



Pastor David's Weekly Devotional

Church matters. It not only matters to those who love the church, but (more importantly) the church matters to God Himself. For through His Son, Jesus Christ, God established, expressed and demonstrated His love for the church which Jesus *"bought with His own blood"* (Acts 20:28). In fact, the Bible clearly states that we (as true believers in Christ) are the church, and we (the church) belong to God. We are Christ's treasured possession. So much so that *"He gave Himself up for [the church]"* (Eph.5:25). Therefore, since the church intimately and eternally matters to God it should matter to us.

Unfortunately, we live in a time where, for many, the priority of church is pushed out into the unimportant (or less-important) extremities of life. This problem is compounded by certain "religious leaders" who proclaim that a commitment to church is not only unnecessary for the Christian, but also ("potentially") harmful to the Christian's spiritual life. This wariness and laziness has functionally produced an attitude among many professing believers of skepticism and secularism. On account of this, we currently have labels placed on the church and Christianity such as "Consumer Religion," "Church Hopping and Shopping" and "Marketplace Christianity." Consequently, there is tremendous pressure on the church today to conform to the desires and demands of the unchurched (and de-churched) instead of conforming to the will and Word of God.

Many churches are jumping from one marketing gimmick to the next, trying to stay current with cultural trends and desperately afraid of being labeled irrelevant or uncool. Some churches have transformed their sanctuary into an auditorium, theater or concert hall, as Sunday mornings have become less about worship and more about entertainment. Preaching has also been unceremoniously "modernized" as the preacher is called upon to deliver humorous, entertaining and inspirational messages with little or no regard for the truth and transforming power of God's Word.

Church leaders continue to promote a marketplace mentality for the church. That is, the pastor is the CEO, the elders are the managers, and the people are the consumers. In this scenario, the church functions as a storefront, and the Gospel (if not God Himself) becomes a product that has to be marketed. This domesticated Christianity has produced a church that cares more about the comfort of the sanctuary than the conviction of the sermon, and a service that is not meant to exhort and admonish the saints but to entertain and amuse the spectators.

Emotion is mistaken for worship; tolerance is mistaken for grace; acceptance is mistaken for love; secular ideology is mistaken for truth; pragmatism is mistaken for discernment; euphoria is mistaken for spiritual life; and activity is mistaken for godliness – in all of this, the Gospel is distorted if not abandoned entirely.

As Christians, it is our responsibility and privilege to believe, proclaim and live according to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel is not to be adjusted to suit out political climate or cultural ethic. We need to echo the words of the apostle Paul, with both our lips and our lives, that we are not ashamed of the Gospel *"for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes"* (Rom.1:16; see Mk.8:38).

May we be willing to suffer any opposition or persecution for the sake of the Gospel. May we never compromise the Gospel for the sake of worldly comfort, or social gain. May we, with great vigor and veracity, *"contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints"* (Jd.1:3).

Together in and for Christ,
Pastor David

Scripture Readings for the week (Monday – Sunday ~ Week #51):

Deuteronomy 29-31; Esther 1-5; Psalm 146-148; Song 5-6; Revelation 12-17; Acts 25-26; 3 John

Recommended Reading:

"The Church: The Gospel Made Visible" by Mark Dever

Calendar of
Events:

December 21

SAM's Christmas

Potluck Luncheon

December 24, 6:30pm

Christmas Eve

Candlelight Service

December 25

Office's Closed

Looking Ahead....

January 28, 6:00pm

Annual Business

Meeting

For prayer requests,
email Amy Woodruff
at prayer@sbcnb.org
or call 541-404-0547

We're on the Web!

See us at:

sbcnb.org

Growth & Study.....

Men's Group Studies

Mondays ~

6:30pm "On the Christian Life" by John Calvin
w/Jeff Etzel

Wednesdays ~

6:30-7:30am "The Christian Walk"
w/Pastor David

8:15-9:30pm "Zechariah"

w/Pastor Josh

Thursdays ~

6:30-7:30am "Let Us Pray"

w/Pastor Tim

Fridays ~

6:30-7:30am "The Murder of Jesus"

Begins January 12th

w/Pastor David

Adult Group Studies

Sundays ~

6:30-7:30pm "The Sermon on the Mount"
At the Woodruff's Home (541-756-3311)

Sunday Prayer Time

Please consider devoting some time to prayer by joining with others in Pastor David's office at 10:30 Sunday mornings, during the second service. In Acts 2:42, we see the early church was "Devoted to...prayer."

Women's Group Studies

Mondays ~

6:30pm "Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians"
w/Renee Middleton (541-297-2500)

Tuesdays ~

6:30-7:30am "The Sermon on the Mount"
w/Loy Huntzinger (360-607-0022)

8:30am "Isaiah, the Lord Saves"
w/Beth Wallstrom (541-404-0112)

9:00am "Graceful Living"

w/Lois-Elaine Rencehausen (541-267-3106)

7:00-8:15pm "Romans"

w/Barb Young (541-404-6242)

Wednesdays ~

9:00-10:30am "Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians"

w/Amy Woodruff (541-404-0547)

10:00am "A Woman of Wisdom, Proverbs"
w/Jeanette Murphy (541-266-7575)

6:30-8:00pm "Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians"

w/Amy Woodruff (541-404-0547)

Young Adults

Thursdays ~

7:00-9:00pm w/Pastor Tim 541-756-3311

Connect & Encourage.....

SAM's Christmas Potluck Luncheon ~ December 21, Noon

For those ages 55 and up, please join us for our Christmas Potluck. Ham will be provided, and we will be singing carols, telling stories and Pastor Tim will share a special Christmas devotional. See the insert for more details and a list of gift items we will be providing for the South Coast Gospel Mission. We don't want to miss you - if you need a ride, contact the church office at least 24 hours in advance and we will arrange a ride for you.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service ~ Join us for our Christmas Eve Candlelight service at 6:30pm. We welcome the children to join their parents for this special service so there will not be any child care or other activities available. Please note there is only one service this year.

Church Directory ~ It's time again to update our church directory. If you have any changes or if you'd like to be added or removed, please email us by December 27th at:

office@sbcnb.org.

Children's Ministries.....

AWANA – The calendar and registration are available online at www.sbcnb.org. Book time listeners and leaders still needed. We can't wait to spend this year growing in the Lord with your kid(s).



Youth Ministries.....

Youth Group ~

High School youth group ~ Sunday nights 6 to 8pm.

Junior High youth group ~ Wednesday nights 6:30 to 8pm.

High School Winter Retreat ~ December 28 to 31, 2017

Building Project.....

Update – Volunteers are working hard to get the addition weathered in before the wet seasons start. Please be praying for continued safety, energy and provision for all of those working so hard on this project. We're always in need of more helpers and everyone is welcome to volunteer regardless of experience. You can check our website at www.sbcnb.org for daily work schedule updates, contact Keri in the church office or just come on down if you are able to help out.

Serve.....

Church Kitchen Supply Shopper Needed ~ We are looking for a volunteer to order & re-stock our kitchen with supplies. This would include checking the supply levels once a month and before special events, and re-ordering as necessary and within the limits of the church budget. Please contact Pastor Tim or the church office for more details.