



Pastor's Perspective — Bless the Boundaries

By Dr. Ron D. Lindholm, Senior Pastor

Sometimes, one of the hardest challenges that parents face is convincing their children that the rules they've established are for their good. I can remember as a teen thinking that the set of rules under which I lived were designed to frustrate me and to keep me from "the good life"—whatever that was or happened to be. I felt so restricted at times—so confined. In my mind, my parents didn't understand, or if they did they surely weren't on my side. What I failed to appreciate then, but not now is that the boundaries they set were for my blessing and joy. My parents wanted to spare me trouble and to help me to enter into the fullness (and goodness) of life that was only possible for those who lived within those parameters.

The other morning, the experience of those teenage years came rushing back into my mind as I mediated on that passage in 1 John where John says that God's commands are *not burdensome* (5:3b)—which is to say that they are not designed to oppress or impede us (or to otherwise frustrate us), but to keep us from harm (and heartache) and to guide us into the best life that we could ever know, and the only one we would ever want if we could see into the future with 20/20 vision.

Those thoughts were driven home later that same morning when I read the *Our Daily Bread* devotional reading for the day, Psalm 1, and then the accompanying comments by Dr. Joseph Stowell, which I've included below, that you too

might be edified and bless God for the boundaries and the way they bless us when we live within them:

"In all the years I've worked with people, I've yet to meet someone whose life was all messed up because he or she kept God's commands. Yet, in a day when personal freedom is celebrated as an inalienable right, talk of conforming our lifestyle to God's ways is often viewed as an infringement. And anyone who speaks out in favor of God's boundaries is ruled out of bounds. But in this frenzy to be free, it should not go unnoticed that our society is increasingly marked with a haunting sense of meaninglessness and despair.

"God's people should have a distinctly different view of boundaries. Like the psalmist, we must realize that a blessed life comes from delighting in the law of the Lord (Psalm 1:2)—not in living like those who *walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take* (v1). A believer in Jesus will recognize that God's boundaries are not meant to take the pizzazz out of life. Instead, they are divine fences constructed with God's wisdom to help us avoid the treachery and trouble of reckless living.

"Next time you are tempted to break through God's boundaries, remember His loving purpose in putting up fences. Choose to bless God for the boundaries and for the way they bless you." (*Our Daily Bread*. December 29, 2012. Used by permission.)

God's fences keep you within the bounds of His blessings.

January Scripture Verse

Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God.



Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honor the king.

1 Peter 2:16-17 —



Christmas Choir Celebration

Scriptures for the “New Year”



Philippians 3:13-14

Brothers, 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, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!



Please plan to attend the [January Annual Meeting](#) on January 30. We will be approving the Officers and Officials appointed by the Pastors and Deacons, as well as reviewing the annual reports of the various church leaders. If you are responsible for an annual report, please remember that the deadline for turning them in to the church office is Sunday, January 13.

Welcome New Members

Katie Irving, Rebekah Porter, and Michael English became members of Fellowship Baptist Church on December 16 having been baptized that morning. We celebrate this act of obedience on the part of these believers in which they were immersed as a testimony of their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and their identification with Him in His death, burial and resurrection. We hope to see others take this important step in the days ahead.

Money Matters

Christmas Missionary Offering: Through the annual Christmas offering, \$5,268 was given for our missionaries, exceeding our goal of \$4,550. This enabled Fellowship to present each family with a gift of about 116% of the monthly support we provide. Thank you for this generous expression of your love for the Lord and for our missionaries who are serving Him in our behalf.

December Giving Per Week (General Fund)	\$4,741
Weekly Need	\$5,105
Year-to-Date General Fund Giving	\$256,475
Year-to-Date General Fund Need	\$270,549

Special-Called Business Meeting of December 12, 2012

This year, the Clearing Committee was unable to secure consent to serve in the office of Deacon from men in the church at-large who are eligible for the office and deemed by the Committee to be biblically qualified to serve. When the Deacons heard of this in the November meeting of the Pastors and Deacons, they were immediately concerned that they would be hard pressed to adequately serve the needs of the church without unnecessarily encumbering the Pastors, the very reason their office exists.

To compensate for the absence of men who are eligible and biblically qualified and willing to serve in the office, it was determined by the Pastors and Deacons to hold a special-called business meeting in order to ask the church that Article V, Section 3, Subsection 1 of the church Constitution (the provision that requires a deacon who has served two consecutive three-year terms to sit out a year before being eligible to serve again) be temporarily suspended through December 31, 2015, and to ask the Clearing Committee in the meanwhile to consider asking the Deacons scheduled to sit out a year if they would be willing to continue to serve, which the Committee was more than happy to do and did. This recommendation was brought to and approved by the church at a special-called meeting held immediately prior to the December Annual Meeting. This resulted in Pete English being reelected to serve in the office of deacon.

While this step was taken for the benefit of the church, there remains the need for deacons who are both qualified and willing to serve in the future. Our goal and prayer should be that more men would be prepared for and accept this privilege to serve the body.

Calendar



Jan. 8	Nursing Home Ministry (2:00 PM)
Jan. 12	Spaghetti Dinner (6:00 PM)
Jan. 19	Men's Breakfast (8:00 AM)
Jan. 29	Youth Ski Trip
Jan. 30	January Annual Meeting (7:30 PM)
Feb. 8	Women's Heart Friend Party (7:00 PM)

Fellowship Baptist Church

5936 Rolling Road
Springfield, VA 22152