



Pastor's Perspective — The Value of Hindsight

By Dr. Ron D. Lindholm, Senior Pastor

Looking back has its advantages. Hindsight provides a perspective we lack at the start of a journey or in the middle of a trial. It's also free of the emotional stress that can distort our perspective and derail us.

In the midst of a trial, we often think: "If I could only know how long this will last or where it will lead, then persevering would be so much easier." We might even cry out: "How long, O Lord? How long?" But we learn that God rarely discloses the time. Instead, He calls on us to trust Him and thereby rest in His sovereign providential care.

The Old Testament story of Joseph helps us to grasp this trust. At the end of a journey marked by rejection, slavery, false accusation and imprisonment, Joseph was able to look back and assert with clarion conviction: "God intended it for good" (Genesis 50:20).

Joseph's story fills us with hope because it reminds us that even though we may not see it now, as you put your trust in God, the day will come when you will be able to look back with that same perspective and conviction.

But until that day comes, what do you do today?

You look to the Scriptures for encouragement (Romans 15:4). You look ahead by faith, knowing that the same God who was at work in Joseph's life is at work in yours (Malachi

3:6). You remember the promises of God and the instructions given by God in the Scriptures (Hebrews 10:23). You remember that God is working all things together for good (Romans 8:28-30). You remember to count it all joy when you face trials of various kinds, knowing that the purpose of those trials is not to destroy you but to develop staying-power in you and to bring about a beautiful maturity of life in you (James 1:2-12). And you look up to Jesus, the

example par excellence of what it means to live by faith (with that kind of trust)—who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross (Hebrews 12:2).

*"God intended it for good"
(Genesis 50:20)*

Someday you will be able to look back and declare with Joseph-like conviction: "God intended it for good!"

In the meanwhile, a prayer of faith and affirmation like this one may serve you well: "Lord, I don't understand how the painful experiences of my past or the trouble of today fit within Your good purposes for me. But I know they do, and I trust You. Like Joseph, I choose to live today by faith in light of Your promises, knowing that You are working for my good and Your glory. When unexpected turns confront my path, I rest in the certain knowledge that You know the way, that You have prepared the way, and that You are with me on the way. I therefore entrust my life, my days and these circumstances to You that Your work in me and through me might be fully accomplished. In Jesus' name, Amen."

On Being a Kidney Donor

By Joe Robinson

On August 1, 1961, I became a kidney donor. I didn't know it, my sister, Sabrina, didn't know it, and our mother didn't know it. Nevertheless, God had a plan for the kidney He had already been forming for nine months in my mother's womb. God knew that 54 years later, He would call on me to donate a kidney to my sister.

Sabrina has Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD), a genetic affliction that causes hundreds of cysts to grow in the kidneys. About 20 years ago, I learned that I was free of PKD, and that some day I might have the opportunity to donate a kidney to Sabrina.

As the years passed, I sometimes wondered if I would be willing to go through with the donation. To the contrary, the Lord has been preparing my heart, as well as my kidney, to make the decision to give. Rather than grow fearful, I grew more and more comfortable with the decision as the years passed by.

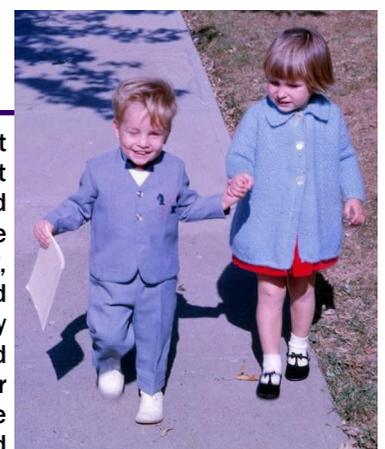
Not only was I a good genetic and anti-body



match for my sister, but my kidneys almost seemed to be designed for the purpose. One kidney had a single, long, thick artery, which would make the graft to my sister's artery simple and effective. My other kidney was unlike the first. It seemed designed to stay. It had multiple arteries, which would have made a graft difficult, but would allow it to take on the additional load once the first kidney was gone.

The surgery took place on Thursday, August 20. After the surgery, as I came to in the recovery room, my first question was, "How is Sabrina?" The doctor said her surgery went smoothly. As I lay there, though, it occurred to me that he probably wouldn't tell me the truth if there was a serious failure. However, he then told me that my kidney, the one I carried for 54 years, was now producing urine for my sister. I immediately broke down with tears of joy, over such a normally mundane bodily function. I count this as the third greatest moment of my life, after accepting Christ as my savior, and taking Louanne as my bride.

Recovery is going well, and I want to thank everyone at church for your prayers and support throughout this process.



Missions Conference: Christ's Love Compels Us

Our annual Missions Conference is just around the corner - September 11-13. This year, we welcome missionaries George and Arlene Blood (Alaska), Nathan and Dawn Patefield (Brazil), and Joel and Beverly Shoaf (New Zealand). Our conference theme is "Christ's Love Compels Us," from 2 Corinthians 5 where Paul writes of his passion to preach the Gospel and live for the One who died for all.

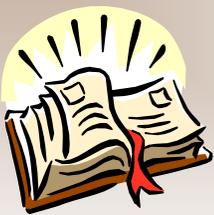


The conference opens at 7:30 Friday evening, with worship, missionary testimonies, and teaching from Scripture. On Saturday morning, 9:00, we enjoy a light breakfast, followed by field reports from the Bloods, Patefields, and Shoafs. On Sunday, our regular times of ministry are specially focused on missions, as we share together in God's Word. We would love for everyone to be part of these meetings, and eagerly anticipate the Lord's work in our lives.

There are still opportunities for hospitality during that weekend, from housing to meals. We encourage you to sign up as the Lord leads.

The Missions Conference is always a time of encouragement for our church and for the missionaries who participate. Our desire is that the Lord would renew our zeal to share Christ here in West Springfield and around the world. Let's pray for that, and also that God would strengthen our partnership in ministry with His servants.

SEPTEMBER MEMORY VERSE



Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still." ~Exodus 14:13-14.

Money Matters

August Giving Per Week (General Fund)	\$4,298
2015 Budgeted Needs Per Week	\$4,933
2015 Budgeted Receipts to Date	\$165,454
2015 Budgeted Needs to Date	\$172,655

English as a Second Language Classes Starting Soon

By Brian Platt, ESL Director

In early September our ESL ministry will begin its 12th year. Every Thursday evening from 7:00 until 9:00, people from all over the world will come through our church's doors in the hopes of getting help with achieving what is a difficult but critical goal: learning to speak English. Their backgrounds vary widely. Many were highly educated professionals in their own country; others came to the U.S. because they could find no work at home. Some moved to the U.S. so that their children could grow up in America and attend schools here; others left children behind in their countries so that they could make money here to send back to their families. Most of them are able to enjoy some support from communities of people from their own country who are living in this area, but some are not so fortunate. For almost all of them, our classes are their primary link to English-speaking American culture. And while some are familiar with the Bible, most are not Christians.



This is a snapshot of the group of students we will teach this year. The classes provide us with a unique opportunity, not only to teach them English, but to introduce them to the Gospel through Bible instruction. The classes also give us the basis on which to build friendships with people whom we would otherwise not have the opportunity to meet. God has dropped this opportunity in our laps, and we are grateful for it. It is our desire that our students not only improve their English skills, but attend church services, get to know others in our church, come to know Christ as their Savior, and participate as fellow believers in the ministries of our church. Please pray that this ministry would bear such fruit. And if you would like to participate in this ministry in some way, we would love for you to join us!

Calendar

Sep. 8	Women's Bible Study Begins (9:30 AM)
Sep. 8	Nursing Home Visit (2:00 PM)
Sep. 10	ESL Begins (7:00 PM)
Sep. 11-13	Missions Conference
Sep. 18-19	Women's Retreat
Sep. 20	Awana Begins (5:30 PM)
Sep. 26	Church Picnic (1:00-4:00 PM)

Fellowship Baptist Church

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