



Who has your heart and allegiance? Who is Love? God is Love? He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. I John 4:8. For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, Plans to give you hope and a future.... You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. Jeremiah 29:11,13

1. **WAKE UP !!** Decide to have a good day.

"Today is the day the Lord hath made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" Psalms 118:24

2. **DRESS UP !!** The best way to dress up is to put on a smile. A smile is an inexpensive way to improve your looks. "The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at outward appearance; but the Lord looks at the heart." I Samuel 16:7

3. **SHUT UP !!** Say nice things and learn to listen. God gave us two ears and one mouth, so He must have meant for us to do twice as much listening as talking. "He who guards his lips guards his soul. Proverbs 13:3

4. **STAND UP !!** For what you believe in. Stand for something or you will fall for anything .. "Let us not be weary in doing good; for at the proper time, we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good ... " Galatians 6:9-10

5. **LOOK UP !!** To the Lord.

"I can do everything through Christ who strengthens me." Philippians 4: 13

6. **REACH UP !!** For something higher. "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways, acknowledge Him, And He will direct your path." Proverbs 3:5-6

7. **Lift Up !!** Your Prayers.

"Do not worry about anything;

Instead PRAY ABOUT EVERYTHING."

Philippians 4:6 and remember:

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER..

NOW This is The Real Living Bible

His name is Bill. He has wild hair, wears a T-shirt with holes in it, jeans, and no shoes. This was literally his wardrobe for his entire four years of College. He is brilliant, kind of profound and very, very bright. He became a Christian while attending college. Across the street from the campus is a well-dressed, very conservative church. They want to develop a ministry to the students but are not sure how to go about it. One day Bill decides to go there. He walks in with no shoes, jeans, his T-shirt, and wild hair ... The service has already started and so Bill starts down the aisle looking for a seat. The church is completely packed and he can't find a seat. By now, people are really looking a bit uncomfortable, but no one says anything. Bill gets closer and closer to the pulpit, and when he realizes there are no seats, he just squats down right on the carpet. By now the people are really uptight, and the tension in the air is thick. About this time, the minister realizes that from way at the back of the Church, a deacon is slowly making his way toward Bill. Now the deacon is in his eighties, has silver-gray hair and a three-piece suit. A godly man, very elegant, very dignified, very courtly. He walks with a cane and, as he starts walking toward this boy, everyone is saying to themselves that you can't blame him for what he's going to do. How can you expect a man of his age and of his background to understand some college kid on the floor? It takes a long time for the man to reach the boy. The church is utterly silent except for the clicking of the man's cane. All eyes are focused on him. You can't even hear anyone breathing. The minister can't even preach the sermon until the deacon does what he has to do. And now they see this elderly man drop his cane on the floor. With great difficulty, he lowers himself and sits down next to Bill and worships with Him, so he won't be alone. Everyone chokes up with emotion.

When the minister gains control, he says, 'What I'm about to preach, you will never remember.

What you have just seen, you will never forget.

'Be careful how you live. You may be the only Bible some people will ever Read!'

Seven Steps for Setting and Reaching Goals

(Submitted by: Kay Cheser, Women's Ministry Leader)

“I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead...” (Philippians 3:13).

1. **Stay focused.** Anticipating larger goals turns ordinary activities into achievements and adventure. Don't let daily details distract and derail your long-term goals.



2. **Set realistic expectations.** Achieving a small goal is more valuable than brooding over impossible expectations. Be aware of your own limits as well as the demands put on you.
3. **Expect challenges.** Successful people are not mistake-free; they just don't give up when things go wrong. Rather they find valuable lessons in challenges and adopt new strategies.
4. **Maintain a positive attitude.** Make the choice to focus on solutions rather than problems. Cultivate thankfulness, optimism, and trust in God in the situations you can't change.
5. **Seek support and accept responsibility.** Surround yourself with people who have positive life skills and learn from them. Develop new habits and ways of thinking. Social ties create mutual accountability and give opportunity to grow in responsibility and consistency.



6. **Practice new choices.** Positive choices, when repeatedly made, build body, mind, and spirit. Steady growth and development overcome big, bad habits. Fast is fragile; slow is stable.
7. **Connect.** Circumstances alone cannot change the heart. Recovery from broken habits, restoration of health, and renewal of hope and happiness come through a daily relationship with God who is personally interested in your healing, growth, and progress. He will guide, sustain, and empower all who come to Him in prayer.

Source: www.lifestylematters.com

PASTOR'S CORNER

Getting to Know God

We are usually motivated by something that gets our attention. Things like sickness, financial crisis, or other disasters get us to our knees in prayer. However is this what God wants? To hear us pray whenever we feel desperate. I am reading a new book and it is about developing a relationship with God. Too many times our prayers are just a list of what we want God to do. I have been talking about this in prayer meeting and am preaching about it as well. Here is the PAPA prayer as defined in the book:

P: Present yourself to God without pretense. Be a real person in the relationship. Tell Him whatever is going on inside you that you can identify.

A: Attend to how you're thinking of God. Again, no pretending. Ask yourself, "How am I experiencing God right now?" Is He a vending machine, a frowning father, a distant, cold force? Or is He your gloriously strong but intimate Papa?

P: Purge yourself of anything blocking your relationship with God. Put into words whatever makes you uncomfortable or embarrassed when you're real in your relationship with Him. How are you thinking more about yourself and your satisfaction than about anyone else, including God and His pleasure?

A: Approach God as the "first thing" in your life, as your most valuable treasure, the Person you most want to know. Admit that other people and things really do matter more to you right now, but you long to want God so much that every other good thing in your life becomes a "second-thing" desire.

Crabb, Larry. *The Papa Prayer* (p. 10). Thomas Nelson. Kindle Edition.

What would happen if we just prayed because we wanted to really be real in our relationship with Him? What would happen if we stopped pretending that everything is always perfect in our lives and just cried out to God?

Stay tuned as we continue to explore these thoughts. We also have a good reason to do this. A little lady over a hundred years ago wrote these words:

Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive Him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to Him. *Steps to Christ*, p. 93.

Let's get to know God and find in Him our true joy. It is worth the time and investment in His Word.

Pastor Dan Thompson

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From Linda's FB page (sharing for those that don't do FB) : Christmas with Daddy, my Brother & Wife, our Daughter & Husband & the Grandkids

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ANYWAY

Someone gave me a piece attributed to Mother Teresa. I went online and discovered this attribution to her is actually challenged. But while “Quote Investigators” extensive review suggests multiple sources, this piece is still rich with meaning, and so I share it with you:

*People are often unreasonable illogical, and self-centered; Forgive them anyway.
If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; Be kind anyway.
If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies; Succeed anyway.
If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; Be honest and frank anyway.
What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight; Build anyway.
If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; Be happy anyway.
The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway.
Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;
Give the world the best you've got anyway. You see, in the final analysis,
It is between you and God; It was never between you and them anyway.*

I admit it does sound a bit like a string of graduation platitudes at first glance. But the thematic undertow speaks volumes inside that little word, “anyway.” “Anyway”—in this case meaning “in spite of it”—isn’t that the way the follower of Christ often has to live? “In spite of it all”—Paul writes with quiet courage—“we are hard-pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Corinthians 4:8-9). “Anyway” or “in spite of it all”—Peter counsels—“in all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials” (1 Peter 1:6). “Anyway” or “in spite of it all”—the Apocalypse begins—“I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus”—and Jesus himself concludes—“Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer—be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor’s crown” (Revelation 1:9; 2:10).

Truth is “anyway” or “in spite of it all” is the way third millennial Christ-followers still walk in his steps. And “in spite of it all” their faith, like Jesus, “shines brighter” and “shines purer” against the dark panoply of evil. Anyway. So what’s the “anyway” you’re having to face down in your life right now? A disease that won’t give up? A state of depression that won’t seem to let go? Are your last dollars gone, leaving your future uncertain at best? What is the “in spite of it all” pathway God has set your feet upon? Paul, Peter, John, Jesus—who lived out their lives in spite of the most debilitating circumstances imaginable—surely in their “I will put my trust in him” courage we can find solace and fearlessness of our own. Trust anyway. Hope anyway. Love anyway. Live or die anyway. Why? “When the darkness is deepest, then the light of a noble, Godlike character will shine the brightest. When every other trust fails, then it will be seen who have an abiding trust in God” (*Sketches from the Life of Paul* 252).

Anyway. You may not be able to see it—but it’s that word “anyway” that radiates from your life right now. Your friends and family see it. The world takes notice, too. Because like Jesus you are a spectacle to behold. **Anyway.** And so He thanks you.

(Not sure who shared it with me but thought it was good advice to share)

Happy, Birthday. We pray that you are blessed with many more. If I don't have your special day, let me know. Brenda

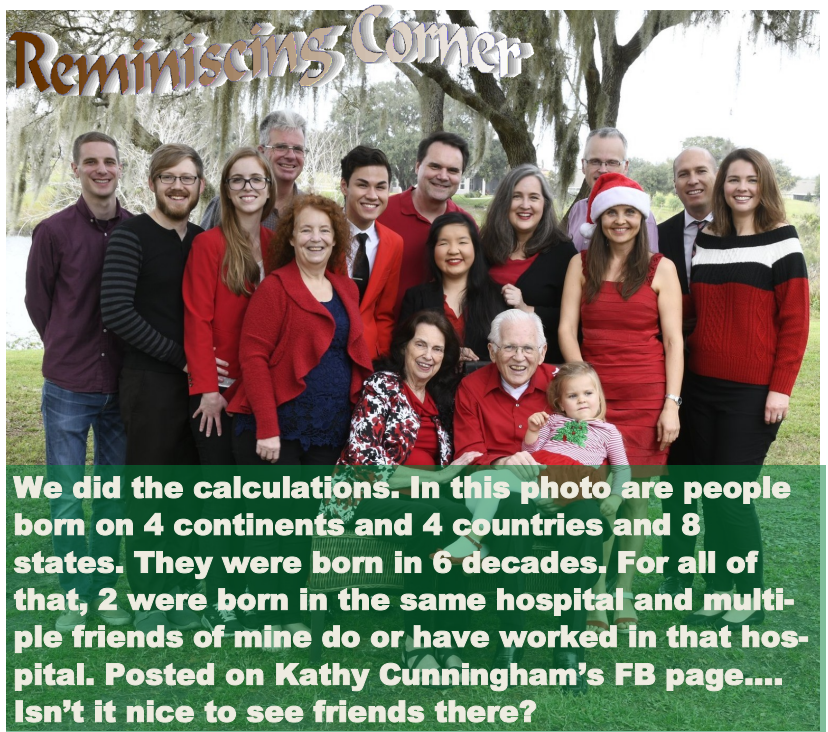
F E B R U A R Y	1	Holly Boggus
	5	Terry Cheser
	7	Kelaiah Radford (2010)
	10	Tony Plier
	12	Carol Fortuna Inman
	15	Gary Ernest
	19	Laurie Ernest
	25	Camron Higgins, Anthony Chrishon (2014)
	26	Jimmy Powers, Jim Higgins
28	Madison Chrishon	

Anniversaries

- 1 - Gary & Laurie Ernest
 15 - Donald and Holly Boggus

Speaker Schedule: Feb. 1 Ted Winslow; 8 Pastor; 15 Steve Radford; 22 Pastor; 29 Tui Pitman; Mar. 7 Pastor; 14 Gary Linkous; 21 Pastor; 28 Ted Winslow

Church service every **Sabbath at 11:00** at the Maplesville Train Depot. Please feel welcome to come & join us. Shawn Smith - Pastor for the Selma/Sylacauga Churches



We did the calculations. In this photo are people born on 4 continents and 4 countries and 8 states. They were born in 6 decades. For all of that, 2 were born in the same hospital and multiple friends of mine do or have worked in that hospital. Posted on Kathy Cunningham's FB page.... Isn't it nice to see friends there?

OK, Did you guess who was in the picture from last month? That was me when I was about 8 or so and Anita my sister from Prattville. She is 7 years younger is how I am calculating the age, I don't remember where we lived at that point in time, and of course she doesn't remember either. This one explains itself, Paul and Kathy were church members here until 2004 when they moved to Montgomery and then to Florida. He was the last church school teacher that we had here. Don't forget to give me something for next month. Thanks, Brenda

God's Love letter to us: From the Palace of the King

My Dear One: I just had to send a note to tell you how much I love you and care about you. I saw you yesterday as you were walking with your friends. I waited all day hoping you would want to talk with me also. As evening drew near, I gave you a sunset to close your day and a cool breeze to rest you. And I waited, but you never came. It hurt me, but I still love you because I am your friend and Savior.

I saw you fall asleep last night and I longed to touch your brow. So I spilled moonlight on your pillow and your face. Again I waited, wanted to rush down so we could talk. I have so many wonderful gifts for you. But you awakened late the next day and rushed off to work. My tears were in the rain.

Today you looked so sad, so all alone. It makes my heart ache because I understand ... my friends let me down and hurt me many times, too. But I love you. Oh, if you would only listen to me. I really love you. I try to tell you in the blue sky and in the quiet green grass. I whisper it in the leaves on the trees and breathe it in the colors of the flowers. I shout it to you in the mountain streams and give the birds love songs to sing. I clothe you with warm sunshine and perfume the air with nature's scents.

My love for you is deeper than the oceans and bigger than the biggest want or need in your heart. If you only knew how much I want to help you. I want you to meet my Father. He wants to help you, too. My Father is that way, you know. Just call upon me, ask me, talk with me. Please, please don't forget. I have so much to share with you. And I am always willing to wait for you because I love you so.

YOUR LOVING SAVIOUR AND FRIEND, JESUS

By: Evangelist Michael F. Clute

King Ranch Chicken

- 2 Cans Worthington Fri Chick drained and cut into small pieces
- 2 cans Cream of Mushroom soup
- 1 can Cream of Celery Soup
- 1 can Diced Rotel Tomatoes (optional)
- 1 can Small green chilies
- 1 onion Diced
- 1 Large package Doritos, crushed (16 oz)
- 1 8oz vegan Cheddar Cheese



Mix all first seven ingredients together. Layer half of mixture and half of cheese.

Repeat. Bake at 350 degrees until cheese is melted and mixture is bubbly. (Better the second day) can be frozen.

Bon Appetite!

Mirtes Schmeling

We have a website!! **UPDATED - Church Website:** <https://www.clantonsda.com/> Tony Plier has posted sermons, music & a lot of info, look under Newsletters to find this publication on line each month. Tony has made it so the previous couple years are there also. If you get an online version and want a hard copy or if you don't want to get the Newsletter, Let me know. Don't forget without you sharing with others, we wouldn't have a newsletter. Also turn in articles, poems and pictures that you want to share. Thanks to those that do, Until next month! Brenda

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