

The Vine

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

A publication of Valley Falls Christian Church

November 2014

TRY IT---- YOU'LL LIKE IT

Who has never been urged by friends to do something against our wills, against our own best interests, and in violation of our own consciences? A friend says, "Oh come on try it once, you don't know what you're missing." It may be that we have been led into some pretty horrible practices.

The reasoning behind such an appeal is faulty to the core. The truth is that you don't have to try something before you know whether you will like it or not. Those who have never been put in jail for a crime don't have to wonder whether they would like the experience or not. If you've never jumped head first with no parachute from a high building to the concrete pavement, I doubt that you wonder what it would be like or what you may have been missing all these years. Don't try it.

The "do your own thing" existentialist view of life is very faulty also. Should you really have to taste the full cup of life before you know what is bad and what is not? Do you really need to participate in the seamy side of life as well as the good life to become a full human being? It is faulty to think that one can experiment with things that endanger the soul and destroy the health of an otherwise intelligent being.

Many things lure all of us into sin. Falling for the stupidity of "Try it, you don't know what you're missing," has led a host of people to take their first "toke" or "joint" of marijuana.

That first sip of beer or whiskey could be the result of listening to the same stupidity. Ask a heroin addict how much fun he is having. Ask him if he wishes now he had not been so foolish as to take his first halting steps into the misuse of drugs. Before you fall for such stupidity, remember: "Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22)

Think about just how really dumb it is to do anything without first researching the experience. Here are just a couple of good research questions.

1. Would God approve this?
2. Will this be good for me?
3. How will this affect me now and in the future?
4. It is something I want everyone to know that I do?
5. Will it damage my health?
6. Could I recommend it to others?
7. Will it cause me to violate my conscience?
8. Will it cause me to grow in Christ?
9. Will it hurt my reputation with good people?
10. Why should I do it anyway?

The Marks of a True Christian, Part 3

Romans 12:9-13 (ESV) ⁹ *Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good.* ¹⁰ *Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.* ¹¹ *Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.* ¹² *Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.* ¹³ *Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.*

Thus far, we have covered service and generosity. This month, we look at verse 12 with an eye toward Thanksgiving. *Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.*

Rejoice in hope. As I write this, the Kansas City Royals are preparing to play game four of the ALCS. They need only win one game out of four possibilities to go to their first World Series since 1985. I hope they win today, and I hope they win the World Series. If they win, there will certainly be rejoicing, but we can't rejoice in the victory just yet, for it hasn't happened. This is not the kind of hope we find in the Bible. We can't rejoice in wishful thinking until it actually happens.

Hope in the Bible is the expectation of a future event promised by God. If God promised us that the Royals would win the World Series (He didn't, sorry) we could already rejoice in that victory, even though it hasn't occurred yet. That would be a biblical hope. We actually have a greater victory promised us in the Bible. We have hope in the promise of eternal life with Jesus. *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.* **1 Peter 1:3-4.** Our hope is eternal life. It is heaven. It is victory over death. It is transformed and glorified bodies that will be like Jesus' own body. Has it happened yet? No, but it will because God

has promised that to all who follow Jesus according to the scriptures. That is a hope worth rejoicing in. It is a hope worth thanking God for. Thank God that your citizenship is in heaven and some day you will be with Jesus!

Be patient in tribulation. While our hope is transformation and a heavenly home, our time until we realize that hope is spent on earth. That is not always fun. In fact, it can be downright nasty. I'm supposed to thank God for that?

It is primarily because of the hope we have that we can be patient as we go through our trials on earth. Rely on God's grace to get you through the thorny times (2 Corinthians 12:9). God never promised us an easy life on earth. In fact, he warned us of quite the opposite. *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.* **Romans 8:18.**

If we follow the 1 Peter 1 passage, we see it leads to talking about trials. *In this (our hope of heaven) you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* **1 Peter 1:6-7.** The trials purify our faith, and a pure faith brings glory to God. I don't have to thank God for the trials in my life, but I should give thanks for the pure faith that they can bring and I certainly should thank God that He is glorified in that!

Be constant in prayer. Prayer is the vehicle in which our thanksgiving rises up to God. However, our thanksgiving in reference to prayer should go much deeper than that. Think about this: The God of the universe, who created all things, is all powerful, all knowing, all wise, ever present, eternal and self-sufficient doesn't merely allow us to pray to Him, He wants us to! *(continued on back page)*

Recipe Swap

PUMPKIN PIE SQUARES

1 cup flour
½ cup quick cooking oats
½ cup packed brown sugar
½ cup butter or margarine

Filling:

2 cans (15 oz. each) pumpkin
2 cans (12 oz. each) evaporated milk
4 eggs
1-1/2 cup sugar
2 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. ginger
½ tsp. cloves
1 tsp. salt

Topping:

½ cup packed brown sugar
½ cup chopped pecans
2 T. butter or margarine, softened

Combine the first four ingredients until crumbly; press into a greased 13x9x 2 inch pan. Bake at 350* for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Meanwhile, beat filling ingredients until smooth; pour over crust. Bake for 45 minutes. Combine topping ingredients, sprinkle over top. Bake 15-20 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool. Store in the refrigerator.

PRAYER REQUESTS

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

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.

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 be meeting on Nov. 8th at 9:00 AM.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

2 Grace (Arnold) Farwell
4 Nolan Reich
7 Curt Gatzmeyer
Avery Gatzmeyer
9 Cylus Tichenor
Shelly Gatzmeyer
12 Eli Farr
15 Joan Hosler
18 Libby Phillips
20 Doris Bixler
21 Sheila Farr
Melissa Scrivner
23 Leota Bolz
24 Curt & Shelly Gatzmeyer (2013)
27 Linda Trotter

(Names in CAPS in Mission Field)

Serving in NOVEMBER

Congregational Prayer:

Clint Thomas

Scripture Readers:

2- Joan Phillips: John 1:1-5

9- Grove: Matt. 3:13-17

16-Rhonda Mitchell: Matt. 13:44-46

23- Turner: Luke 17:11-19

30-Welborn: Matt. 16:13-17

Nursery:

2-Debbie Gerstner/Nik Branam

9-Jo Tichenor

16-Carol Welborn/Libby Phillips

23-Sarah Hollis/Nik Branam

30-Laura Reich/Caitlyn Thomas

Greeters/Ushers:

2-Phillips

9-Grove

16-Mitchell

23-Turner

30-Welborn

Lord's Supper Preparation:

2-Phillips

9-Grove

16-Mitchell

23-Turner

30-Welborn

Communion Table:

2-Stan, Jay

David Grove, Kevin Gatzmeyer

9- Jay, Stan

Steve Carson, Curt Gatzmeyer

16- Stan, Jay

Dennis Tichenor, Andy Arnold

23- Jay, Stan

Ray Mitchell, Matt Branam

30-Stan, Jay

Dennis Turner, Ben Trotter

Worship: David Grove, Jay Welborn,

Stan Farr, Matthew Branam

Organ: Leah Brown

Piano: Donetta Farr

Guitar: Mike Kirby, Clint Thomas

Mandolin: Erin Thomas

Church Offerings

Sept. 28-\$2364.00

Oct. 5-\$1331.00

Oct. 12-\$2017.00

Oct. 19-\$2075.00

Our expenses average \$1500 a week.

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

CHURCH FAMILY THANKSGIVING DINNER: The church dinner will be Sunday, Nov. 23rd after church. Please mark your calendars and plan to stay. Lists will be coming out soon to sign up to bring food.

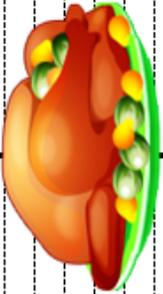
HOLIDAY SEASON: I know it seems like Christmas is a long way away, but it will be here before you know it. It is time to be thinking about the Dec. activities. I don't want to panic you, but we need to get the dates on the calendar so everyone can plan ahead to participate. If you are heading up any of the activities we've had before (caroling, cookie bake, ladies Christmas party, church Christmas dinner, food boxes, Christmas program) let Donetta and Christy know the date and your plans soon. We are open to any other ideas or activities too. If you are willing to host the ladies Christmas party please let us know.

CHRISTMAS BOXES: We need to bring all shoeboxes, preferably wrapped but if not wrapped, the sooner the better. Also if anyone has extra wrapping paper that would be very much appreciated also. Please leave it in the foyer.

COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE: The community service will be Nov. 23rd at the Methodist Church at 7:00 PM. We need to furnish 2 pies.

TIME CHANGE: Don't forget to set your clocks back on Nov. 2nd. Spring ahead Fall back!

DECORATE THE CHURCH: We will be decorating the church for Christmas on Nov.30th after church. Please plan to stay and help.

2014		NOVEMBER					2014	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	
	Thanksgiving						1	
2  Time Change 2:00 Midland Service 5:00 PM Youth Group	3	4	5 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM Elders	6	7	 8 Men's Breakfast 8:00 SOS 9:00AM	15	
9	10	11	12 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study 8:00 PM Board Meeting	13	14	22	29	
16 10:00 AM Pocket Change for Progress 5:00 PM Youth Group	17	18	19 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Bible Study	20	21	28		
23 Church Thanksgiving Dinner 7:00 PM Community Thanksgiving Service Decorate the Church 30	24	25	26	27	28	29		

Valley Falls Christian Church

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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

(Marks of a True Christian continued)

*Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. **Hebrews 4:16.** Not only do we lift up our thanksgiving to God in prayer, we should be deeply grateful to God that we can even go to Him in prayer!*

So these are marks of someone who has genuinely been converted by Christ and are new creations in Him. We rejoice in the hope we have, we are patient as we wait for that hope, and have a constant attitude of prayer as we walk this earth. And in all these things, we overflow with thanksgiving toward our God who loves us so!

*... "Give thanks to the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted. **Isaiah 12:4***

Mike

