

HUGGS

Heartfelt, Uplifting, Guest Stories

DEVOTIONS FROM OUR CHURCH FAMILY
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Courage

One of God's great leaders was Moses. Never was there a prophet like him (Deuteronomy 34:10). There were many problems during the years of wandering in the wilderness toward Canaan. Moses encouraged the spies he sent to be of courage (Numbers 13:20). He also wrote and sang a song which reminded people to be strong and courageous, along with God's promise to be with them.

David gave his son Solomon the great advice to avoid being afraid, just as Moses had cautioned Israel.

The dictionary links courage with the heart. Jesus said, "I have said these things to you, that in me, you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world" (John 16:32).

Paul wrote from prison saying he was honoring God in his body with full courage . . . whether by life or death. We, like Paul, need to be strong and courageous to have a pleasant and peaceful life. Obedience to God, combined with support, care and love for family and others, makes for a wonderful journey. Joshua admonished, "Turn not to the right or to the left" (Joshua 23:6). He also emphasized that when he said he and his family would serve God (and the people agreed).

In the Psalms, we are admonished to have strength and courage. "Let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord" (Psalm 27:14). David, along with Moses, Joshua, Jesus and Paul has given us good advice.

We should also remember that God if God is for us, it does not matter who is against us (Romans 8:31).

--Dorothy Steury (deceased)

Our Ministry

On July 1, 1965 our family arrived in Calvert City, Kentucky for me to serve as minister of the church, which met in a building on the corner of Second and Aspen. Plans for a new church building were discussed almost daily. Land had been donated by Earl and Juanita Smith, but the project had not yet begun. When they were finally offered, bonds sold quickly, and construction was set to begin. It started in October of 1967. On August 4, 1968 the first worship service was held in the spacious new building located on Highway 62. The church invited H.A. Dixon (then president of Freed-Hardeman College) to preach that day, and he did so, speaking about the great influence of the church.

Throughout my years of preaching my theme has, in essence, been the words of Colossians 3:16: "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

I consider myself greatly blessed by God to have been a preacher of the gospel. Life is wonderful, due to my family and friends! Our family has been supportive and faithful. Susan (now deceased), Katie, Leigh, Sarah, Tara, and Dorothy have excelled in their work as teachers. This has resulted in many positive contacts through the years.

Susan's accomplishment gave us much joy. She died at thirty-one, leaving Sarah, who was five. Sarah's parents made an agreement with a wonderful Christian couple to take her into their home and

encourage her through public school and Freed-Hardeman University. Living in Calvert City has truly been a blessing for all of us.

--Ralph Steury (deceased)

What Love Really Is

In I Corinthians 13:1-8 the apostle Paul is giving the praises of love. In these verses, Paul lists many things that he may possess such as: ability to speak; prophesy; understand mysteries; have all knowledge; have faith to move mountains; give all his goods to feed the poor; and give his body to be burned. If he has not love, it will profit him nothing. Paul also describes love as: long suffering; kind; not envying; not puffed up; rejoices in truth; never fails. Paul continues, "So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love" (I Corinthians 13:13). As I study the Bible, I am made to realize that the subject of love runs through the Bible like a thread woven through a piece of cloth. The apostle John has become known as the "apostle of love" because of his many writings about it.

The Bible speaks of three kinds of love: the love of God for man; man's love for God; and love within mankind. I John 4:8, 10 tell us that God is love. The word love is mentioned eighty times in I, II and III John. The ultimate example of the act of love is that God gave his son for the remission of the sins of all mankind that lived under all three dispensations of the Bible.

All that people need to do is love God enough to obey the plan of salvation set forth in the New Testament to become a Christian and serve God faithfully thus having the promise of a home in heaven in eternity.

--Jackie Travis

Warnings, Warnings, Warnings

When my two children were very young, I began to warn them of dangers of things that would harm them such as: don't touch the stove because it is hot; don't play with sharp objects or electrical receptacles. As they grew older the warnings were: drive safely; don't speed; don't ride with drunk drivers. Sometimes all these warnings brought on, "But why, Mom"? Why? Because I loved them so much!

God's warnings are because of his love for us as his children. God's first warning to mankind was given to Adam in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 2:17. The Ten Commandments were really God's warning to the children of Israel; seven of the ten began with "You shall not." In other words, you must not do these things. The other three were things the children of Israel were cautioned to do in order to stay in God's favor. All

these were rewritten in the New Testament for our learning except the one to keep the Sabbath. This was replaced by the assembly on the first day of the week. God continually warns us in his Word of the temptations of the devil and warnings of sin creeping into our lives.

Our good and bad experiences in life should teach us that we should obey God's warnings. God allows things to happen to us in order to teach us to heed his warnings about sin. Warnings about sinful acts help us to become and stay God's faithful children. In 2 Timothy 2:15 we are told to study God's word. We should always study in order to apply God's warnings and teachings to our lives and others' lives.

--Marlene Travis

Bonding, Walker Style

My husband Danny and I have been married almost thirty-nine years. We do a lot of things together such as clean, paint, and organize his shop. He tells me the kitchen and bath remodel is next. He allowed me to help him fence and even thinks I might enjoy raking hay for him to bale!

But as far as hobbies we have together, the main one would be driving country roads. It does not matter if we are familiar with the area or not, we may turn down a road to see where it comes out. We've found our share of dead-end roads with this hobby. But along the way we've seen beautiful old buildings, green fields, ponds, and animals.

We have an atlas in each of our vehicles. We even have GPS systems and cell phones with navigational tools. But when you are truly lost these may not help at all. We have learned to turn around, backtrack, and start over. When this happens, we always want to know where we made our wrong turn. If it is late, we will usually get back on track and go home. However, if it is not too late, we will try again. This time we will watch and visually mark our surroundings.

Most of the time we figure it out and try to remember the way for the next time. We don't get upset when we get lost or misplaced, we just bond.

When we are working on our farm, we bond. Driving back and forth to church is always a special time of bonding for us. We made the decision a long time ago to enjoy just being together and bond, however simple that may sound. So, start bonding! You never know where you will end up, but you will be together.

Colossians 2:2 says, "that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding the knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ" (Colossians 2:2).

--Becky Walker