

**Faith  
&  
Family**

Connecting the Community to the Christ

**Connect**  
A Ministry of Victory Baptist Church

## Jesus Provides Freedom

by Pastor Mike Ennis

Victory Baptist Church

America was a nation that was founded on freedom. The first ten amendments to the constitution are referred to as the bill of rights. They set forth the precious rights and freedoms that we enjoy as Americans. As long as the constitution is the highest law of the land; we enjoy freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of petition, the right to bear arms, no-quartering right, the right to equal justice, the right to own private property and the right to enjoy other freedoms. These are blessed and wonderful freedoms. But we need to be aware that there are greater freedoms to be had, freedoms that come from a relationship to Jesus Christ. John 8:31-36 (AV) <sup>31</sup> Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;* <sup>32</sup> *And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.* <sup>33</sup> They answered him, we be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? <sup>34</sup> Jesus

answered them, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.* <sup>35</sup> *And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.* <sup>36</sup> *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*



Jesus promises and provides freedom from sin. Sin is the real problem in the world. Sin damns those who do not know Christ to an eternity in Hell. Sin is behind all the evil of the world and the source of most of the problems that we personally experience. As Jesus said, Whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin."

(See Freedom – Page 3)

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

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

**Fields White for the Harvest**

by Sim Lee

*"Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest" [John 4:35 ESV](#)*



All Hebrews at the time of Christ's first advent were very familiar with the importance of their three main crops: barley, wheat and grapes. In their own season, each crop figured significantly into their everyday life and religious observances, for instance, it was by Commandment that the Aviv stage of barley would determine the month that would begin the Jewish New Year.

If the barley was in the Aviv stage of growth (close to maturing and brittle enough to be easily harmed by hail) the very next new moon would mark the beginning of the New Year. In the Aviv stage, the grain heads would become "light" (golden) instead of "dark" (green) as it had been, indicating that the barley harvest would be coming soon.

This is what Jesus was referring to when he told His disciples that if they were to look at the barley fields along the road leaving Samaria, they would know at first glance that the barley was still "dark", and that the harvest would still be at least four months away.

However, to make His point about evangelism, Jesus then referred to a crop that was coming

toward them, a "field" that was "white" for harvest, the people.

Dressed in the common light-colored garb of the Middle East, the curious people coming from Samaria to see Jesus would have resembled the light color of mature barley, but were indeed seen as a crop of "lost" souls to be saved and brought into belief. (The woman at the well of Jacob had told them of this great prophet she had spoken to, prompting their curiosity and departure out of the city so as to see Him.)

Our Lord Jesus was like no other of His brethren of the time, in that he would stop and engage or teach anyone, just as He would eventually die for everyone. When he looked at these "lost" people, His heart was moved and he wanted his disciples to also see them as "lost", and to know that almost everyone in the world was "lost" as well. He wanted them to know that any and all of their evangelism would bring a great and welcome harvest of all kinds of people for the Kingdom. (to seek and to save that which was lost." [Luke 19:10](#)).

These are the people who are always "white for the harvest", the unbelievers then and now. As these "fields white for the harvest" of today are much larger, any evangelism (written, spoken, support or example) on our part counts toward that great and continuous harvest for the Kingdom.

Are we responding to these "white fields ready for harvest" as Jesus asks all of His followers to do? And are we praying for more workers in gathering the harvest? Are we witnessing to every type and class of people, and not just to our own kind, as the disciples had been doing, before Jesus enlightened their understanding of things?

Note: There are more "lost" people upon the earth today than there has ever been before (4.9 Billion non-believers during 2015 - Pew Research, 2017). Almost 60,000 people in the world die each day "lost", never having heard the Gospel.

◇

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

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

**(Freedom from Page 1)**

The good news is that Jesus sets us free, free from sins penalty, power, and one days it's presence. Jesus provides freedom from sin's penalty. Sin's penalty is death. Sin brings death and destruction. Romans 5:12 (AV) <sup>12</sup> Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: Sin causes death which is the number one fear of man. The good news is that you can be free from the fear of death. Jesus promises those who put their faith in Him eternal life. You can be free from the penalty of death. John 11:25 (AV) Jesus said unto her, **I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:**



Not only does Jesus provide freedom from the penalty of sin, but He provides freedom from the power of sin., **Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.** <sup>35</sup> **And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.** <sup>36</sup> **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.** Romans 6:16 (AV) Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? This is especially good news from many people in our country today who are enslaved to sinful ways of thinking and behavior. Addictions and mental health issues are rampant today. The good news is that Jesus provides freedom from these. He provides freedom from addictions to drugs, alcohol, pornography, food addictions and many others. "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Not only can Christ set you free from addictions, but He can set you free from an anxious mind. He can set you free from worry, anxiety, fear, depression, and other mind troubling thought patterns.

Our Church is starting two new programs to coach people in finding in Christ; freedom from addictions and freedom from a trouble mind. The freedom from addiction program will begin January 10, 2020. It will be from 7-8:30 p.m. in our church fellowship barn.

**(See Freedom Page 6)**

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

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

## Holiday Issue : December 2019 / January 2020

### **Believe it or Not** by Robin Newberger

The water sloshed gently over the edges of the leather bucket, spilling down and returning to the well beneath. Susanna grasped the coarse rope and hoisted the heavy goatskin hand over hand, up and over the stone edge.



Lowering it to the ground, she wiped the sweat from her brow with the sleeve of her tunic. The sun was just beginning to set over Judea, taking with it the scorching heat of the day.

This daily ritual has been her task since she was a young girl, first with her mother and sisters, now a solitary one, her daughters grown with families of their own. Decades of daily trips to the ancient well was gradually chipping away at Susanna's ambition. Forty-one years of women's work has made her robust, but her spirit grows weary. Life feels tedious and monotonous and her burden as heavy as the water pots she carries upon her shoulders.

Susanna heard the two women talking. She had been half-listening to them while she drew water, too involved in her thoughts to give heed to what they were saying. They had finished filling their jars and were now deep in discussion about something. Susanna bent down to transfer water into the vintage earthenware jar, glancing over her shoulder in their direction. A twinge of guilt checked her spirit. She shouldn't be listening to gossip. The Book of Proverbs warns against being a talebearer.

Finishing her task, she rose and returned to the well with the goatskin bucket to retrieve more water. Her mind begged for quiet. If those women would just

leave. The well was a place of solitude for Susanna. Though she was weary from the work, the water was soothing to her mind. This was the one time of the day that she could be alone, just her and the sound of the water. She lowered the bucket into the well, feeling its descent as the rope passed between her fingers, breaking the surface of the water. Closing her eyes, she could better judge when the skin was full. It had become her time of meditation.

For a brief moment, she was in her quiet place. The dialogue behind her interrupted her thoughts once more, but this wasn't idle gossip after all. Susanna turned in their general direction. Engrossed in their discussion, the women took no notice of her. She knew these women from the village. Rizpah, a woman close in age to Susanna, spoke intently to her companion, Joanna.

"That's what people are saying. You haven't heard this?"

Joanna shook her head in disbelief.

"Yes, I heard about it. But it's impossible. Why do you believe such things?"

Rizpah continued in her retelling of what she had heard, unfazed by Joanna's unbelief.

"Resurrected, indeed!" Joanna scoffed.

"The sun is affecting your mind, Rizpah. Jesus of Nazareth was crucified. He died and he was buried. We know this. Everyone knows this! Dead people don't come back to life."

Susanna's thoughts swirled. Could this be true? All of Israel was buzzing about the death of Jesus. It was common knowledge. She also heard rumors that Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead just weeks before in the town of Bethany. News from the north trickled down slowly to Beersheba, but fantastic accounts such as this one circulated quickly. Now this about Jesus being alive? Joanna was right. Dead people don't come back to life. Susanna wanted to believe the story about

**(See Believe it or Not, Page 5)**

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

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

**(Believe it or Not from Page 4)**

Lazarus. She desperately wanted to believe that death was not the end. It was just so incredible. Unable to make sense of it, she put off deciding what to make of it.

Rizpah believed the rumors concerning Jesus, and her friend's skepticism did nothing to dissuade her.

"I believe it, Joanna. I believe He is the Messiah that our people have been waiting for."

Susanna turned away from the women, returning to her work. Her strong hands transferred the remainder of the water. She looped the handles of the goatskin into her sash and deftly raised the earthenware pot to her right shoulder for the journey home. The sun was dipping lower in the west, giving way to dusk and bathing the clouds in swaths of orange. As she walked, she thought, the gentle tinkling of her anklet accenting her steps. Despite the heavy load she carried, Susanna felt a burden lift inside her. Rizpah's testimony echoed through her mind.

"I believe He is the Messiah..."

(Editor's Note: What do you believe about Jesus? Do you believe He is the Messiah, the long-awaited and promised Redeemer? Or is it just a foolish tale? Your eternal destiny is dependent upon what you believe about this One called Jesus. Contact us if you have questions.

◇ (Used with permission)



***The Desperate Plant***

If a plant is under stress, it doesn't take long for the signs to show. First the leaves wither, followed by the branches and then finally, the roots themselves. Even so, when death seems so near, there is still hope while there is life. If the plant is given the right amount of water, fertilizer, light and time, small sprouts of life will appear and soon it will prosper again.

Plants are insightful illustrations of people. When they are under stress, it doesn't take long for them to show the signs. Their interest in life – withers.



Caring for themselves and for those around them - dries up. Eventually, their very roots (soul) become weak with depression. Death may be just around the

corner. However, while there is life there is still hope. If someone under such stress is given the right amount of light (intercessory prayer), fertilizer (a loving environment), water and time (encouragement and patients), small sprouts of hope will appear. As God never gives up on us, we should never give up on them. But we must resist the temptation of smothering (over-watering is the quickest way to drown a plant).

The Bible tells us of God's concern for those who are overburdened; He wants to take our load from us and be a refuge in times of trouble. Interesting, most of our Biblical heroes suffered depression from time to time. How many times did God prop up those withered plants so they had a chance to become future great trees, bearing fruit for many hungry souls to feed upon?

If we are to rise from our depression like our Biblical heroes, we must do what they did and stop holding onto our burdens and give them over to God to deal with. (Psalms 9:9,10. 34:18. 43:5.

◇

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

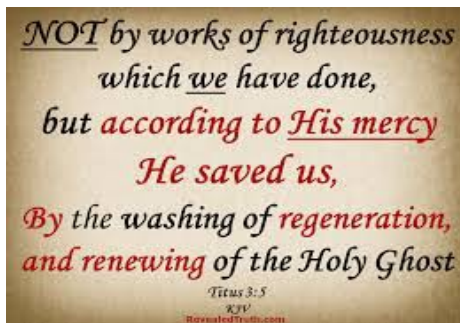
Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

**(Freedom from Page 3)**

We will also begin a freedom from a troubled mind program on January 8, 2020 from 7-8 p.m. in our church fellowship barn. We invite you to both programs so that we might direct you to finding freedom in Christ. It will be a no-judgement loving environment, our by-line is struggling people helping struggling people.



Christ not only provides freedom from the penalty of sin and the freedom from the power of sin, but one day He will provide the freedom from the presence of sin. Freedom from sin and its consequences means that those who place their faith in Christ will one day live in a place where there is no sin and sins consequences. We now live in a fallen world because of sin. All that is bad in this world can be traced to sin, sin in world in general, sin of other people, and sometimes our own sin. But in Heaven there will be no sin. If there is no sin, there will be no consequences of sin. Revelation 21:4 (AV) <sup>And</sup> God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no

more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

You can have this freedom. “If the Son sets you free you shall be free indeed.” This freedom can be yours for the receiving. If you will turn from you sin to Christ and ask Him, he will save you from the penalty, power, and presence of sin. Romans 10:9 (AV) 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. Romans 10:10 (AV) <sup>For</sup> with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Romans 10:13 (AV) <sup>For</sup> whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.



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

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

## Holiday Issue : December 2019 / January 2020

### “They Said (it would happen)”

by Barbara Lynn Culler

**BOB:** They’ve always said it would happen; I’ve heard the legend all my life —44 years to be exact. The story goes that a man from ancient times was killed, came back to life, and then went up into the heavens. The myth continues on to say that the man claims to be the Son of God, and will suddenly return in the sky to collect all of his followers. What malarkey! Why do people fall for such foolish fables?

**TOM:**They said it would happen, but no one would know when. It’s a story I’ve heard and read about for the better part of my 97 years. I’m a follower of Jesus Christ —a Christian, and took for granted that someday, He would come for us. However, it seems that events occurring right now definitely point towards the coming of the Lord. Maybe it actually will happen in my lifetime! I need to better prepare myself for that glorious day.



**BOB** So yes, the world is getting crazier and crazier; what was once vile and reprehensible is now touted as normal. That’s how the world is, and everyone must accept and tolerate it. Of course, I don’t do all that perverted stuff. Nah, I just smoke weed —it’s legal now, you know, and drink a few beers each night, though rarely drive while drunk.

But what’s with all the mass shootings, hit and run drivers, fighting within our own government and bad stuff happening in the environment? Yesterday, a few guys I work with who identify as Christians said that many of the things happening now were prophesied in the Bible. Baloney! I don’t believe that hogwash.

Besides, many so-called Christians are nothing but money-hungry hypocrites — look at those TV preachers! Why do people buy into that garbage of name and claim your blessings, but first send them money? No thanks. I’ll just continue living my own life and fulfilling my own desires. I don’t care what they said.

**TOM:** I sit here on my patio, cup of coffee in hand and Bible beside me. I’ve just finished reading about the hour Jesus comes back for us. So exciting! Yes, they’ve been saying forever that he’s coming back for us, but I believe it will happen. Lately, we’ve had major earthquakes and turmoil within our own country. Government officials attacking one another instead of leading their people, famines, wars, rumors of wars, crazy weather patterns, and a lot of evil people trying to make their perversions acceptable. I’m grateful that I’m Heaven-bound, and just passing through this wicked life. I’m striving to be better prepared for when He does come. It really seems close.

RUMBLE, RUMBLE... Big earthquake we’re having! Can it be that which I just read in my Bible? No, must be a coincidence; this is California after all. Wow, the sky just went totally dark. (Gasp) Did you hear that? A booming sound, yet musical like a trumpet. Golly, look at the sky, it’s so brilliant! Look! It’s Him! They said He would appear in the clouds! *My Jesus, I am ready!*

**BOB:** Man, this morning traffic is at a dead stop; I’m gonna be late for work. Hey, why is my car shaking so hard? Earthquake! Oh no, this must be the BIG ONE they’ve been predicting. It’s really eerie around here, like I’m in the Twilight Zone. The power must have gone out...but why is the sky dark like the night? What’s that awful sound? Have the looters already started? Oh my gosh, driverless cars are crashing all over the place! What’s going on?

Somebody just yelled out that Christians are missing. This can’t be happening, it’s a bad dream. There’s no way that the Jesus-guy came back for his people because it’s a myth. This is not that, is it? No, no, no ... Nooooo!

***They said it would happen!!!***

◁>(Used with Permission)

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

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor

### Two Halves Make A Whole

Many things have two parts to make a whole. A candle needs wax and a wick to make light. A bow needs an arrow to hit the target. A CD needs a CD-player to make beautiful music. A BBQ will not cook without gas or coals. And a hose is just a pipe without water.

So many things need a counterpart before they can become truly effective.



God designed man and woman as two parts that come together to work as an effective whole. Quite often, we will only start functioning when we are connected to our counterpart. What one lacks, the other has in abundance and vice versa. Only as a whole do we start realizing our purpose and full potential. God created marriage so greater things could be accomplished. However, we must remember, in order for this to happen both parts must be in working order. (Ecclesiastics 4:9, Ephesians 5:31)

◇ (Used by Permission)



### Your Invitation to Visit us

We invite you to visit us at Victory Baptist Church here in Kokomo. Our schedule of services are in this newsletter on Page 6. You will find a warm welcome, and solid Bible-based preaching and teaching. Feel free to call our church (Phone number below) if you have any questions regarding any of our ministries here at Victory. Come join us and glorify our Lord!

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

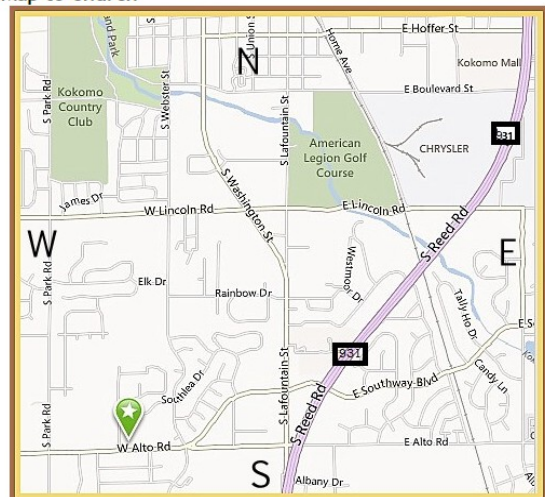
**Michael Ennis - Senior Pastor**  
**Landon Bagley - Assoc. Pastor**  
**Morris Starkey - Editor**

**Victory Baptist Church**  
[www.vbckokomo.com](http://www.vbckokomo.com)  
765-453-9768

**Victory Christian Academy**  
[www.vcakokomo.com](http://www.vcakokomo.com)

**Faith & family *Connect***  
[editorfaithandfamily@gmail.com](mailto:editorfaithandfamily@gmail.com)

Map to Church



610 West Alto Road. Kokomo.

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

Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor

Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley -Associate Pastor