

August – September 2020

**Faith
&
Family**

Connecting the Community to the Christ

Connect

A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

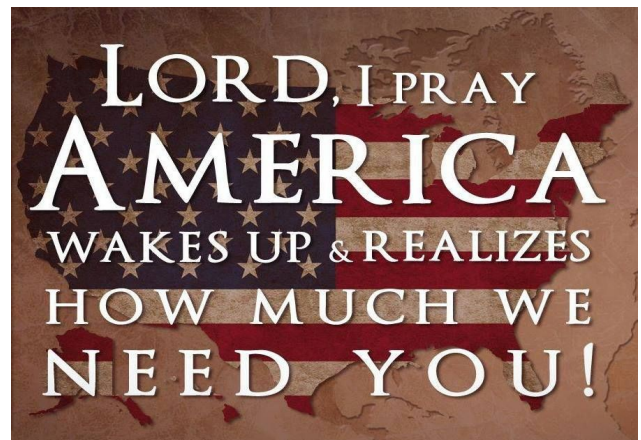
What America Needs

by Pastor Mike Ennis

Most Bible believing Christians are very troubled with what is going on in America. The moral slide that began back in the sixties is now in full bloom. The, so called, sexual revolution has eroded the Biblical, traditional family unit through divorce, co-habitation (shacking up), and, so called, gay marriage. On top of that family love has reached such a low that fathers abandon their families or simply breed children into the world with no intention of taking care of them. Unborn babies are murdered and discarded like yesterdays trash with no thought whatsoever except the desire to be free from the consequences of promiscuous sex.

With this door open to degrade life in this way it will not be long before older people and handicapped people are killed and thrown away in the same fashion. How can we be so calloused? On top of the breakdown of the family we now have a rising level of hatred and violence that is almost beyond belief. People are

being killed simply because of their skin color or a view that they may have expressed. One bad cop, or even more than one, has made all policemen targets. Politicians, on both sides of the two main political parties, are more concerned about power and money that they are about people.



Most of what our “leaders” do now is to gain or retain power over people. An honest politician, that is one who does not manipulate and use people, is about as rare as rocking horse manure. Crime, corruption, and chaos dominate our country.

(See America Needs Page 6)

Faith & Family *Connect* – A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

August – September 2020

Old Faithful

by K. Ebright

**For he shall give his angels charge over thee,
to keep thee in all thy ways. Psalm 91:11"**

KJV

It was a sad moment when the tow truck operator pulled out of my parking lot with "Old Faithful."



In the end, I was complaining about how the seat belt didn't wind up correctly, and in the summer, my hands would turn black because the steering wheel rubbed off in the heat. Yet despite those minor problems, looking back, it was a very dependable car. I had very few issues with it. I purchased it in the spring of 2006, and it lasted until 2019. I credit much of my car's long and dependable life to my Christian car salesman. He sat in the front seat with me and prayed for my car when I purchased it.

When I was on my way to give the salesman the check for the car, I noticed that the transmission slipped a little bit. That would occasionally happen when I drove it. While transmission problems usually spell the death of a vehicle, it didn't break. That transmission held for up for the entire thirteen years I owned that seventeen-year-old car.

When we read that God has charged angels to watch over us, we need to remember their duty

covers big and small things. If we have asked Jesus into our hearts as our Lord and Savior, God's word guarantee's His angels are standing ready to help. We know that does not mean we will be completely free from difficulties in this life. But we do not know how many times God and His angels have protected us from unknown disasters the enemy had planned for us.

God promises us His angels are here to help us get through this life, wherever we go. Only God knows, could my praying salesman have been an angel? We need to whole heartedly trust God and His word more than ever; He is our Rock.

Do you trust him?

(Via Free share)



Too Good To Be True?

By J. Howard

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life."

Most of us know that if something sounds too good to be true, then it is just that - too good to be true. Recently, I heard a preacher say that the Gospel, which is commonly referred to as the Good News, is more accurately defined as "the nearly too good to be true, news."

Well, the so-called, "nearly too good to be true, news" is that for love God gave His Son to save humanity from eternal condemnation (hell); and, that Salvation is free; we cannot achieve, work for, or purchase it. And, that, this situation is called grace, which is defined as the unmerited, unearned, and undeserved favor of God.

Jesus died on the cross and He rose from the grave, demonstrating God's power over sin and death (1 Corinthians 6:14). And, because of His sacrifice, you and I are made right with God. Wow. This is news you can believe! "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast" (Ephesians 2:8).

(Via FW)

Faith & Family *Connect* – A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

August – September 2020

God's Gentle Reminders

by A. Hill

"I will never leave you nor forsake you."
Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV)

One afternoon I pulled out the hose to water our sunflowers. As they became heavy with water, they drooped downward until they were only inches from the ground. Gradually the water



dropped from them and inch by inch, they slowly started to rise. Later in the afternoon, they stood tall and proud. It was at that point I realized I had something in common with this beautiful flower. I go happily along, doing my thing, enjoying the busyness of life.

Then suddenly I get a drenching of frustrations, heartaches, serious troubles, and I bow low. The weight seems more than I can bear. It's then I sense God's presence. He reminds me He is not a condemning God when I grow weary. He's not angry with me. In fact the bible tells me I am the apple of His eye. That means He's crazy about me. He is concerned about my problems. That thought makes me lift my head. I grow strong again.

The cold blast of water to our sunflowers on that hot late summer afternoon was shocking and their sunny heads bowed. But because of the wet soaking, they grew even more beautiful and strong, much like my hurting times deepen my relationship and trust in the God who loves me. I love the way God takes something as fragile as a flower and reminds me I'm never out of His mind or heart. (Via Free Share)

Just Walk Away

by E. Smith

But Foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes." 2 Timothy 2:23

God's word notes that Satan's goal is to steal, kill and destroy. He doesn't always use over-the-top, easy-to-recognize theatrics to pull us out of God's will. No. More often, he uses subtle annoyances to first steal our peace. Minor arguments and petty irritations between loved ones and brethren play on our human sensibilities, distracting us from our focus on God's will.



Paul warned Timothy to recognize silly issues and questionings, and to refuse engagement, lest he be consumed by strife and contention. He knew Satan's antics all too well. In warning Timothy, he was also warning the body of Christ today. Sometimes, we need to walk away from potential conflicts if they are not righteous.

By engaging in nonsensical confrontation, we run the risk of inadvertently falling into Satan's trappings. It's okay to walk away from controversy that threatens your peace. The source just might be Satan at work, using someone close to your heart, to steal your peace. Once your peace is gone, it's easier for him to kill your spirit and destroy your faith. Learn when to just walk away. Time and space may be the remedy for peaceful resolution.

(Via FW)

Faith & Family *Connect* – A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

August – September 2020

Conversations with Jesus ~ Thomas

By C. Harrison

Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

John 20:29: “



In the midst of grief and fear, a small group of people hid behind locked doors. Unseen enemies lurked in the darkness awaiting the opportunity to sow seeds of doubt. One seed of doubt can weaken the focus of an uncertain heart, and since things did not happen the way Thomas expected, his heart was fertile ground.

The disciples were overjoyed when Jesus appeared. But, Thomas, who was not present when Jesus came, refused to believe the truth. He proclaimed, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

One week later, Jesus returned to visit his doubting disciple. This time, Thomas was present, and Jesus spoke directly to him. "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and

believe." Jesus knew how to alleviate Thomas' unbelief and chose to reveal Himself in a way that Thomas could understand.

Only God can move us from unbelief to faith. Unlike Thomas, we haven't seen Jesus with our own eyes, nor have we touched his wounds.

But, as promised, there is a blessing for those who believe without seeing. We walk by faith and not by sight, trusting the Lord will reveal himself to us in ways we can understand.

(Used by Permission)



It's A Command – Not A Suggestion

“Be Ye angry and sin not.” Ephesians 4:26

In the film “Anger Management”, Dave Buznik, (Adam Sandler) travels the gates of anger management hell. You ask, ‘What did he do wrong?’ Actually, nothing! In the end we realize it was the love and intervention of his girlfriend Linda (Marisa Tomei) that helped him, via Dr. Buddy (Jack Nicholson). She loved him so much that she was willing to let him go so he could find his own his life. Dave’s problems from childhood, was holding him back. Sound familiar?

Dr. Buddy had the ability to get Dave raging angry. Then he’d show him the difference between the good anger and bad. Not all anger is bad. Someone taking our parking space is not the same anger as seeing a bully hurt a child. One situation requires action, the other, a different parking space. The walk will do you good.

Stop excusing yourself as “this is just the way I am.” Newsflash, this is the way we all are.

Pastor Chuck Smith, told the story of his wife hearing their young daughter screaming at the top of her lungs, when she got to her, there sat a teary-eyed little girl and Chuck. She asked, “What’s going on?” To which the little girl replied, “Daddy won’t let me play with razor blades.”

I know someone that loved us enough to give His life for us and will help us with our anger issues, His name is Jesus.

By J. Belshe-Toernblom (via FW)

Faith & Family *Connect* – A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

August – September 2020

The End Of The Road

by A. Hill

In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. John 14:1-3



We stopped the car at the end of the pavement and got out. Richard had told me about this highway, but he had not shared it with me until now. A mile back a traveler would think he had miles of highway ahead of him. There were no road signs that mentioned the end of the road. Thick forest on each side of the highway was swaying in the cool of the day. We could hear birds singing in the trees. No road noise here! "What happened?, I asked. Even the highway lines go to the dirt. What a waste!"

"It's a road to nowhere," Richard said, shaking his head. "It's kind of like people who don't plan for life after death. They're caught up in the trip, not the destination. Beautiful scenery, nice ride, just no plan when the trip is over.

What Is Worship?

By S. White

But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. John 4:23-24

What is a worshiper? By the original definition, a worshiper is someone who adores God. This means that a worshiper is passionate about God. They are stuck on God – they won't wander away from Him; they are abiding in Christ – for them to live is Christ. A worshiper is in love with God and we know that a person only loves Him because He first loved them (1 John 4:19); hence, a true worshiper knows that God is in love with them. They are intimately acquainted with His love.



A worshiper worships. What is worship? In Romans chapter twelve, verse one, we see the word "worship." This word is translated from a word that is defined as "ministration of God." What this means is that worship is Biblically defined as being cared for by God, supported by God, aided by God, assisted by God, and nurtured by God. God cares for, supports, aids, assists, and nurtures us because we are abiding in Him. Worship is a Spiritual action with a Spiritual source – God!

A worshiper knows that they cannot offer God worship – they know that worship is His gift to us! A true worshiper is consumed by God!
(Via Free Share)

Faith & Family *Connect* – A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

August – September 2020

(America Needs from Page 1)

When we look at what is happening in our culture it is clear that our nation is moving further from God. The cause is man's corrupt heart apart from God. The more our nation turns from God the worse it is going to get. I am not pointing all this out to be a Debbie downer, it is just the facts. Unfortunately, concerned Christians are not looking in the right place for answers. Our tendency is to look for solutions from man, the government, leaders and so on.

All the evil things that I have just mentioned are the result of wicked hearts in wicked people. The heart of the problem is the heart. Man cannot change man's heart. The heart represents our inner being. It is where our thoughts and motives take place. It is what we really are and not the way we want to appear. Only God and you know what is going on in your heart. 1 Samuel 16:7 (AV) ⁷ But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

No man can fix people's hearts which is the source of evil thoughts and behavior. The Bible and Jesus plainly taught this. Jeremiah 17:9 (AV) ⁹ The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, and desperately wicked: who can know it? Matthew 12:34–35 (AV) ³⁴ **O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. ³⁵ A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.** Matthew 15:19 (AV) ¹⁹ For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders,

adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: Mark 7:20–22 (AV) ²⁰ And he said, **That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. ²¹ For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, ²² Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:**

The answer to what is plaguing our nation will not be found in politics, human effort, or even religious activity. It can only be found in the transformation of wicked hearts and only Jesus Christ can do that.

Christ has the power to change our hearts. He has the power to change us from self-centered, self-pleasing, wicked people into good moral beings who are seeking to do God's will.

Ezekiel 36:26 (AV) ²⁶ A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. What America needs is a Heaven sent, Holy Ghost, revival. It must begin in the church. Christians must repent of their sins, rededicate their lives to the cause of Christ first. Our prayer should be like King David. Psalm 51:10 (AV) ¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Quit being distracted by the things of this world, including politics, and focus on getting close to God, right with God, and being used by God. We must clean up our own act first. What we allow in moderation the world practices in excess. Once the church is revived, we need to proclaim Christ boldly and faithfully as the answer to this country's problems. Only He can change people's hearts.



Faith & Family *Connect* – A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

Five Reasons for Church Planting

By S. Thomas

“The single most effective evangelistic methodology under heaven is planting new churches,” according to Peter Wagner (1990). This oft-quoted phrase by the former professor of Church Growth at Fuller Theological Seminary preceded a growing number of books, articles, blogs and ministries dedicated toward church planting.



Denominations and mission boards are investing much time, money and personnel into church planting. Networks of churches, like Stadia, ARC, Acts 29 and New Thing Network and NAMB have come together for the primary purpose of planting new churches.

Why is there so much interest in church planting?

1. People Need the Gospel

New Churches make disciples more proficiently than established churches (Matthew 28:16-20). Stuart Murray established the first accredited university church planting and evangelism degree in the United Kingdom. Murray believes that new churches draw converts and unchurched people into their congregations. He believes church planting is crucial to reaching people.

Church plants reach different people groups. The Great Commission mandated that disciples

were reached among all nations, not just the Galileans who were gathered. Church plants can reach a whole different demographic of people by strategically positioning ministries poised to serve the community in fresh and effective ways.

2. Communities Need Churches of Reconciliation

More education, more sports options, more parks, more community centers or more gun laws do not answer the brokenness in the community. The real need in a community is a reconciled relationship with God through Jesus.

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, (Ephesians 2:13-15, ESV, emphasis added)

David T Olson said in his book, *The American Church in Crisis*, that every state in the US has experienced a decline in church attendance percentage. Planting new churches is Olson’s main solution to this church attendance decline in America. He claimed that denominations needed to plant at least two percent of the total number in the denomination to keep pace with population growth (Olson, 2008). Olson warned that if the evangelical church wanted to survive, established churches “must courageously strive towards health and growth” and they must “actively plant new churches” ...(Olson, 2008).

3. God Needs Laborers for His Harvest

Jesus saw the crowds of people who were like sheep without a shepherd. His response was for the disciples to pray for more harvesters

(See Church Planting Page 8)

Faith & Family *Connect* – A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

August – September 2020

(Church Planting from Page 7)

(Matthew 9:35-38).

Our God is a sending God whose harvesters gather His people together to send them into other places to gather and scatter. God sent His Son Jesus into the world to save and redeem it from the curse placed upon all mankind. Jesus sent the church as laborers to make disciples of people of all nations. Where this is practiced and adhered as the battle cry of Jesus, more churches will be necessary to handle the births of new believers.

4. Christ, the Head of the Church, Needs a Body

It seems heretical to say that Christ needs anything. But Christ chose to use His spiritual body as the means to represent Himself to the world. The local church is a representative of Christ's body in that community. To call a church's mission "incarnational" (as some do) is somewhat belittling to the incarnation of God as Jesus.

A better term may be representational (as Andreas Kostenberger said). This simply means that the church embodies the Spirit, words and activities of Jesus Christ, especially amongst those in the community. The incarnation of God was fully accomplished by sending Jesus in a human body to live among humans in order to seek and to be able to save them from their sins. The new church plant seeks to become Christ's representative in a specific local community or region. A church does not exist just for its own interests; it exists for the greater good of the community in which it resides—and that to bring glory to God. To properly represent Christ, a church embeds itself into the community with the clear message of hope through the One who can save them from their sins (1 Cor. 9:19-23).

5. The Local Church Needs a Reproducing Mission

Aubrey Malphurs believes that the secret to a vibrant Christianity is a pregnant church, culminating in reproduction. He emphasized the importance of a sending church preparing itself for reproduction (Nuts and Bolts of Church Planting, Malphurs, 2011). As a church is developing leaders, clarifying vision, sending people and resources, articulating doctrines and strategizing for mission, it will have a spiritual vibrancy accompanying these pre-birth activities.

In a scientific research project done in a PhD dissertation researching 624 [SBC] churches that had planted a church, attendance rose 21.5% for the five years after a church plant. Additionally, monetary growth was favorable in 7 of the 8 variables tested, including designated gifts (77% increase) and tithes (48%). (Source: Jeffrey C. Farmer, 2007).

A church on mission prioritizes its sending capacity over its seating capacity. This reproductive generosity brings health to the mother church as well as to the baby churches.

(Via ChurchPlantingdotcom)

Faith & Family *Connect*
Published by
Victory Baptist Church Ministries
610 Alto Road
Kokomo, IN 46902

Michael Ennis - Senior Pastor
Landon Bagley - Assoc. Pastor
Morris Starkey - Editor

Victory Baptist Church
www.vbckokomo.com
765-453-9768

Victory Christian Academy
www.vcakokomo.com

Faith & family *Connect*
editorfaithandfamily@gmail.com

Faith & Family *Connect* – A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor