

The Vine

I am the vine; you are the branches...John 15:5

A publication of Valley Falls Christian Church

August 2013

WHAT HAPPENS IN HEAVEN WHEN WE PRAY?

I dreamt that I went to Heaven and an angel was showing me around. We walked side-by-side inside a large workroom filled with angels. My angel guide stopped in front of the first section and said, "This is the Receiving Section. Here, all petitions to God said in prayer are received. I looked around in this area, and it was terribly busy with so many angels sorting out petitions written on voluminous paper sheets and scraps from people all over the world.

Then we moved on down a long corridor until we reached the second section.

The angel then said to me, "This is the Packaging and Delivery Section. Here, the graces and blessings the people asked for are processed and delivered to the living persons who asked for them." I noticed again how busy it was there. There were many angels working hard at that station, since so many blessings had been requested and were being packaged for delivery to Earth.

Finally at the farthest end of the long corridor we stopped at the door of a very small station. To my great surprise, only one angel was seated there, idly doing nothing. "This is the Acknowledgement Section, my angel friend quietly admitted to me. He seemed embarrassed.

"How is it that there is no work going on here? I asked."

"So sad," the angel sighed. "After people receive the blessings that they asked for, very few send back acknowledgment."

"How does one acknowledge God's blessings?" I asked.

"Simple," the angel answered. Just say, "Thank you, Lord."

"What blessings should they acknowledge?" I asked.

"If you have food in the refrigerator, clothes on your back, a roof overhead and a place to sleep you are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare change in a dish, you are among the top 8% of the worlds wealthy, and if you get this on your own computer, you are part of the 1% in the world who has that opportunity."

"If you woke up this morning with more health than illness, you are more blessed than the many who will not even survive this day."

"If you have never experienced the fear in battle, the loneliness of imprisonment, the agony of torture, or the pangs of starvation, you are ahead of 700 million people in the world."

"If you can attend a church without the fear of harassment, arrest, torture or death you are envied by and more blessed than, 3 billion people.

"If your parents are still alive and still married, you are very rare."

"If you can hold your head up and smile, you are not the norm, you're unique to all those in doubt and despair."

"Ok," I said. "What now? How can I start?"

The angel said, "If you can read this message, you are more blessed than over 2 billion people in the world who cannot read at all."

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS!



No Sweat

As I write, the forecast for tomorrow is supposed to be 94°; the next day is supposed to be 96°, then 97°. Toss in 80% humidity and I can think of one word to describe that: oppressive! One day at camp the heat index pushed 110°. It seems as the dog days approach, our desire to be outside plummets. We would much rather be inside in front of the TV as opposed to outside working up a sweat.

When it gets hot like this, I can't help but think of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace. They lived in an oppressive situation. They were officials in King Nebuchadnezzar's court and were ordered to bow down to a statue made in his image, yet they refused to do it. This infuriated the king and he brought them before him for one last opportunity to pay homage to him. I love their response to the threat.

"If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to save us from it, and he will rescue us from your hand, O king. But even if he does not, we want you to know, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

In essence, their response to the threat of a fiery furnace was, "No sweat! Do what you want, but we will not deny our God." They refused to stay in the comfortable places just so they could avoid the heat!

When Peter and John were told to stop preaching Jesus, they told their rulers "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard." The rulers looked for other ways to punish them. They turned up the heat!

Do we have this same resolve to stay true to God? Are we willing to refuse to obey when we are told to deny our God? Are we willing to stand firm when confronted by those who would have us worship something else? Do we want the easy life of God on Sundays and maybe Wednesday nights and let the world dictate the other hours of our week? Some would

have you believe that it is illegal to have a bible at school or to start bible studies. They would like you to believe that it is wrong to wear Christian T-shirts or pray before meals. They repeat the mantra that Christians should not be involved in the political process. They would rather have you bow before their ideologies and worldviews, and when you refuse they turn up the heat. People in schools and the workplace alike have been threatened with lawsuits if they don't tow the ACLU line and bow before the gods of political correctness (tolerance for every and all viewpoints except Christianity; diversity even if it means accepting something we disagree with on moral grounds).

Perhaps you have experienced this already. If not you probably will at some time in the future. How soon before churches and ministers are sued for refusing to perform same-sex wedding ceremonies? What will your response be? Live and let live? Go with the flow even if you don't agree with it? Just make sure you don't rock the boat? The bible tells us we are to submit to the authorities God has placed over us (Romans 13) but obedience to God takes precedence (Acts 4:19-20).

It is my prayer that you have the same attitude as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. That your response would be, "I will do nothing that will cause me to deny my God or His word. Nothing you do can harm me and my God will protect me through anything you can dish out. But even if he does not - if He has some purpose unknown to me that would cause me to go through the fire - I will not deny my God."

I know my response. Do what you will, but *'...I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me'* (2 Timothy 1:12)

In essence, "God's got my back. No sweat!"

Mike

Recipe Swap

CROCKPOT HONEY SOY CHICKEN

1 lb. boneless chicken
salt and pepper
1 c. honey
½ c. soy sauce
¼ c. ketchup
2 T. oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ c. onion, diced
¼ tsp. red pepper flakes
Cornstarch
Sesame seeds
OPTIONAL: peanuts or cashews, water chestnuts, peppers

Combine honey, soy sauce, ketchup, oil, garlic, onion and red pepper flakes. Pour over chicken in the crock pot. Serve hot over a bed of rice.

Donetta

PRAYER REQUESTS

OUR SOLDIERS: Jacob Mitchell, Curtis Mitchell, Brandon Miller, Ryan Myers, Luke Cummings, Greg Morales, Ryan Kirby, Zach Stiffler, Josh Lackey, Dan Cook, Rick Heuertz, Steve Heinen, Ammin Spencer, Gates, Kobuszewski, Leslie Bolz, Steve Grove, Austin Everhart, Noe Garza, Brandon Hammons, Ruth Churchill

Becky Arnold will be having cataract surgery, still to be scheduled.

Tom Harris- gall stones and not sleeping well.

COPIES OF THE SERMONS ARE AVAILABLE ON CD UPON REQUEST: If you would like a copy please see Mike. You can also listen to them online at www.valleyfallscc.org.

POCKET CHANGE FOR PROGRESS: This will be a special offering every 3rd Sunday during church. The money will be split between Mission Lake Camp and the School Supply Giveaway Fund

RECYCLING: We have a recycling box beside the copier in the office.

COLLECTING FOR ALPHA: Alpha Christian Children's Home can use Campbell soup UPC labels and lids, Best Choice UPC labels and General Mills Box Top Symbols coupons (Box Tops for Education.) We will have a box in the hallway outside the nursery under the mailboxes.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

2 Cody Church
4 JENNA WATKINS
6 Becky Arnold
12 Clinton & Erin Thomas (2000)
June & Gene Dedeke (2012)
14 Chris Sanders
Sarah & Chuck Toy (1971)
15 CYNTHIA MCAFEE
16 Christy Smith
Kaitlyn Speer
17 RALPH & CINDY SHEAD (1974)
Tom & Leah Brown (2005)
Kenzli Turner
18 Rhonda Mitchell
20 Melody Hosler
21 Carolyn Starkey
25 Hunter Dean McGuire
26 SARAH SHEAD
28 PHIL MCAFEE
30 Chris Dedeke
Cooper Taliaferro

(Names in CAPS in Mission Field)

Serving in AUGUST

Congregational Prayer:

Steve Carson

Scripture Readers:

4- Carolyn Starkey-Romans 8:1-4
11- Jarret Mitchell- Romans 8:5-11
18- Tichenor- Romans 8:12-17
25- Christy Arnold- Romans 8:18-25

Nursery:

4- Debbie Gerstner/Nic Branam
11- Linda Durand/Jackson Reich
18- Glee Hosler/Jarret Mitchell
25- /Caitlyn Thomas

Greeters/Ushers:

4- Starkey
11- Durand
18- Tichenor
25- Arnold

Lord's Supper Preparation:

4- Starkey
11- Durand
18- Tichenor
25- Arnold

Communion Table:

4-Stan, Jay
Dennis Tichenor, Jarret Mitchell
11- Jay, Stan
Clint Thomas, Andy Arnold
18- Stan, Jay
Ray Mitchell, Cylus Tichenor
25- Jay, Stan
Dennis Turner, Jarret Mitchell

Musicians

Worship Leader: David Grove
Organ: Leah Brown
Piano: Donetta Farr
Guitar: Mike Kirby, Clint Thomas
Mandolin: Erin Thomas
Vocals: Stan Farr, Jay Welborn

Church Offerings

June 30-\$1782.68

July 7-\$3572.37

July 14-\$1420.50

July 21-\$1201.50

Our expenses average \$1500 a week.

Valley Falls Christian Church has a website!!

www.valleyfallsc.org

MEN'S BREAKFAST: The men's breakfast will be on August 10th at 8:00 AM. Mike Kirby will be cooking.

CARRY IN DINNER: The church will be having the quarterly carry in dinner here at the church on August 25th immediately following church. Please mark your calendars and plan on staying.

SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE: The newsletter went to press before the school supply drive so be looking for news on how everything goes in next months newsletter.

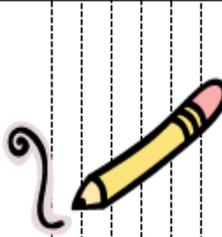
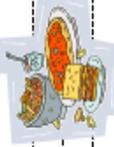
LOCK IN: We will be having a lock in for the youth. It will be Aug. 30-31 from 6:00 PM to 8:00 AM. We need volunteers to help in shifts overnight and to help with breakfast. See Mike if you can help out.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED: If you are interested in being on the Community Christian Council or want more information on what it does, please see Mike.

SISTERS OF STRENGTH (S.O.S.)-

(Mission Statement: We are a lifeline to glorify God through service to the church and community and to build personal relationships with our Christian Sisters.) We will not be having our regular meeting until fall.

BIBLE STUDY: Both bible studies will be on hiatus until fall.

2013		AUGUST					2013	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	SATURDAY
								
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	17
2:00 PM Worship Service at Midland 5:00 PM Youth Group			6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Elders			 8:00 AM Men's Breakfast		
11	12	13	14	15	16			
5:00 PM Youth Group			6:15 PM Worship Practice					
18	19	20	21	22	23			24
 10:00 AM Pocket Change for Progress 5:00 PM Youth Group			6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Elders					
25	26	27	28	29	30	31		
 Quarterly Carry In Dinner after church 5:00 PM Youth Group			6:15 PM Worship Practice		 Youth Group Lock In 6:00 PM - 8:00 AM			

Valley Falls
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On the web: www.valleyfallsc.org
Find us on Facebook!

Mike Kirby, Pastor

You are welcome to join us!

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Sunday Service times:

Bible Study (all ages) – 9:00 AM
Worship – 10:00 AM
Youth Group – 5:00 PM

Midweek Bible Study:

Wednesday 7:00 PM