

Facets of Fellowship

THE NEWSLETTER OF FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH

JULY 2012



Pastor's Perspective – Prayer and God's All-Sufficient Grace

By Dr. Ron D. Lindholm, Senior Pastor

Sometimes God denies a prayer request because He wants to give us something better (though not necessarily more comfortable). This is one of the things we learn from the Apostle Paul's second letter to the Corinthians. I suspect that you know the story well. In 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, Paul refers to an affliction that caused him exceeding distress. He tells how on three separate occasions he had pleaded with the Lord that the Lord might take it away, thereby to relieve the Apostle of that trouble, and how three times he was denied.

What we learn from Paul's experience is that God used the Apostle's affliction to teach Paul dependence on Himself (that is, on the Lord) and the sufficiency of His grace—where that grace is as always, God's unmerited favor, but here especially, God's provision for our every need when we need it.

According to the text, so thoroughly did Paul learn the sufficiency of God's grace that he even came to boast of his afflictions. He realized that when he was naturally weak the Lord would provide the power that Paul himself lacked and needed.

This, I believe, is one of the most important lessons that we must learn as Christians. Both natural weakness and

supernatural strength are constantly at work in us as they were in Paul. The greater we sense our weakness, the more we will sense God's power (Philippians 4:13).

Someone has said that Christians live on promises, not explanations. The promise of 2 Corinthians 12:9 (*My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness*) is one of the greatest that God has given us to live on.

We may not experience as high spiritual highs or as low spiritual lows as Paul did, but we too are in need of being aware of God's all-sufficient grace—His supernatural power.

This can be especially true in the practice of prayer, where in response to our requests, instead of giving us what we ask for, He sometimes gives us something better—howbeit sometimes not more comfortable.

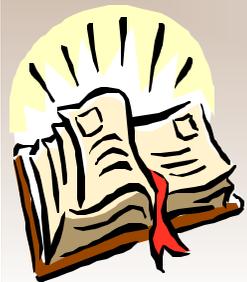
Sometimes God denies a prayer request because He wants to give us something better...

In his book, *The Purpose-Driven Life*, Rick Warren notes that human weakness can be a profound blessing if it results in our depending more on God and less on self (272-78). In his *Bible Exposition Commentary*, Warren Wiersbe writes:

In the Christian life, we may get many of our blessings through transformation, not substitution.... Sometimes God does meet the need by substitution; but other times He meets the need by transformation. He does not remove the affliction [whatever it might be], but He gives us His grace so that the affliction works for us and not against us (1:675).

My encouragement to you is that you keep these things and Paul's experience in mind whenever you go to the throne of grace with requests for how you might like the Lord to work in answer to the requests that you bring to Him for yourself and for others.

June 2012 Bible Memory Challenge



But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables Him to bring everything under His control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like His glorious body.

Philippians 3:20-21

“Bug Zone: Transformed by Our Big God”

VBS Ready to Start: Important Contributions Still Needed

“Bug Zone: Transformed By Our Big God” is the theme of this year's Vacation Bible School, taking place July 23-27, from 9 to 11:30 AM. One of our church's biggest evangelistic opportunities of the summer, the program is up and ready to go! We give thanks as all the staff positions have been filled, under the leadership of Pastor Stuart Odom. There are, however, some key areas that the whole body can help with before the event starts.

One need is cookies! Lots and lots of cookies are needed and lots and lots of cookies are eaten during VBS. Be sure to watch for and not include cookies that have peanuts and



peanut products, to protect any children who may have allergies. The contributions can be brought to the church Fellowship Hall.

Another need is canvassing. Flyers about “Bug Zone” are available in the lobby and families are encouraged to pass them out to their neighbors, friends, around the church community or anywhere. The flyers are a great way to both invite and remind friends of the time and place for VBS.

But the key need is prayer. Pastor Odom asks for prayer that “lots of kids from the neighborhood would come; that there would be good contact with families in the community and not just the kids; and that our church would be built up and people saved through this ministry.”

Meet a Fellowship Member — Kay Bray

A Life Characterized by Great Joy

There is a popular belief that it takes more muscles—43 to be exact—to frown, than it does to smile—17 being the suggested amount. Whether that is true or not, Kay Bray is a firm believer and practitioner of the idea. “I’ve had very deep emotions in my lifetime, but I’d rather laugh than cry,” she says.

Kay became a member of Fellowship this year, having come the first Sunday of 2011. “I drove by this church so many times,” she says. Having gone to a “huge” church when she first came to the area in 1972, and having been recently widowed, Kay was looking for some place she belonged.



Kay’s outlook comes despite hard times. She was widowed in 2010 when her husband Bill passed away, following complications from gall bladder surgery and Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome. The difficulty was intensified because, although more often than not a fatal condition, Kay said it was like being on a roller coaster: with Bill looking as though he was about to pass away, and then getting better, and it was hard to watch him suffer. But Kay says the Lord has given her a life of peace and joy. “God has kept His arms around me,” Kay says.

So, Kay thought she would give our church a try. “The first Sunday I went, I didn’t leave,” she adds. “It just felt right. It felt warm. People greeted me like I’d always been there.”

Born and raised in North Carolina, Kay was the youngest of seven children...the only one born in a hospital, because her mother had a kidney infection and that was the only place the doctor would agree to deliver the baby. There was a 13-plus-year gap between her and the next youngest sibling and even as a young girl, Kay was known for her joy.

One Dutch neighbor from those younger years reportedly said, “Before Kay moved in (the neighborhood), all I heard was cryin’, cryin’, cryin’. But since Kay moved in, all I hear is laffin’, laffin’, laffin’.” Kay still giggles at the thought of his strong accent.

Kay was 13 years old when she attended a revival meeting where she became a Christian and which later resulted in being baptized in Bath Creek. “There were 13 or 14 of us,” Kay remembers. “It was late in the afternoon, and we all held candles that were lit after we were baptized.”

“I am not unhappy,” she added. “He has given me a new life. I have time so that when my sister needs me, I can go. When my children need me, I can go. When my grandchildren need me, I can go.” Kay has three surviving siblings, three children, nine grandchildren and four great-grandchildren: “all close enough, that I can get to them if I need to....”

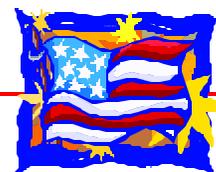
Kay is excited about what God is doing in her life. She finished reading through the Bible and is starting again. She daily calls her sister, Dot, to read “Our Daily Bread” together. “I just want to know more about the Bible,” she says. She participated in the Spring Festival and loves attending the Women’s Bible Study. She also loves work days at the church. “I truly enjoyed working that day,” she remembers of the spring work day. “My finger was sore for days—not my back, not my legs...but, my poor little finger! But that was fabulous! I felt good. I will go next year! I was right beside Neita (Lindholm) and we chatted and worked. It was so much fun!”

Kay gives the credit for her life and joy to the Lord: “He’s looked after me and I didn’t even know He was doing it!”

Money Matters

John and Ronda Lennon, missionaries to Paraguay and Ecuador, were in ministry at Fellowship throughout the day on Sunday, June 10. A love offering of \$941.00 was received.	
June Giving Per Week (General Fund)	\$4,546
2012 Budgeted Needs Per Week	\$5,105
2012 Budgeted Receipts to Date	\$119,716
2012 Budgeted Needs to Date	\$132,722

Calendar



July 4	Independence Day (No church activities)
July 10	Nursing Home Ministry (2:00 PM)
July 20 or July 21	Fellowship in Homes (Shepherding Groups)
July 23-27	Vacation Bible School (9:00-11:30 AM)
July 25	Quarterly Business Meeting (7:30 PM)

Fellowship Baptist Church

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