

YOU CAN KNOW FOR SURE YOU ARE ON YOUR WAY TO HEAVEN.

REALIZE THAT GOD LOVES YOU.

The Bible says in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

UNDERSTAND EVERYONE IS A SINNER.

Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." No one is perfect. We have all broken God's commandments. This is called sin, and it separates us from God.

SIN HAS A PRICE THAT MUST BE PAID.

Romans 6:23 tells us, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord"

JESUS PAID THE PRICE FOR YOUR SIN.

Romans 5:8 says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." If we choose to accept Christ, we do not have to pay the price of death and Hell for our sins because Jesus paid for our sins when He died on the Cross. Three days later He rose again!

FINALLY, PRAY. ASK JESUS TO BE YOUR SAVIOR, AND CLAIM HIS PROMISE OF ETERNAL LIFE.

Romans 10:9, 13 says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved... For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved..." This is a promise directly from God that if you will confess that you are a sinner and trust Him to be your Savior, He will save you and give you the gift of eternal life.

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

A small-town church with a world-wide vision!

325 S. Toussaint-Portage Rd.
PO Box 69
Oak Harbor, OH 43449
419.898.4002
gracebaptistcokharbor.org
Richard Bickelhaupt, Pastor



• Scan QR code to "like" us

Place address label here

Address Service Requested

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH
P.O. BOX 69
OAK HARBOR, OH 43449

The Earnest Contender
GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

Please Affix Proper Postage



The Earnest Contender

"...that ye should earnestly contend for the faith..." Jude 1:3



Pastor Rick Bickelhaupt

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."
— Col. 2:6-7

As I study history, and look back over the past 31 years as pastor, I see one thing consistent: churches are changing! Churches that were once powered by preaching the Bible and walking with God have digressed to a self-centered form of worship void of God's Word and His transforming power. At the heart of all of this is the gospel. Churches that once preached a pure gospel are now diluting it or eliminating it all together.

This year, Grace Baptist Church's theme is *Back To Basics*— getting back to the simple things of God's Word. For the Christian, there is nothing more basic than the gospel, but unfortunately, most believers do not know what the *gospel* is. Most cannot give a biblical definition of the term. It means, *good news*. The *good news* is that we do not have to stand before God with all the sin that will condemn us; rather, we can stand with personal faith in the death, burial and

resurrection of Jesus Christ, which results in forgiveness and eternal life. The salvation of our soul and our eternity is based upon what we do with the gospel! The gospel is important! The Apostle Paul put it this way: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures;" (I Cor. 15:1-4)

Paul gives four basic truths about the Gospel. First, **the good news must be provided**. Jesus Christ, God's Son, was the perfect provision for sinful mankind. Before man was ever created, the Lord knew that he would sin and that he would need a Savior. Jesus is described in Revelation 13:8 as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the earth." He is our Passover Lamb – our sinless substitute! He is the "Just for the unjust," (I Pet. 3:18). The gospel was afforded to us by God's grace (Eph. 2:8-9), it was demonstrated to us by His love (Rom. 5:8), and it was paid for by Christ's blood (Eph. 1:7, I John 2:2). Thank God for His provision; for without it, we would be eternally lost. It must not be forgotten that provision is

See "Back to Basics" pg. 7

inside	The Blessings of Delegation	page 2, 5
	Why I Never Force My Kids To Go To Church	page 4-5
	Events & Ministry News	page 6
	Pastor's Health	page 7
	Back to Basics	page 1, 7



The Blessings of Delegation

By Jeremy Bickelhaupt

“One of the hardest duties to handle as a leader is that of delegation; because- too often- the passion he has for seeing a task performed exceptionally well is not shared by those to whom he has delegated it. But a good leader will recognize his limitations and delegate anyway, always taking note of who can be trusted and who cannot. So, if one is called upon over and over again to assigned tasks... he should consider that a compliment and a testament of his trustworthy character. Conversely, if he is never called upon for a delegated task, perhaps his trustworthiness has been called into question.” -- Anonymous

Having worked in a leadership position of a ministry for thirteen years, I haven't always had an easy time giving over responsibility to others. I get it honestly. My dad, a pastor of 30 years, had a difficult time with this for the first half of his

service. His mindset -as was mine- was: "If you want something done right, just do it yourself."

There is a two-fold problem with that logic. First, you assume that your way is the only "right" way of doing something. It comes across as haughty and arrogant, and others are less likely to want to help in fear of falling short of your unattainable expectations. Second, with this mindset, you will have to do everything yourself. For those in the ministry for any length of time, you understand that the latter point is the quickest way to burn yourself out. You will become weak and "weary in well-doing" in no time.

We can learn from the adage, "Do more by doing less yourself." There is much truth in this paradox. It does not say "Do more by doing less." That last word *yourself* is ever-so important. It

implies that growth will happen once we get others involved. Delegation if you will.

Once my dad relinquished some of his innumerable ministerial tasks to others, the growth of our church and its ministries commenced.

It is important to note that finding the right people to trust is key. It is also a learning process. One must be very diligent in observing people and recognizing their talents. Discovering who is reliable and who is not is not as daunting a task as it may seem. As my experiences have dictated, there are those who are not reliable. They want to help (with all good intentions), but never follow through on anything. They

see "Delegation" pg. 7

from "Back to Basics" pg. 1

profitless to us unless personal application is made!

The second basic truth is that **the good news must be declared**, (I Cor. 15:1). In the opening verse, Paul uses two important words in connection with the gospel- *declared* and *preached*. The word *declared* means, "to make known" or "to give understanding." We need to teach the basic truths of the gospel and help people to understand it. *Preach* means "herald, or proclaim." It is the same root word from which we get the words *evangelize* and *gospel*. Jesus *declared* the good news in Mark 1:14-15. "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." Jesus told the disciples to do the same in Mark 16:15- "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Peter *preached* the gospel in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost and 3,000 people were saved. Paul *preached* the gospel (I Cor. 15:1-4) to help the church of Corinth. The goal of the Christian life is to glorify God and to *declare* the gospel of Jesus Christ to the lost!

Third, **the good news must be personally received**. It is not

enough just to *know* about the gospel; it must be personally applied to one's life. While growing up, I "believed" in God. I "believed" that Jesus was the Son of God. I "believed" that He died on the cross, was buried, and rose the third day from the grave. I "believed" that He was the Savior of the world. With all that belief, I was still a lost sinner headed to hell. It was not until I received Jesus as my *personal* Savior. So, what is involved in "receiving" Jesus Christ as Savior? First, it involves repentance and faith. These- like two sides of one coin- are inseparable truths concerning salvation. Faith is the positive aspect (heads) of salvation, while repentance is the negative aspect (tails) of salvation. Just as a real coin has both a heads and a tails, so too does biblical salvation with faith and repentance. Authenticity comes when both are present. A coin without a heads or a tails is not genuine. Salvation that lacks either faith or repentance is likewise not genuine! The apostle Paul said in Acts 20:21, "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, **repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.**" The Bible tells us that the gospel is for everyone (Rom. 10:13), but it must be

personally received (John 1:12, Acts 4:12, Acts 16:31).

The final truth is that **the good news must be stood upon**. The believer's stand on the gospel should be the main focus of every biblical church. Unfortunately, the emphasis of many churches today is on their "worship service" where music programs, video productions and visual stimulants are the focal point. Other churches focus on programs and methodology, forgetting that we are to *stand* upon the gospel. Again, Paul states in his opening statement, "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, **and wherein ye stand**" (I Cor. 15:1). The word *stand* means, "to hold up; to abide; to be staunch; to stand up for." This definition speaks volumes. It tells the believer that every thing we do and every ministry of our church should *stand* upon and emphasize the good news of Jesus Christ.

The good news of Jesus Christ is fundamental to our faith and it is still saving lost souls. This year, let us commit to getting back to basics and, with every opportunity, let us share the gospel. □



April 23 Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

June 12-16 Youth Camp @ Camp COBEAC

Summer activities are currently being planned. Please see Joe or Danielle Henderson for more details and event times.

The Earnest Contender

The Earnest Contender is printed quarterly as a ministry of Grace Baptist Church. All articles for The Earnest Contender should be submitted no later than the 20th of every odd month. All articles are subject to change and approval. All articles should be submitted to graceoh@juno.com in MS Word format. Donations are accepted to minimize printing and publishing costs. Please submit donations to Grace Baptist Church:

PO Box 69
325 S. Toussaint-Portage Rd.
Oak Harbor, OH 43449

Editor Jeremy Bickelhaupt

Layout/Design Jeremy Bickelhaupt

Assistant Editor Shauna Bickelhaupt

Contributing articles: Richard Bickelhaupt, Jeremy Bickelhaupt, Ruth Meyer (permission)

Update: Pastor's health

By Pastor Bickelhaupt

Many have been asking about my health, so I thought I would give an update. Several years ago I was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Last fall, on November 9, I had surgery to remove the prostate. The proceeding months were difficult, but God's grace was abundant. The doctor's report was good following the procedure, as they believe all the cancer was removed. In their opinion, I am now cancer free. My other health scare came on Valentine's Day when I was admitted to the hospital for chest pain. My initial thought was a heart attack; but, as it turns out, I just was recovering from a bad case of the stomach flu. During my illness, I had lost most of my electrolytes causing my heart to go into atrial fibrillation. After three days in the hospital, many tests and a heart catheter, everything is back to normal. They found minimal blockage, my heart is back in rhythm and I am doing well. I would like to thank everyone for their prayers and support during this difficult time. Let's pray that the rest of the year is better for us all.

UPCOMING Events

APRIL 11

Ladies' Fellowship
at Jamie Kozak's
6:30 p.m.

APRIL 16

Resurrection Sunday

APRIL 23

Missions' Emphasis Sunday
W/ Roger Green
&
Second-Mile Youth Ministry's
Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

MAY 13

Annual Ladies' Tea
2-4 p.m.

MAY 14

Mother's Day Service
11 a.m.

MAY 28

Memorial Day Service
11 a.m.

OCCA Kindergarten
Graduation & Year-End PTF
6 p.m.

JUNE 12-16

Youth Camp
@ Camp COBEAC

JUNE 18

Father's Day Service
w/The Seminole String Quartet
11 a.m.

JUNE 25

Anniversary Sunday
w/Mark & Liz Rogers

Ministry News

Ladies' Fellowships

Jamie Kozak will host the next Ladies' Fellowship at her home on April 11 at 6:30 p.m. Rachel Fruchey is scheduled to bring the evening's devotion. All ladies' of GBC are invited to attend this special time of prayer and devotion. Please contact Mrs. Kozak for directions to her home.

Missions' Emphasis Day

Roger Green, director of Independent Baptist Missions for Asians, will be here on Sunday, April 23, in the morning services for Missions' Emphasis Day. Brother Green is also the former pastor of Sandusky Baptist Temple and Grace Baptist Church (Middletown, OH). During the service, our Sunday school classes and junior church children will be putting on a short mission's program. Missionaries B.J. Schultz (Tanzania) and Berry Williams (Baptist Evangelistic Missionary Association) will also be here to present their ministries. The goal of these services is to challenge us to do more for missions here in Oak Harbor and around the world. Please be sure to attend!

Spaghetti Dinner

The Second-Mile Youth Ministry will conduct a Spaghetti Dinner following the services on April 23. This dinner will be on a donation basis only and all proceeds benefit campers who will be heading to Camp COBEAC June 12-16. Please see Joe or Danielle Henderson for more details.

Ladies's Tea

The ladies of GBC will conduct their annual Ladies' Tea on May 13 from 2-4 p.m. Lynette Weirich of Harvest Baptist Temple (Clyde) will be the guest speaker. All those interested in attending should sign up at the Welcome Center in the

main lobby by April 16. Please see Leah Bickelhaupt with any questions.

Academy News

Ottawa County Christian Academy will wrap up its 13th year on Sunday, May 28, by conducting its annual Kindergarten Graduation and final Parent-Teacher-Fellowship at 6 p.m. We encourage all GBC member to attend as we recognize our students for all of their achievements this year.

Anniversary Sunday

Mark and Liz Rogers will join us on Sunday, June 25 to help GBC celebrate 31 years of ministry in Oak Harbor. The Rogers family will sing throughout the day and Brother Mark will preach. There will also be a carry-in dinner following the morning services.

Resurrection Offering

This year's Resurrection Offering will help cover expenses associated with some much needed landscaping for behind the church building. A privacy fence needs built around the furnaces and mechanicals, dirt needs to be brought in and leveled, and general landscaping will be installed. A total of \$2,000 should accomplish these tasks. Please pray about what you can give.



May 10 – Trading Post is Open! - 7 p.m.

June 21 – Balloon Blast 2017 - Clubbers will receive 10 points for every balloon they bring in, up to 25!

Club is for all children between 3-12 years old. The purpose of the club is to encourage spiritual growth on a personal level through Scripture Memorization and Character Building lessons.



Excelling in Spirit and Truth!

NOW ENROLLING



• Scan QR code to "like" us

Inquire online or call 419.898.3888
www.ottawacountychristian.org

Why I would **NEVER** force my kids to go to Church!

By Ruth Meyer

My parents forced me to eat three times a day growing up. No joke. Three times. Every. Single. Day. And it wasn't always stuff I liked, either. Matter of fact, I complained a lot about what my mom made. "Ewww, gross! Sauteed zucchini? Seriously? Mom, you know we hate this stuff!" So as I approached adulthood I made an important decision. Since my parents forced me to eat while I was growing up, I decided I was done with meals. Oh, here and there I'll eat out of obligation. I mean, family traditions like Thanksgiving and Christmas, yeah, I'm there. But daily eating? No way. I'm done.

Set in any other context, excuses people make for not going to church sound completely ridiculous. But set in the context of Christianity, people say these things in all seriousness while others nod sagely in somber agreement.

My son told me a few weeks into school that he didn't like the teacher. He wasn't getting excited enough about learning, and he didn't really feel connected to the other kids in his class, so I told him he never had to go back to school again. Who wants to waste their time going somewhere where they aren't being fulfilled?

We've never forced our daughter to

"...a loving Christian parent also does not give the option to their children about going to church..."

stay off the road when playing. We don't want to restrict her imagination. We allow her the freedom to make her own choices in life.



Okay, Ruth. Come on. That one was just ridiculous. No loving parent would ever say that. That's a safety issue- a matter of life and death. Exactly. And that's just my point.

Church isn't a place you go to get pumped up about life. It isn't entertainment like a movie or concert. It is literally a life and death matter.

Eternal life. Just as a loving parent wouldn't allow their child to wander in the road or to quit school, a loving Christian parent also does not give the option to their children about going to church, learning Bible stories at home, and praying together. Do your kids always jump for joy when they hear you say, "Time to get up! Let's get ready for church!" No. They won't. Do they get excited for school every morning? Hardly. But you still make them go. Why? Because you are the parent and you know what's best. Even when they complain, you serve them healthful meals and limit their junk food intake. You set boundaries for their own safety when playing outside. You insist they go to school because you're looking at the long term picture. And you are right to do

From "Forcing Church" pg. 4

those things. How much more so are you responsible for doing all you can to secure their eternal well being?

Yes, kids can be brought up in a loving Christian home and still turn away later. That's on them. But you, parents, have a task of the utmost importance. God has placed these precious children into your homes for such a brief while. You have them with you for perhaps 1/5 of their lives. Set a strong foundation while they are under your roof. Take them to church. Make sure they understand that they are sinners and that Jesus is their Savior. They are never too young to learn this. My one-and-a-half year old sees a cross and excitedly shouts, "Jesus!" Don't use the excuse that "they wouldn't understand this." Try them. I don't understand it all myself, but I still believe. And you'd better believe that the Holy Spirit works in their hearts effectively. My children sometime amaze me with the insights they pick up during devotions or Bible readings. The strength of their faith often humbles me. Once when I was having a terrible day, my oldest asked, "Can I

From "Delegation" pg. 2

take charge of a ministry only to quit it a few months in. They tackle a task and months later, it still has not been completed. But then there are those who, when you delegate a task to them, exceed your expectations and you discover that the job was done far better than if you had done it to the best of your own ability.... going to prove that your way is not always the "right" or "best" way.

As I continue to learn how to delegate and to whom I should delegate tasks, I am reminded of Ecclesiastes 9:10. It is my life verse. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to

pray with you?" He was nine at the time. He knows there is power in prayer. He perceives that sometimes there's nothing he can say that will make it better, so he'll just go straight to the One who does have that power. Do my own kids complain about church? Yes. Do they tell me it's boring? Sometimes, yes. They say the same things about school. But church and school are different environments for a reason. School is centered around learning and thus has its own schedule and structure. Church is a hospital for sinners. That would be all of us, mind you. You, me, the drug dealer a few streets away- all of us are sinners in need of a Savior. So what do we do at church? We claim forgiveness of our sins. Why do we do this? To "wipe our feet" so to speak. We hear God's Word. We sing hymns proclaiming what Christ has done for us. We hear sermons where our pastors preach Christ. We don't go to church to hear what we have to do to gain heaven. No, Christ did it all. 100%. We can't do one thing to merit salvation for ourselves. That's why we hear sermons about Jesus and not about us. We enter the sanctuary weak and in need of strength for our souls, and we depart

do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, wither thou goest." My mindset is to always do my best. Never to quit. I also apply this to delegation. When I find that I can do more by doing less myself... I will find those who are trustworthy and dependable and who share the same mindset found in Ecclesiastes 9:10. It's how things get done efficiently and effectively.

Republished with permission from jmbickelhaupt.blogspot.com "Thoughts from Within" Jan. 16, 2017.

refreshed to serve God by serving our families, friends, and neighbors in Christian love.

So parents, don't give in to outside pressures telling you not to force your kids to go to church. Don't give in to them, either, when they complain about it. Because at some point an amazing thing happens- that kid who complains about church grows up and takes his or her own kids to church every Sunday. Going back to my opening analogy, believe it or not, there came a point in my own life where I realized I actually liked sauteed zucchini (although I never would have admitted that to my mother). Keep at it, parents. Just as we need three meals a day for physical strength and nourishment, so do we need regular worship to refresh and strengthen our souls. Now, if you'll excuse me, I need to go make breakfast.

Grace Baptist Church will occasionally republish a work from an unaffiliated author. GBC does not endorse every doctrinal position of Ruth Meyer. Meyer, who does not hold to the Baptist doctrines, simply offers general Bible wisdom to her online subscribers. You can find more of her blogs at truthnotes.net. This article was republished with the permission of the author.



Moses depicted here taking advice from Jethro, his father-in-law, in regards to delegating the responsibilities of leading the Israelites through the wilderness.