DECEMBER 2020

Monthly Newsletter of Eastridge Baptist Church

The Best Gift Ever! from the desk of Pastor John

I recently asked someone, "What is the best gift you ever got for Christmas?" They thought for a moment and replied, "A bicycle." A bicycle is a pretty cool gift. I tried to think back to my childhood (which is getting harder to do) to what Christmas gift stood out to me. The only thing I could think of was a Pachinko Machine (a Japanese arcade game that was similar to a vertical pinball machine). Like most gifts we received when we were children, they served a purpose for a time, but then we outgrew them, they wore out, or our preferences changed, and we simply stopped using them. Bikes rust, games break, clothes wear out, electronics become obsolete. That said, even though most gifts are temporary in nature, it does not keep us from giving gifts to one another nor should it.

There is, however, a gift that never wears out, never breaks, never becomes obsolete, and can never become corrupted. It actually gets better the more you use it! The more you explore and understand the gift the more valuable it becomes to you. The gift is, of course, a relationship with Jesus Christ. To become a Christian only requires an elementary understanding of what happens at salvation—simply knowing that we are sinners separated from God, the wages of our sin is death. Jesus died as our substitute to pay the penalty for our sin, and if we seek God's forgiveness and confess Jesus as our Lord, believing that God raised Him from the dead, we will be saved. While those are vital truths about salvation, much more takes place the moment we put our faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul explained some of the important things that happen at salvation when he wrote to the church in Ephesus. He explains what was true of us before we came to Christ and then what is true after we came to Christ. The transformation that takes place makes salvation the best gift ever!

In **Ephesians 2:12** Paul states five things we should remember were true of us before salvation,

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that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."

The first thing we should remember is that we were **separated from Christ**. Now, for those who are separated from Christ, this does not seem like a big deal since they do not know or even care to know Christ. But Christ is the Promised One (Deut. 18:15), the only Savior of the world (Isa. 43:11; John

continued on page 2

The Best Gift Ever! Continued from page 1

4:42). There is no other Savior (Acts 4:12). In our ignorance we neither knew nor cared that we were separated from our only hope of salvation.

Second, we were **excluded from the commonwealth of Israel**. That means we were not part of the blessings that are granted to those who are God's chosen people. Again, that did not really bother us because we did not know what that meant.

That leads to the third reminder: we were **stranger** (s) to the covenants of promise. Specifically, Paul was referring to the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and

new covenants. The covenants, which were given to the nation of Israel, do include universal blessings. The Abrahamic covenant promises that the whole world will be blessed through Abraham's offspring. The Mosaic covenant gives laws that governed the nation of Israel but also reveal God's standard for holiness and expose man's true sin nature. The Davidic covenant promises a descendant of David

to reign forever. We know from other passages that the coming King will reign over all the world. The new covenant is God's promise to redeem Israel and giving her a new heart. All who know Christ as Lord have a part in the new covenant.

While these first three reminders from Paul have eternal ramifications for all people (but on the surface appear to apply only to Israel), the last two transcend time and culture and should be a concern to everyone who does not know Christ.

The fourth reminder about ourselves before we came to Christ is that we were in a position of **having no hope**. There was nothing to look forward to. There was no hope for what would happen to us after we die. The only thing we could look to for hope was empty manmade philosophies. Hoping in man's philosophies for your eternal destiny is like hoping you can build a house out of wind and rainbows.

The fifth thing to remember is that before Christ we were **without God in the world**. This does not mean that we were atheists. It means we were without the One True God. Whatever we thought of as god was the result of our own desires and was, therefore, idolatry. We believed in a god that had no power to save and no authority to forgive our sin, and ultimately did not even exist.

Before we were saved, we were separated from Christ but did not care. We were excluded from the com-

> monwealth of Israel but did not want to be part of Israel anyway. We were strangers to the covenants of promise but did not know they affected us. We had no hope, though we never considered ourselves hopeless. We were without God in this world though we created a god in our own imagination.

When Jesus opened our eyes to the Truth, all those things

changed! We were united with Christ, joined to the family of God, partakers of the blessings of the covenants, specifically the New covenant. We suddenly had hope because the Holy Spirit of God took up residence in our hearts and gave us the hope, the certainty of eternal life. God graciously removed the blinders that kept us from seeing our sin, His righteousness, and our need for repentance. He gave us the grace to believe the truth. He broke down the barriers of sin, deception, and pride that kept us from seeing Him for who He really is. And He forgave our sin and covered us in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He made us new creatures in Christ and we were adopted into the family of God. This is the gift of salvation and it is the best gift ever!

From

A Curious Story of the Church, Part 3 by Derek Iverson

In the final installment of this article, you'll learn about the continued spread of the gospel in Taka-Shera in Nepal and the persecution that accompanied it.

David Watters and Hasta Ram finished the first draft of the entire New Testament in the Kham language, had it printed, and brought copies across the border into Nepal through various means. Meanwhile the imprisonment of the seven men from the Kham church had become an amazing evangelistic tool. Peo-

ple were wondering how the government could imprison such good men. What was in the Bible that made it so dangerous? Many from surrounding villages would come to learn what the Bible said.

In order to better control the situation, the police set up an auxiliary police station in Taka and persecution increased. In early 1982, while Watters was in Canada, the police came to the church on a Sunday with clubs and guns and captured the entire church

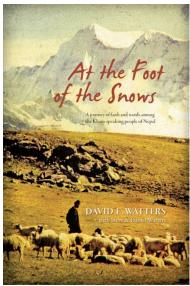
congregation—58 people total. They were left standing for two days in a snowy field and when they held firm in their faith, the police started marching them to prison in Musikot. But as they passed Kham villages along the trail, the people observing the group asked where they were going. The common reply was, "We're off to stand before governors and kings for Christ's sake, as a testimony to them." Gradually they were released and sent back to Taka. However, later in July the police arrested Hasta Ram and 14 leaders of the church; they were imprisoned until December before being pardoned by the king. In the meantime others were also arrested. One of the newer prisoners was a 75-year-old illiterate man named Dalla, who had been the religious storyteller for the area. During his year in prison, Dalla had memorized Scripture and could recite the gospel by heart. When released in July of 1983, he turned his farm over to his children and began living in a tent with his wife. He said he had only two goals: to care for his buffalo and to know God. In 1985 he pitched his winter tent outside the village of Chhamarih and every evening he would sit at the tent doorway and sing the gospel he had memorized. Within days the whole village would gather to listen. Soon they told Dalla, "We want to follow Jesus too. What do we do?" He sent them to Hasta Ram at Taka. On the way there they met more Christian prisoners being taken to jail and heard their testimony for Jesus. In 1986, Dalla moved to another village and repeated

his routine of witness for Jesus.

Torture started in the fall of 1983 at the Musikot prison. One prisoner, Karna Bakadur, speaking of his beating in prison said, "How stupid could they be? They thought they could beat God out of us with a stick!" But the prisoners never reviled their persecutors, instead obeying Jesus' command to love their enemies. Their witness was so earth-shattering that Bahadar, who was also police chief in the area, asked forgiveness of the church and became a true follower of

Jesus. He learned that his black heart could be made white by the God of the Bible!

At the end of 1985 David and Hasta Ram had completed a revision of the Kham NT. In the intervening years David learned more of the subtleties of Kamkura. For instance, in Kham there are no nouns for things like love, faith, grudges and so forth, so no direct way to translate commands about forgiving someone. But by accident David learned that Kham handles these expressive issues by verbal phrases. For instance, if you hold a grudge against a person, you would say that you have that person "tied up in your heart" and to forgive that person would be to "untie him." So these and many other changes had to be made in the Kham NT so that it spoke to the heart of the Kham people in a natural way.



Cell Phones and the Gospel By Cathy Mickelson

Do you have some old cell phones or iPads hanging around the house that you've been thinking about recycling but you



just never got around to it? Eastridge is collecting those used items to give to *Jesus Film Project* so people around the world can watch the "JESUS" film and the follow-up series "Waking with Jesus" in one of 10 different languages. This could be huge, truly a disciple-multiplying model in closed, restricted countries!

Donated cell phones and iPads must have all personal information removed from them and must meet the following minimum requirements:

 iPhones[®] and iPads[®]: iOS 10 or higher, iPhone 5 and higher, and iPad 4th gen and higher
 Android: Android 6.0 or higher. eg. Samsung Galaxy S5 and higher

You may give your used devices to Bill or Cathy Mickelson. They can be contacted at mickelsons5@msn.com or camickelson@msn.com. This will be an ongoing project.



Event rescheduled! Watch for the new date and sign-up information on Realm and in the bulletins.

Questions? Contact Pastor Ryan at ryant@eastridgebaptist.org



Date and time TBD Main Sanctuary Food and tea to be provided. All ages welcome! More details to come.





Join us for our service at 6:00pm in the auditorium or via livestream

Comforted by the Infinitely Wise God from the desk of Pastor Paul

Last month we discussed that a right understanding of God makes a tremendous difference to how we handle the chaos of the world and our lives. We reflected on this as we looked at Isaiah 40:12 where God is described as the all-powerful One. Isaiah 40 served to provide comfort to the people of God who are suffering under the affliction of the Lord for their sin of violating the covenant. As the lives of people seemed to fall apart, they could find hope in the God who has the power to do all that He pleases, including rescuing and restoring His people. wisdom continues to providentially shape and care for our lives.

The people in captivity were to find hope in knowing that the Lord is even wiser than those who have taken them. For Israel, this means that God would have no problem saving them. It also should have pointed them to humility and repentance as they realize that it is only by God's sovereign direction that they are bearing the discipline for their disobedience (Deut. 28). No one needs to teach God what is just and right. God is truth and He determines what is right. What is right is that which is in obedience to His commands and in line with His character.

However, Isaiah does not stop encouraging the people by pointing only to the power of God. He goes on to describe the uniqueness, as well as the infinite knowledge and wis-

dom of God Almighty in vv. 13-14, "Who has measured the Spirit of the Lord, or what man shows him his counsel? Whom did he consult, and who made him understand? Who taught him the path of justice, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?" As God's people faced excruciating difficulties, they are reminded that God in His perfect knowledge knows what is best to accomplish His will and how to do so for His glory. Not only this, but there is no one who can fully comprehend God. From His acts of creation to His providential care of our lives, God does not need anyone to tell Him what is best. He did not guess when He created all things. He didn't just guess when He made you, hoping that He would get everything right. No! He made us perfectly as He planned. Even more so, His infinite

tle has made everything beautiful in its time. tle has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what Qod has done from beginning to end. For us, realizing that God is all-knowing and allwise should propel us towards comfort in knowing that no matter what may happen in our lives, God has everything under control. Let us trust in Him. All things are still working according to His plan. He

knows exactly what He wants done and why. He guides all of history and our lives as He determines best. We cannot teach Him anything, which is good news. Instead, He gives us knowledge and wisdom as we seek Him (Psalm 94:10; 1 Cor. 2:16). May we have the attitude of the psalmist who writes, **"Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I believe in your commandments"** (Ps. 119:66).

Eccl. 3:11

Let us rest in His sovereign care and plan even as our lives might seem to be going differently than what we expected. God's ways are beyond our full comprehension (Rom. 11:33-34). He has no equal, no teacher, and does not need anyone's counsel. What an amazing God we serve! How comforting it is to know that the all-powerful, all-knowing, all-wise God has everything in control in the best and worst of times. May God receive all the glory.

Christmas Kids' Corner



- 1. Where in the Bible do we read about the birth of Jesus?
- 2. Who appeared to tell Mary that she was with child?
- 3. Who is the father of Jesus?
- 4. How many miles did Mary and Joseph have to travel to get to Bethlehem for the census?
- 5. What is a manger?
- 6. How many angels spoke to the shepherds?
- 7. What signs were the shepherds supposed to look for when searching for Jesus?
- 8. Where did Jesus' family flee to from Bethlehem and why?
- 9. What does the name Immanuel mean?
- 10. How many days after the birth of Jesus did Joseph and Mary give him the name Jesus?

True or False

- 1. Early Christians celebrated the birth of Jesus.
- 2. Mary, mother of Jesus, had other children.
- 3. The three wise men were present at Jesus' birth.
- 4. Jesus was born in 0 A.D.
- 5. The star led the wise men straight to Jesus.
- 6. God told people to remember the birth of His Son.



led them to lesus 6) False. God only tells people to remember the death of His Son.

1) False. There is no mention of either the apostles or early Christians celebrating the birth of Jesus. There is no trace of Christmas until it was first in 336 A.D.
2) False. The of Christ is generally accepted to be around 5 or 6 B.C.
5) False. The star led them to Herod first, after which they saw the star again, which is generally accepted to be around 5 or 6 B.C.
5) False. The star led them to Herod first, after which they saw the star again, which is generally accepted to be around 5 or 6 B.C.
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5) False. The star led them to Herod first, after which they saw the star again, which here are again.

True or False answers:

Jesus. 9) "God is with us" 20) 8 days. See Luke 2:21

1) Luke 2; Matt 1 & 2) The Angel Gabriel 3) God (not Joseph) 4) The distance from Wasareth to Bethlehem was 80 miles. 5) A feeding trough for animals 6) One. See Luke 2:9. 7) A baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger (Luke 2:12) 8) Egypt because King Herod wanted to kill

In Defense of Hope From the desk of Pastor Samuel

One of my favorite things about living in Washington is seeing Mt. Rainier on a clear morning. Not too long ago I saw it while I was driving—that crisp, snowcovered peak in front of a backdrop of grey and yellow sunrise. I was blown away afresh by the beauty I was beholding. I've seen this mountain countless times in the few years my family and I have lived here, but I cannot get over just how impressive and, dare I say, *majestic* that view is.

Of course, living in the Pacific Northwest, there are more days when you can't see Rainier than days when you can. This often makes the times when you *can* see it that much sweeter. However, that does not mean that Mt. Rainier simply vanishes every time you can't see it. What's hiding from view is not hiding from memory. For me, actually being able to see Rainier almost feels like running into an old friend!

While that all may sound a little ridiculous, our relationship to the hope we have in the gospel functions in the same way. Our hope in Christ is always present and alive, whether or not we notice it at any given moment. The biblical definition of hope is very different from the world's definition. Where someone's worldly hope may rise or fall on decisions made or actions taken, our hope in Christ is anchored in His finished work. It gives us confidence in the promises of God regardless of circumstances. Something may divert our attention from that biblical hope for a moment, but it has no power to remove the certainty of our hope.

Think about whatever earthly circumstance is dominating your attention at this moment. That circumstance might function like a wave of clouds prohibiting you from seeing the mountain that is our hope in Christ. It may be a legitimate concern, but that does not mean it has the ability to replace the power of Christ's resurrection as the primary focus of our attention. That hope may be hidden from view, but it is not hidden from our minds and what we *know* to be true.

Dear brothers and sisters, there is nothing greater than to know and trust in the faithfulness of our God. His sovereign command brought the entire universe into existence—just by Him speaking! In His grace, He has revealed Himself to His creation and has lovingly provided the only possible means of salvation for wretched sinners. He has never once failed to fulfill His promises, so we can trust that He will also fulfill future promises. Nothing in this life comes upon us that He did not ordain in His perfect wisdom. That means that He knows the troubles that come upon us. But He has not left us without hope: "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 16:33). Christ has overcome the power of this world and invites us into eternal life only found in Him! We have hope that spans beyond this life!

Our sufferings in this life, made all the more clear in a year like this, are "light and momentary" compared to the "weight of glory" to be revealed to us in the future (2 Corinthians 4:17; see also Romans 8:18). We can be certain in our hope for this because of Christ's work of salvation and the Spirit's work of sanctification within us. Don't let your patience wear thin for this. Even when clouds cover the sky, hold out hope for the sight of the mountain.

Much more could be said in defense of hope, and I want to continue the conversation by providing a playlist full of songs of hope. You can scan the QR code or find the link below to listen! (You'll need a free Spotify account).



Link to playlist: https://bit.ly/HOPEebc

New study begins January 11, 2021

Ladies' Monday Evening Bible Study

With Love from the Dopper Roopen Opper Roopen Developen R

Story of the Church, Part 3 continued from page 3

In the following years, the Kham church was caught in the middle of the civil war between the Red Maoists and the Hindu Monarchy. Hasta Ram's son Sukha was murdered by police in 1998. Hasta died naturally in 2002, 17 years after he started translating the Bible with David Watters. A week after his death, a government execution squad came for him and another man but when they found out that Hasta was already dead, they grabbed another elder of the church and murdered both men on the spot.

What a curious path God has taken to build his church among such a people as the Kham. What deep spiritual battles were waged in the hearts of the called translators. How deeply the saved among the Kham people love God and His Word!

...taken from *At the Foot of the Snows*, David Watters, 2011.

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

Steve Wentworth 12/1 Steve Peltekian 12/1 Trina Bonn 12/1 Bryan Botka 12/1 Zachary Peltekian 12/2 Shannon Kearney 12/2 Alijah Lopez 12/3 Caleb Watson 12/5 Emily Reed 12/6 Carmina Panfil 12/7 Chris Bonar 12/7 Jim Hunter 12/9 Bev Heusser 12/10 Gina Robinson 12/10 Sandy Thomas 12/11 Matt Hurst 12/12

Sabrina Kelsey 12/12 Marian Hutchins 12/13 Robert Turnbull 12/13 Becky Maxson 12/14 Anabel Elliott 12/15 Esther Blake 12/15 Amanda Olson 12/17 Ashly Barrios 12/17 Ethan Tuthill 12/18 Tyler Botka 12/18 Bruce Diehl 12/19 Michaela Rutherford 12/19 Kristen Lege 12/19 Ray Emme 12/20 Joy Hafford 12/20 Andrew Winn 12/21 Savannah Wentworth 12/23 Noelle Ahlstrom 12/23 Emma Hayward 12/23 Aiden Keating 12/24 Danielle Jensen 12/25 Pam Emme 12/29 Larry Hughes 12/29 Emily Williams 12/29 John Stahlschmidt 12/29 Cherryl Boston 12/30 Julia Kinney 12/31 Madelyn Brichka 12/31



Anniversaries John and Susan Rehberg 12/13 Jason and Haley Ausen 12/17 Kenny and Karin Kerr 12/18 Larry and Jann Hughes 12/20 Bob and Jackie Cochran 12/28 Silesh and Marlene Mansukhani 12/28

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
		5:00pm–8:30pm Taekwondo 7:00pm Young Marrieds' Bible Study 7:00pm Ladies' Bible Study	6:30–8:00pm Adventure Club 6:30–7:30pm Adult Bible Study 6:30pm Youth Group	10:00–11:30am Ladies' Bible Study 5:00–6:30 Bible Quizzing Practice 7:00pm College/ Career Bible Study	8:00am Men's Bible Study	9:00am-4:00pm Bible Quiz Competition **Postponed** Ladies' Christmas Brunch **Postponed** Father-Son Dinner & Cornhole
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
8:30am & 10:30am Worship Services 10:30 Adult Sunday School 6:00pm Prayer Meeting	2:00–3:00pm Ladies' Bible Study 6:30–8:00pm Ladies' Bible Study	10:30am Missions Prayer Meeting 5:00pm-8:30pm Taekwondo 6:30pm Elder Mtg 7:00pm Young Marrieds' Bible Study 7:00pm Ladies' Bible Study	6:30–8:00pm Adventure Club 6:30–7:30pm Adult Bible Study 6:30pm Youth Group	10:00–11:30am Ladies' Bible Study 5:00–6:30 Bible Quizzing Practice 7:00pm College/ Career Bible Study	8:00am Men's Bible Study	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Special Christmas Music (8:30am & 10:30am Worship Services) 10:30 Adult Sunday School	2:00–3:00pm Ladies' Bible Study 6:30–8:00pm Ladies' Bible Study	5:00–8:30pm Taekwondo	6:30–8:00pm Adventure Club 6:30–7:30pm Adult Bible Study 6:30pm Youth Group			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
8:30am & 10:30am Worship Services 10:30 Adult Sunday School		5:00–8:30pm Taekwondo		6:00pm Christmas Eve Service	MERRY CHRIST MAS	
27 Communion	28	29	30	31	Decer	nber
8:30am & 10:30am Worship Services				New Year's Eve		

Please reserve seats for the Sunday services through your Realm account (events) or our website at eastridgebaptist.org/registration

January 2021

Sunday, January 3	Monthly Prayer Meeting	6:00pm (Auditorium)
Tuesday, January 12	Missions Prayer Ministry	10:30am @ Alaire Irish's

February 2021

Sunday, February 7	Monthly Prayer Meeting	6:00pm (Auditorium)
Monday, February 15–		
Friday, February 19	Kent School District Presidents' Break	
Tuesday, February 9	Missions Prayer Ministry	10:30am @ Alaire Irish's

March 2021

Sunday, March 7	Monthly Prayer Meeting	6:00pm (Auditorium)
Tuesday, March 9	Missions Prayer Ministry	10:30am @ Alaire Irish's



The Necessary Qualities of Those Who Counsel from the desk of Pastor Ryan

Every job has attached to it a set of employee standards and qualities that make someone qualified for the position such as being punctual, hard-working, and respectful. The same goes for those who engage in counseling others with the Bible. Throughout this year we have been looking at the basics of biblical counseling: the fundamentals and the necessary components. We've talked about the goal and focus; and the necessity of repentance, faith, and forgiveness. In this final article for 2020, we turn our attention to the necessary qualities of those who counsel.

Romans 15:14 provides us with three essential qualities of those involved in biblical counseling. Paul writes, "I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another." Biblical counselors must be full of goodness, filled with knowledge, and able to teach.

The first quality, "full of goodness," is a term that refers to one who has a benevolent disposition and a virtuous character; a good person who seeks to do good. We know that any goodness found within comes from the Lord, and the goodness received from Him is to be passed on to others. Those who counsel have been placed in a strategic position to be good and to do good.

The second quality is "filled with knowledge." The way Paul uses the word "filled" indicates that this is a continual process. When people come to Christ, there are certain things they know about the gospel and biblical truth. As they continue to grow in Christ, their knowledge of Christ will also grow. Every believer must have a continual desire to increase in the knowledge of the truth, and this is especially significant for biblical counseling.

Third, those who counsel are to be able to instruct one another. At its basic level, all counseling is the passing on of information and influencing action in accordance with that information. A "good" biblical counselor is one who is "filled with knowledge," particularly the knowledge of Christ (Col 3:16), and who teaches that knowledge to others so they might live accordingly.

Now, you might be asking yourself, "Hey, isn't Paul talking to believers in this verse? Isn't this one of those 'one-another' verses? So aren't these qualities necessary for all Christians?" And the answer is yes! Every follower of Christ is to be full of

> goodness, continually being filled with knowledge, and ready at all times to point others to Christ. What this means is that every believer is a biblical counselor, because a biblical counselor is simply one who is able to take what they know about Christ from the Word of God and share it with others so that they might be

influenced to know, love, and live for Christ.

Earlier this year we discussed that everyone is an influencer, and thus a counselor. Whether we find ourselves in an official teaching position, or an informal conversation over coffee, all of us pass on information with a desire for people to think the way we think. That causes us to ask questions like, "How biblical is our counsel?" and "How godly is our influence?" If our aim is to be full of goodness, seeking to be good and to do good, increasing in our knowledge of Christ as we pass that knowledge on to others, then we will possess the necessary qualities to be biblical counselors. May the Lord bless you as you seek to minister His Word in the lives of others for His glory and their good.





