

CHAPEL NEWS

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MISSION:

- » **To serve as a source of information regarding the Chapel, its staff, services, programs and planned activities**
- » **To encourage all members to -
portunities for the exercise of their gifts within the Body and for personal spiritual growth**
- » **To provide a handy reference source for future scheduled events and names of persons to contact with questions**



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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WHY ARE BELIEVERS STILL HERE: THE BOTTOM LINE

— by John MacArthur

This article is an edited version of John MacArthur's recent exposition of 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 at Believers Chapel, culminating with verse 21: "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

If there were one thing that I would want to say to you it is that you would understand why you are on this earth. I want to get down to the irreducible minimum, if I can. People, I think, sometimes miss the obvious at this point. Some people think we have been saved to worship. And that's true, but our worship is truncated. Our worship is corrupted. Our worship is limited because we are in our fallenness still. We have a hard time concentrating on worship, focusing on worship.

Why are we here? There's one reason. There's only one. There's only one thing that you can't do in heaven, and that's preach the gospel to the unconverted. That's the only reason you're here. Everything else gets put on hold. Your holiness is put on hold. Your perfection is put on hold. Your worship is put on hold. Your full service is put on

hold. Everything is put on hold. Imagine that. The purposes of God, God hits the pause button for all His purposes in order to fulfill one purpose that you must be fulfilling or there's no point in you being here. God has literally interrupted the eternal decree, which is election to glorification, election through salvation, sanctification to glorification. We're stuck in that sanctification mode, left here without the completion for one sole purpose. Not many, one. And it's laid out in that passage.

We're here for one great purpose, the fulfillment of the ministry of reconciliation by means of the message of reconciliation. You will notice from verse 18 through 20, five times you see the word "reconcile." This is reconciliation between the sinner and God. We're all caught up by the purposes of God in the calling to this ministry of seeing sinners reconcile to God. That's what we do. That's why we're here.

Sometimes when I'm sitting on a plane and people say, "What do you do?" I say, "I tell people they can be reconciled to God. Are you interested?" I've had people change their seat. I've had people go to the restroom and never come back.

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I confess that's more confrontation than some people want, but that's the bottom line, isn't it? That's the bottom line. It's about reconciliation of an alienated sinner to a just God who will punish that sinner forever in hell. So I'm just trying to get you to understand this isn't one of many elements of the Christian life. This is it. It's why we're here. It's why you live where you live, work where you live, know the people you know and are exposed to the people that you're going to be meeting in the future. Because you are an instrument of God in the ministry of reconciliation with the message of reconciliation that is the only hope for the world.

God is by nature a loving, forgiving savior. God is by nature a Father who runs, who pulls up His robe and brings shame on Himself in the Middle East, runs through the village to throw His arms around a stinking, repentant sinner. That's God in that picture. God is not a reluctant redeemer. God is not a recalcitrant savior. He is by nature a savior ... God says

to Adam, "In the day you sin, you die." Guess what? He lived over 900 years. What does that tell you about the nature of God? That even in a physical, temporal sense, God is merciful. He is a savior by nature. This is what allows common grace to exist.

God is not a reluctant savior. He planned it. Before the foundation of the world, He planned in Christ to redeem the elect and wrote their names down. And all of human history is simply the outworking of God's decree. God is the reconciler.

This is the message we have for sinners, to say to a sinner, "God will forgive all your sins. Are you interested?" That's the bottom line. This is not about He wants you to have a better marriage. He wants you to get bumped up a few notches on the social scale. This is not about He wants you to have a better job, He wants you to create the world where you're happy. This is not about that. This is not the message of the prosperity preachers who basically are telling the world what the devil's

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telling them. They're the devil's instruments. Jesus wants you healthy, wealthy, and happy. That's the devil's message. This is about forgiveness, which then is about sin. This is all about sin and all about forgiveness and if somebody is not interested in forgiveness of sin and deliverance from both its reality and its consequences, then you have nothing to offer, nothing.

Reconciliation is by the will of God, by the act of forgiveness, by the response of faith. Here's the key: by the work of substitution, by the work of substitution. Because you say, "Look, how can God forgive the sinner?" You mean that God forgives the sinner just out of sympathy? Here comes the sinner. "I believe. I'm sorry. I repent." Does God just say, "Okay. I'll forgive you?" Well, that is a problem. Paul shapes that problem with these words. How can God be just and the justifier of sinners? Do you get that? In Romans, how can God be just and the justifier of sinners?

How can God forgive you? By punishing someone in your place. Who did He choose? "He" God "made Him who knew no sin to be sin" who's that? Short list. One. "He made Him who knew no sin sin." That's literally what it says. "He made Him who knew no sin sin on our behalf" for us.

On the cross, God treated Jesus—listen—as if He had personally committed all the sins of all the people who would ever believe through all of human history, though in fact He committed none of them. He treated Him—I'll say it again—as if He had committed every sin ever committed by every person who would ever believe through all of human history, though He committed none of them. He punished Him for every sin ever committed by every person who would ever believe through all of human history, and He punished Him in full." You say, "How is that possible in a three-hour period of darkness?" It is possible for Him to absorb an infinite amount of punishment because in Himself He is an infinite person? I'll

say it a simpler way: On the cross, God treated Jesus as if He lived my life with all its sins. On the cross, God treated Jesus as if He lived your life and punished Him in full for every one of your sins. He was guilty of none. He was punished for all.

It's an actual atonement, but that's not all. That's only the front half of substitution. Look at the back half. "In order that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." It's hard to understand how God could put our sins on Christ, punish Him for our sins. But it's equally hard for me to understand how God could take His righteousness and put it on me. He lived a complete life into adulthood, tempted every way possible that a human being can be tempted and yet without sin, right? He was in all points tempted like we are, yet without sin.

Why does there have to be this complete sinless life? Answer: so that sinless life can be credited to your account. Understand it this way. On the cross, God treats Jesus as if He lived your life so that He can treat you as if you lived His. He imputes His righteousness to you in the same way He imputed your sins to Him. It is the massive reality of the work of justification and substitution. Imputation is not just our sins imputed to Christ. It's His righteousness imputed to us. So when God looks at Jesus on the cross, He sees us, and is satisfied with the punishment. When He looks at us, He sees Christ and is satisfied with the righteousness.

This is the glory of the message of the gospel. This is why we are here. Therefore in verse 20 we are what? Ambassadors. What is an ambassador? A representative of an alien monarchy, an alien kingdom, an alien ruler. We're here on earth as ambassadors for Christ and our job is to recognize that God wants us to be the instruments through whom He reconciles sinners. That's why we're here.



**ON THE CROSS, GOD TREATED JESUS AS IF HE LIVED
YOUR LIFE AND PUNISHED HIM IN FULL FOR
EVERY ONE OF YOUR SINS. HE WAS GUILTY OF NONE.
HE WAS PUNISHED FOR ALL.**

VBS 2014

— by Vicki Robertson

THE LIFE OF JOSEPH

Sixty-five children took part in VBS this year, as the auditorium was transformed into ancient Egypt for a study of the life of Joseph. The VBS players opened each day with a dramatic portrayal of an episode in the life of this man of God. (Was that really a camel onstage?) Daily activities reinforced lessons of trust, forgiveness, and reconciliation. To show our appreciation to the teen helpers who helped make these activities possible, a drawing was held especially for them to win tickets to an FC Dallas soccer game.

On Friday, the children demonstrated what they had learned by singing songs and reciting verses for their parents. This program is available on DVD by request through the media ministry. As an added blessing to the congregation, on the Sunday after VBS the children sang and recited Scripture during the 11:00 a.m. service.

One of the most rewarding things for all those who have a part in VBS is reading the children's replies to the question, "What did you learn this week?" Some replies included:

"If God makes something bad happen, He'll turn it into good."

"Love your enemies as yourself."

"Trust God and be sweet, patient, and kind."

"You can forgive others like God forgives you."

"Always believe in the Lord no matter if you feel like He isn't with you!!"

"The Holy Word of God, ... the only thing that matters is His Word."

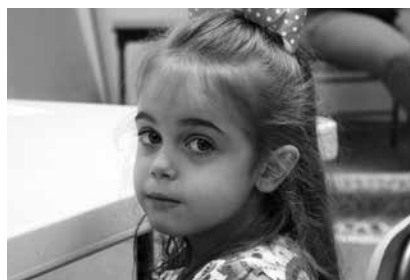
"God gives trials for us to learn through them."

"Joseph was very similar to Jesus."

As these comments reveal, the children benefited greatly from the teaching they received. One second grader even asked, "Will you tell me what we're going to study tomorrow, because I want to read ahead."

Many thanks to all who participated in a very fruitful week.







The theme this school year is “Sailing Life’s Sea – Acts II” This is the fourth volume of the Footsteps of Faith curriculum in the New Testament having 15 lessons. Covering Paul’s 3rd missionary journey, some of the epistles and a brief look at the book of Revelation. Please encourage your child(ren) to bring their Bibles each week.

Sept. 03 NO FOOTSTEPS

Sept. 10 NO FOOTSTEPS

Sept. 17 Welcome Back Pizza & Games Party

Sept. 24 Lesson 1

Oct. 01 Lesson 2

Oct. 08 Lesson 3

Oct. 15 Lesson 4

Oct. 22 Quiztron: Review Lessons 1-4

Oct. 29 Reformation Party

** Schedule is tentative*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2014

Saturday, August 9: Couples Ministry

Sunday, August 17: Promotion Sunday

Saturday, September 13: Couples Ministry

Sunday, September 28: Church-wide luncheon, following the Ministry of the Word service, gym

ONGOING

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP DINNER

Men's Fellowship Dinner meets the second Monday of every month at the Chapel from 6:30 to 8:30 P.M. For details contact Jim Frazier at (972) 233-7566.



Newsletter Deadline for the October/November Issue: September 7

Contact Mike Amis: (972) 238-7421/amismediat@aol.com or Sarah Terrell: sarahdterrell@gmail.com

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

Use your gifts to serve the body at Believers Chapel. Contact the individuals listed below for more information.

MERCY MINISTRY

The Mercy Ministry prepares frozen dishes for special needs. Contact Stephanie Davidson at (972) 239-5372.

HELPS MINISTRY

The Helps Ministry helps others within our body who have need of small repairs such as electrical, plumbing, lighting, carpentry, etc. Contact Ray Smuland at (214) 340-5521 or Lorrie Baird at (972) 239-5371.

MEDIA MINISTRY

The Tape Ministry prepares tapes for worldwide distribution. Contact George Brittain at (214) 674-0367.

Believers Chapel web site: www.believers-chapel.org. S. Lewis Johnson Institute web site: www.sljinstitute.net.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MINISTRY

The Sunday School Ministry teaches or helps with special needs. Contact the church office at (972) 239-5371.

NURSERY MINISTRY

The Nursery Ministry teaches and cares for children from birth-kindergarten. Contact Suzi Faaitiiti at (214) 228-3301.

HOSPITALITY MINISTRY

The Hospitality Ministry serves food and refreshments for church-wide functions. The time commitment is minimal due to rotational grouping. Contact Pat Austin at (214) 368-5918.

OTHER MINISTRY

Other ministry opportunities are available. See the welcome desk for more information.