

BRIDGING THE GAP

FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS CHURCH OF GOD
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From the Pastor's Desk

"The Good Life"

How would you define the word *good*? It is a word we use a lot. We talk about good food, good weather, and a good report. We say "Have a good day." Or "He did a good job." The word *good* is used in many different ways. One phrase we hear often is "The Good Life." For some people the good life means looking good. We place a high premium on beauty and good looks. Some people think the good life means feeling good. Whatever it takes, they have to feel good. They pursue pleasure at all costs. Their standard of living is if it feels good, do it. Still other people think the good life means

means having goods. They set about acquiring things. For these people the whole object of life is to make money and spend it on things.

The Bible presents a radically different picture of the good life. God says in His Word that the good life is not based on looking good, feeling good, or having goods. He says the good life is a life filled with goodness, being and doing good. When you are being good and doing good, you are going to feel good. Genesis Chapter One records God's creating of the universe and tells us that when he saw everything He created, He said it was good. Why? Because it fulfilled the purpose for being. God made you for a purpose. When you live the way He intends for you to live, you will feel why it was created. Goodness means fulfilling a purpose. It is being what God meant you to be. Your life will become meaningful. Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." We are not saved by good works; we are saved for good works. The Christian lifestyle is to be a lifestyle of goodness. By God's grace and power we are re-created and given the ability to do good deeds. God works from the inside out, not from the outside in. Here are five simple suggestions for learning to do good. First, become a student of God's word. Read and study it and memorize significant portions of it. Fill your mind and

your life with it. Second, if you want to do good, you must learn to control your thought life. This is essential because as a man "thinks in his heart, so is he." Prov. 23:7. Sin always starts in the mind, Satan plants ideas called temptations in your mind. So you must guard your mind and think on good things. Third, if you want to learn to do good, you must develop some convictions. What do you stand for? It has been said that if you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything. The difference between an opinion and a conviction is an opinion is something that you hold and a conviction is something that holds you. Fourth, to learn to do good you must have the courage to be different from the world around you. It is easy to go along with the crowd, but sometimes goodness means being willing to stand alone. Dare to be different. Finally, if you want to do good, you must develop the habit of meeting with other believers. Our fellowship with other believers is designed to encourage us to live good lives in an evil world. We can learn to live in the world without being of the world. The Christian life is not easy, but it is eternally worthwhile. And doing good is not always easy, but there is a reward. Galatians 6:9 says, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." My prayer for you is that you live the good life in Jesus and enjoy each day. Spring is here and a time for new life and a time for a fresh awareness of what it really means to live the good life. May the people around you, your family, and your church see you living the good life. We have a great privilege to show the world what real living is and tell them about Jesus.

Enjoy The Journey

Pastor Clayton

Sermon and Service Outline

April 2008

April 6 5-STAR AWARD SUNDAY

AM Service: "The Misunderstanding of Church Membership" Text 1Peter 2:4-12
Pastor Clayton

PM Service: Women of The Church of God will lead the Service

April 13

AM Service: "Are You Ready?" Matt. 25:1-15

Pastor Clayton

PM Service: "Leadership Training 101" (Law of Initiative) Jonah 1:1-3 Pastor Clayton

April 20

AM Service : Pastor Clayton in Revival

AM &PM Pastor Brian will be speaking

April 27

AM Service: "Come to The Well" John 4:13-14 Pastor Clayton

PM Service: Youth will be leading the evening service and sharing about Youth Convention.

Annual Business Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting will be held April 30 at 7:00. Absentee ballots are normally available 1-2 weeks ahead. Please contact Gary Hamilton for a ballot if you cannot attend.

Youth Group

On behalf of the youth group, Jim and I want to thank-you for your kind words regarding Youth Sunday. Jim and I work with a great group of young people and the Lord is doing great things thru them.

Our group also wants to thank-you for your support in our on-going fundraisers. At this time, we have 7 youth attending the Illinois State Youth Convention and thanks to these fundraisers, their registrations have been paid for. We should have many more youth attending next year when we add all the new 7th graders and we will be looking for more fundraising avenues to help with those costs.

During the month of April we will be preparing for Youth Convention by studying our theme and scripture for this years convention which is from Luke 14:15-24 on "The Great Banquet". This year's convention looks to be a little different as we will be having mission and work project opportunities. There is more info coming!!

We have also been listening to and discussing the Dove nominated Songs of the Year. The awards are scheduled to be given out later in April and our youth will see if they can pick the winner. A lot of these songs have some very powerful and thought provoking biblical messages!

So far we have listened to:

"East to West" done by Casting Crown

"Made to Love" done by Toby Mac

"Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone)" by Chris Tomlin as sung by Richard Knowles in Sunday Morning worship.

"Tears of the Saints" by Leeland as sung by Belinda and David Floyd on Youth Sunday Morning worship.

We still need to listen to:

- "Undo" done by Rush of Fools
- "Bring the Rain" done by Mercy Me
- "Give You Glory" done by Jeremy Camp
- "How You Live (Turn up the Music)" done by Point of Grace
- "I'm Not Who I Was" done by Brandon Heath
- "In Better Hands" done by Natalie Grant

Our calendar is as follows in addition to our Sunday night meetings from 5:45 to 7:15.

April 6—5:00-6:00 pm Parent/Youth Meeting for Convention and to discuss Agape Fest

April 25-27-- Illinois State Youth Convention--
-Theme of "The Great Banquet".

May 2-3—Agape Fest at Greenville , IL (this is tentative pending parent discussion at the meeting and finding chaperone's)

May 25-No youth meeting--Jim and Candy gone.

June: date to be announced to welcome all the graduated 6th graders into the youth group--PARTY!

June 30-July 4-Senior Teen Camp

July 7-July 11- Junior Teen Camp

Jim and Candy Niemeyer, Youth Leaders

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As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

DIRECTIONS TO OUR FATHER'S HOUSE

Make a Right onto Believeth Blvd.
 Keep straight and go through the Green Light, which is Jesus Christ.
 There, you must turn onto the Bridge of Faith , which is over troubled water.
 When you get off the bridge, make a Right turn and Keep Straight.
 You are on the King's Highway - Heaven-bound.
 Keep going for three miles: One for the Father, One for the Son, and One for the Holy Ghost.
 Then exit off onto Grace Blvd.
 From there, make a Right turn on Gospel Lane
 Keep Straight and then make another Right on Prayer Road
 As you go on your way, Yield Not to the traffic on Temptation Ave.
 Also, avoid SIN STREET because it is a DEAD END.
 Pass up Envy Drive , and Hate Avenue .
 Also, pass Hypocrisy Street , Gossiping Lane , and Backbiting Blvd.
 However, you have to go down Long-suffering Lane , Persecution Blvd. And Trials and Tribulations Ave.
 But that's all right, because VICTORY Street is straight ahead!
 AMEN!!!!

Life is God's gift to you.
 The way you live it..... ..is your gift to God.

Money Map Coaching

Well, you just can't turn on the TV or Radio without hearing about the bleak economic forecast. Most of us have definitely noted the rising costs of food and gas. And many have seen their investments for retirement take a nose dive. But I want you to know, that God already knows your needs and He will provide for them but God does expect us to be faithful in following the biblical principles that He has given us. Over the next few months, I will share some of the information I have learned thru Crown Financial Ministries. Some of you attended the course that I taught entitled " Discovering God's Way of Handling Money" and I hope you have been able to make progress towards handling your finances in a biblical way. I may be teaching this course again at a local church in the area in the near future so look for that announcement.

This month I want to cover 5 underlying principles to the Crown Money Map. You can obtain this same information by going to www.Crown.org

- Key Principle One: God owns everything
 - Psalm 24 :1 says: "The Earth is the Lord's and everything in it." (NIV)

- Key Principle Two: We are to be faithful managers of all God entrusts to us.
 - 1 Corinthians 4:2 says: "It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful." (KJV)

- Key Principle Three: Invite God to take control of your finances
 - 1 Chronicles 29:11 says: We adore you [Lord] as being in control of everything." (TLB)

- Key Principle Four: Faithfulness with money requires self-control, and God provides it.

- Galatians 5:22 says: “ But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” (NIV)

Key Principle Five: Celebrate each step as you make steady progress

- Psalm 145:7 says: “They will celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness.” (NIV)

Crown recommends reviewing this list as you work towards true financial freedom. What is true financial freedom? “True Financial Freedom is knowing that God owns it all, finding contentment with what he provides, and being free to be all He made you to be.” (This is a direct quote from the Crown Money Map)

The Crown Money Map has a total of 7 destinations. So just like a taking a trip you have a starting point and a final destination.

So let’s start with Destination One—Emergency Savings.

- Scripture Memory Verse: “The wise man saves for the future, but the foolish man spends whatever he gets.” Proverbs 21:20 TLB
- Download a free Crown Spending Plan at www.Crown.org/moneymap. Some call this a budget but I prefer “spending plan”. Most people don’t have any idea where they are spending their money let alone how much they are spending. Until you know where you’ve been, you can’t know where you are going.

- Save \$1000.00 for Emergencies. Without an emergency savings account, you often get into debt with credit cards and loans and become slave to the lender. It is not a matter of “if” emergencies occur it is a matter of “when” because you know they happen to all of us. When you develop your spending plan, you will find ways to save money for this fund.
- After you have a spending plan and have your emergency fund, you will be ready to proceed to Destination 2—Credit Cards Paid Off.

Next month I will talk about Destinations 2 and 3 in more detail. Until then, if you have any questions please feel free to ask myself or go to the Crown Financial Ministries website www.crown.org . I understand that many of you may not feel comfortable talking to me about your finances but I have great news!!!!---you can get free budget counseling online thru the website thru online chat with a money map coach or you can even request to meet with another money map coach in the area.

I promise you that you will never regret making the decision to start handling your money God’s way. Since Jim and I started following God’s financial principles we have made great strides toward true financial freedom. We will be debt free (except for the mortgage and that will be next) in 11 months! We began this program in 2005 and we had credit card and consumer loan debt that would have taken us another 20 years to eliminate the way were doing things. We learned that God had given us what we needed to take care of this debt, we just were not being very good stewards. We had to change many things but God has made it so easy for us and He is truly blessing us and God will do the same for you if you learn to trust in His ways and not your own. We are looking forward to the final destination on the money map---when our retirement is

funded and we are free to volunteer our time working for the Lord.

God Bless,

Candy Niemeyer, Crown Financial Money Map Coach

Getting to Know You...

Bud & Jan Evans

The Evans's began visiting the FHCoG during the Fall of 2007. After completing obligations at the O Fallon Assembly of God, they became full time members here in December. As I said to Bud, "Haven't you two been here longer than that?" and have heard other say the same. Bud and Jan have so seemingly joined and became active in the church that it seems like they have been here forever!

Jan has lived in this area all of her life and worked as a hairdresser for many years. Bud lived and worked in the St Louis area as a civil servant until their marriage. They each have 3 children (Jan – 2 girls and 1 boy; Bud – 2 boys and 1 girl) and Bud wasn't sure how many grandchildren they had between them without a lot of thought so if you want to know, ask Jan.

When I asked how long they have been married, Bud responded "We were married by God March 8, 1997." He said the first time he saw Jan at a planned meeting, he knew it was she before she could introduce herself. God gave him what he needed in Jan. I didn't get to talk to Jan today, but I bet she feels the same way about Bud. He said a strong prayer life and constant, good communication are the keys to a successful marriage.

They went on a Missions Trip to Nicaragua in February. They reported on the experience Sunday night a couple of weeks ago. Jan said the trip changed the way they see Missionary work now. Jan wants to help sew

and make layettes for the babies so many of their mothers will have clothes for their babies to wear home from the hospital. Bud said it was gratifying to see all of the things the NiCE guys ship from here in use in Nicaragua and very much appreciated.

Jan and Bud are now in charge of the kitchen. They order supplies, and have streamlined and rearranged things, and keep things going in the kitchen. A big thanks for doing that job!

Debbie Porter
Editor

CELL PHONE vs. BIBLE

I wonder, what would happen if we treated our Bible like we treat our Cell phone?

What if we carried it around in our purses or pockets?

What if we flipped through it several time a day?

What if we turned back to go get it if we forgot it?

What if we used it to receive messages from the text?

What if we treated it like we couldn't live without it?

What if we gave it to our kids as gifts?

What if we used it when we traveled?

What if we used it in case of emergency?

This is something to make you go....hmm...where is my Bible?

Oh, and one more thing.....Unlike our cell phone, we don't have to worry

about our Bible being disconnected because Jesus already paid the bill.

Makes you stop and think "where are my priorities?"

And no dropped calls!