military and police force, our country and president, and a cure for the Covid virus.

We welcome our new members Carrie Stewart and Joan Hopkins. We are looking forward to knowing you, and worshipping our Lord with you both.

We are happy to announce that Matt Grisham made his first solo flight last week and did well! Congratulations Matt!

Items needed for Fair Haven Children's Home: juice, spam, canned green beans, elbow macaroni, and pumpkin. Our Food Pantry: oatmeal, spaghetti sauce, black beans, chili beans, pinto beans, and chili seasoning.

Keep your eyes on God; He never takes His eyes off you. 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

www.bellavistachurchofchrist.com

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

Non-Profit Org.
 Permit No. 206
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 Bentonville, AR
 72712

Bella Vista

In the Wilderness

If we do a Google search for wilderness images, we will find a lot of forests, rivers, and/or mountains. We see generally untamed areas. The dictionary defines wilderness as an uncultivated, uninhabited, and inhospitable region. It is a place where conditions can be harsh. It may be thought of as a place where resources are scarce, where danger lurks and a place of loneliness. For most of us, it probably doesn't sound like a place where we would want to be, especially on a long-term basis.

Yet in Scripture, there's quite a bit of time spent in the wilderness. Abraham was called from Ur to follow God through the wilderness to Canaan (Genesis 12). Moses spent decades as a shepherd for his father-in-law in the wilderness. God called him and sent him back to Egypt to lead Israel to Canaan, where Moses would spend the next 40 years in the wilderness (Exodus – Deuteronomy). When King David was just a kid, he spent time shepherding his father's sheep in the wilderness (1 Samuel 16 and 17).

When we come nearer to the time of the ministry of Jesus, we find John the Baptist in the wilderness preparing the way for Jesus. Jesus comes to the Jordan to receive baptism by John. The heavens are opened, the Spirit descends and God speaks, declaring that Jesus is His Son. Then the Spirit leads Jesus into the wilderness where he fasts for 40 days and is tempted by Satan. Although the wilderness may not sound like a place where we would like to be, it seems quite a few significant things happen in the wilderness. Let's look at what we can expect to find there.

In the wilderness is where we learn to follow God's lead. Genesis 12:1 reads, "Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the

MEMBERS



the land that I will show you."The only way Abraham would find his destination would be to follow God. When you and I answer the call of God, one of the first things we do is to submit to his leadership. We do this, not knowing where exactly he will lead us, but realizing the need for his leadership in our lives. We see where our own sense of direction has led us and realize that he is our only hope to make the change we need to make.

In the wilderness is where we learn to depend on God to provide. In Deuteronomy Moses recounts the events of Israel's journey from Egypt to Canaan. *"And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD."* (Deuteronomy 8:2-3) The 40-year wandering taught Israel what it was like to depend on God. As we live in a broken and often inhospitable world we need to see God's provision, God's providence at work and learn to lean on him more each day.

In the wilderness we learn to look out for one another. Maybe one of the most well known Bible narratives is the battle between David and Goliath. When David offered to go fight Goliath, King Saul tried to discourage and convince him of the danger that he would face. Listen to David's response in 1 Samuel 17:34-35. *But David said to Saul, "Your servant used to keep sheep for his father. And when there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb from the flock, I went after him and struck him and delivered it out of his mouth. And if he arose against me, I caught him by his beard and struck him and killed him."* As we learn to follow God's lead and watch for his provision in our own lives, we will also meet others trying to navigate life in the wilderness. We need to look out for their needs and serve as a safe place as we journey together.

In the wilderness we are reminded that the King is on his way. As we encounter John the Baptist in the wilderness his role is to prepare the people for the coming King. That King, our King, Jesus came and ministered. He came and lived and died and was resurrected. He came and defeated Satan in the wilderness and at the tomb, and at all points in between. Here in the wilderness we see the example that he has set for us, we pray for his return and we are reminded of the victory that we have because of what the King has done for us.

May God bless us as we live here in the wilderness.

-JEFF GRISHAM

Evaluating Our Spiritual Progress

"Continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life." (Philippians 2:12-16)

We all need to take account from time to time of where we are, how far we have come and where we are headed. There are all kinds of criteria for such evaluations: businessmen look at profits and losses; radio and television stations use Arbitron and Neilson ratings; ranchers look at adjusted weaning weights of their calves; poultry people figure feed conversion and mortality rates. Today we measure our weight and our bank accounts - but all too often we never measure our progress as God's people. What are some signs of spiritual maturity, kingdom faithfulness?

Paul says we are to work out our salvation. Are we making any progress? We are either growing or dying; either moving closer to being what God wants us to be, or we are moving away from Him. There is no middle ground. Jesus denounces the lukewarmness in His letter to the church at Laodicea. Christianity is an *add-on religion*. *Make every effort to add to your faith, goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive.* Spiritual maturity, kingdom faithfulness is a continual process.

With humility. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.* Pride says, I can do it myself, I can do enough good works to earn my salvation. Some of us in this church are worn out, ready to quit. Others have already quit because they're trying to *be* good enough and *do* enough good works to get to heaven. Stop! This kind of thinking will only frustrate us. Good people are not going to heaven! Forgiven people are going there. Paul said, *Jesus humbled Himself and took on the very nature of a servant.* Are we willing?

Without murmuring and complaining. A third sign of progress is learning to live without complaint. God hates our overlooking his daily blessings only to focus on what we don't like in life. The Israelites were condemned during their

wilderness wandering because they murmured - even though God led them, fed them with manna, provided them with water, and kept their clothes and sandals from wearing out. Are we guilty of such dissatisfaction with His daily presence, promises, and blessings? Spiritual maturity is found in *praising* God instead of asking Him for more and more and more.

Maintaining moral purity. We are to be *blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a depraved world.* Scripture teaches us that we have a dual nature, flesh and spirit. Spiritual maturity is found in how we control these two battling forces within us. *So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other. The acts of the flesh are obvious.....But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.....Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*

Influencing others. The great commission is for each and every child of God. Each of us can and must *go into all the world...Our world...* exemplifying Christ. Each of us must show others the way of life that leads to eternal salvation as *we shine like stars in the universe, holding out the word of life.* Paul is promoting life-style evangelism. Some may not be able to teach or preach, but each and every one of us can let Jesus be seen in us.

How do we measure up? Let's stop and evaluate our spiritual progress, and then make the appropriate adjustments.

-RANDALL CASELMAN

From *Lifelines*, June 28, 2006

SUNDAY SERVANTS: 9/26/21

First Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture	Bill Alumbaugh	Song Leader	Anthony Christiano
Greeters	Phil Ward, Joe Hott	Communion Scripture & Prayer	Randall Hunt
Closing Prayer.....		Dallas Dobbs	
Nursery Workers		Mary Bell Banks, Shannon Hubanks	

Second Service

Welcome, Prayer & Scripture.....	Curt LaPorte	Song Leader	Lee McCain
Greeters	John Bowman, Don Cope	Communion Scripture & Prayer	Stephen Hunt
Closing Prayer.....		Ray Reiss	
Nursery Workers	Robin Spencer, Angie Christiano	Van Driver	Wilma Bagwell

September Worship Coordinators

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