

Prepare



Rain

...there is the sound of a heavy rain...I Kings 18:41

for

January - March, 2011

Pastor's Word: Living with Integrity

Greetings!

Let me begin by thanking you for being a part of this fellowship of believers here at Solid Rock Church of God, and for giving me the honor to serve as your pastor. I do not take this calling and responsibility lightly and by the grace of God, I will continue to do everything I can to effectively minister the word of God to you and to model personal holiness before you.

As we embark on a New Year, I feel the Spirit of God would have us to focus on Living with Integrity as believers.

Integrity is one of those words that we hear quite a bit about, but somehow seem to have great difficulty putting it into practice. When we look up the word integrity it says honesty, soundness, unimpaired condition. So when we talk about living with integrity, we are talking about one who is honest, upright and trustworthy.

As a believer, everything that we do should be done with integrity; we need to be real. There must be a genuineness and an authenticity about us.

Integrity is important because:

It pleases God.

If we want God to delight in us, there are some skeletons that need to be removed from the closet of our lives, so that in public or in private our conduct will bring glory to God. We ought to be living epistles that can be

read by all men. When we walk with integrity, when we walk in purity, God delights in us; He affirms us, He blesses us, and He gives us favor.

It affects others

When we live to please God, our children will be blessed as the favor of the Lord follows them.

When we walk with integrity God will empower us to success and we'll be able to leave a memorial Jesus behind that shows it pays to serve Jesus.

It blesses us

When we have integrity, people will cut us some slack. We may not be the most qualified but our character will take us places we never dreamed of; others will see in us someone who can be trusted.

When we have integrity:

We speak the truth

Some people may not like to hear the truth but we have to speak it in love because the truth will set us and others free. Physically, we may pay a price but in our spirit we'll be free.

We stand for what is right

We do not conveniently surrender truth on the altar of expediency; we do not go along to get along. Living with integrity means taking a stand for what is right and not necessarily what is popular.

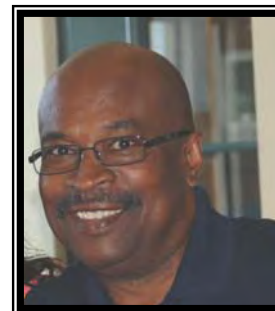
We live lives that are clean

As believers we will continue to flee sin and allow the Holy Spirit to saturate our lives and mold our conduct so that we bring glory to God in all that we do.

As we embark on this journey of Living With Integrity, we will continue to be tempted to gravitate to the lower roads. Nonetheless, we must purpose to (1) honor God in all that we do and (2) be an affirming and encouraging voice for other believers so that together we can successfully finish the race in a way that glorifies God.

Be blessed and be a blessing.

Pastor "B"



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In Pursuit

By *Sis. Cheryl Clarke*

So I've often heard it said, "You become what you pursue." And my attitude towards this statement has always been, "Oh really now, that all depends."

You see, I only pursue that which I perceive to be pursuit-worthy. Let's see; pursue means to chase, sometimes for a long time, in order to capture and overtake. I recall when my children were toddlers and I would repeatedly make the mistake of taking them to the mall with me (well not so much with "the girl" because even then it was evident that she truly was born to shop). With "the boy" however, I would inevitably become frazzled, pull half of my hair out and wonder why I ever thought I could get any shopping accomplished when he was with me. You guessed it, the mall became a virtual playground, and the nicely organized clothing that hung on the racks became toys that either belonged on the floor, or wonderful hiding places for him. And so since I was supposed to be a "good" mother who was not supposed to lose her child at the mall, I would wisely spend all of my shopping time in pursuit of "the boy." In a strange way, this kind of pursuing made perfect sense to me. After college, everybody always looked for a job; so in order not to appear abnormal, I did too. And although I only did it because my parents said I had to if I wanted to eat, sleep, enjoy clothing, their home and continue to breathe, I pursued an education too, albeit halfheartedly. Marriage to my then boyfriend? Oh I definitely pursued that! But somehow, when it came to the things that pertained to God and being used in His kingdom, I got the idea that things needed to go the opposite way—I was not to pursue.

Certainly, if God wanted to use me, He would pursue me. And let me share that to a large extent, God has chased after me. After all, I've spent my life being Jonah-like. And I'm learning that I am not alone; many of you have the "not me" syndrome. This is where you turn your head from side to side looking for the other person that God is calling, 'cause you just know it's not you. But God has multiple ways of communicating and confirming that it's you—yes, YOU. I'm calling YOU.

So when one finally acknowledges and identifies what God is calling him/her to, there ought to be pursuit—pursuit of God Himself. The amazing thing about God is that He allows us to get to know Him—His heart, His will. But we have to pursue; this intimate kind of knowing is not going to just jump into our laps.

Let's get back to the mall pursuit of my son for a minute. That experience never failed to leave me feeling frustrated, exasperated and unaccomplished. Pursuing God however, is personally rewarding. It results in peace of mind, a sense of assuredness, purpose, and clear direction. Jeremiah 29:13-14 assures us that if we seek God with all our hearts, we will find Him.

Eph. 3:19 (NLT) says this: "May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God." Don't we long for this completeness? So come on. Let's collectively purpose to chase after God—for a lifetime—in order to capture Him (that is, to have the mind of Christ) and His will for our lives.

Newsletter Team

Thierry Butler
Photographer



Writer/Artist
AnnMarie Henry



Contributing Editor
Pastor Mark Nelson



Editor
Cheryl Clarke



Contributing Editor
Marsha Wilson

Graphic/Design Editor
Coral Reid-Pemberton



Writer
Rachel Nelson



The Heart of our First Lady

Recently, I had the opportunity to spend some long overdue time interviewing our first lady. I'd like to share that experience with you.

One thing became very apparent as we talked over a healthy, hearty lunch: she's just like the rest of us girls! In fact, I've come up with a profound word that I think best describes her overall—REGULAR! Now don't get me wrong; this is a woman of God for sure, and she chokes up as she privately reflects on some challenging times in life and ministry. But then just as quickly a smile breaks through the tears as she readily tells of how God was faithful during those times, and continues to be today.

Sis JoAnn is keenly aware that many may look upon her role as a glamorous, high profile one to be coveted. But for her, the function of a first lady involves rolling up the sleeves of your cute suit or dress (it's going to be cute because she has her own sense of style and loves to shop) and doing whatever job needs to be done at that moment. It may entail moving furniture because no one else is around, or working in the kitchen with the other ladies of the church—whatever it takes to make sure that the ministry is enhanced. And as you might imagine, it is essential to this first lady that she supports, covers, and partners with her husband in ministry. She visits infirmed members with him, and is vigilant about being his eyes and ears. As a woman of God, Sis JoAnn describes herself as a worshipper. Asked by one of our young ladies about what keeps her focus on God and not the audience during worship, Sis JoAnn shares that she comes to church each Sunday with a single-mindedness—to tune out all distractions so that God might increase and she would decrease.

Sis JoAnn is a woman of calm fortitude. She wants us to know that she is approachable and very much available to listen and encourage the body of Christ. And let's just say a group of women are gathered at a round table to share experiences as we like to do; what does Sis JoAnn bring to the table? A sense of authenticity—in other words, she is the one who would say, "Let's just keep it real here." And speaking of women, our first lady's desire for us at Solid Rock is that we are godly examples for the younger women; that we demonstrate a spirit of cohesiveness. Sis JoAnn has a strong love and compassion for our young people, and emphasizes the importance of education when she engages them. She has watched many of them mature from toddlers to young adulthood, and prays for their spiritual growth and maturity as well.

So as I was saying, in many respects, Sister JoAnn is no different than the rest of us girls. She wears many hats—wife, mother, daughter, grandmother, nurse, and the list goes on. She loves event planning and is a confident, successful business woman as well. But spending time with her granddaughter Janae brings her enormous joy. And her face lights up when she talks about her adult children—what she has tried to teach them along the way, and the tremendous lessons they have taught her. Being able to kick back and get away on a vacation with her husband—what woman in her right mind would not soak that up? Yes, she is a woman of God and a pastor's wife; yet she's just like us—just REGULAR.

By Sis Cheryl Clarke

DAUGHTER

NURSE



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GODLY

C
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WIFE

REGULAR

Marriage Enrichment

The marriage enrichment ministry is currently studying a curriculum entitled "For Christian Lovers Only" by Drs. Clarence and Ja'Ola Walker. This study is packed with all kinds of information on how to improve your marriage. These are the subjects that we have discussed so far. In session one we discussed the topic "What Are You Talking About?" This session dealt with teaching couples the art and definition of communication as well as the elements of communication. Couples in attendance had the opportunity to put their communication skills into practice.

The topic for session #2 was "Fine Tuning Your Channels." This helped couples to understand how they can communicate in five different ways—**verbally, through body language, scriptwriting, actions and touch.**

In session three we discussed "Crazy Couple Communication" which revealed how **corrupt forms of communication** can cause a break in a couple's connection. These lessons are fun and informative and allow couples to discuss these

topics in a safe and loving environment. As we know, there is no perfect marriage and every marital relationship either needs some form of healing or the encouragement to continue growing in love. The goal of the marriage enrichment ministry is to impact the kingdom of God by impacting the lives of married couples. The ultimate intent is for the family to be whole and healthy. These learning tools and skills in turn extend into the community at large.

By Sis. Rachel Nelson

SOLID ROCK'S WEEKLY SCHEDULE

- Sun.** Sunday school @ 9:45 am
Worship Service @ 11:00 am
- Wed.** Mini Institute @ 7:00 pm
- Fri.** Dance/Mime Ministry @ 6:00 pm
Choir Rehearsal @ 8:00 pm
- Sat.** Youth Impact 3:00 pm-6:00pm
(1st) Men's & Women's Ministry @ 10:00 am
- (3rd)** Marriage Enrichment 7:00 pm-8:30 pm

Solid Rock Welcomes
JANUARY 2011
"New Members"

Linnette Grayson

Timothy Steele

Sharlene Starling

Avril Wright

Martha Cozier

Jessica D. Moton

Leviticus & Melba Dunbar

Christina Beira

Yvonne Fraser

Linda Rodriguez

Upcoming Events

February 27—Black History Presentation

April 24—Easter Sunday/Baptism

TBA—Picture Day for all Ministries



Help for Today's Parents Healthy Homework Habits



“Ms. Wilson, I don’t have my project because my mommy said she is not done with it yet!” You’ve got to love first graders! They have no filter! This was the response from a first grader for a robot project that she was given three weeks to complete. Parents were encouraged to only offer encouragement and minimal help. Needless to say, I got so many meticulously done robots that the parents slaved over while the *student* observed and offered minimal help. My favorite is the parents who, in their infinite wisdom and their own unmistakable scrawl, complete the homework for their children.

The dreaded homework is the issue! Let’s face it; homework ranks right up there with death and taxes! Many times I get notes that say : little Johnny might be a little tired today because we were up until 10’o-clock doing homework . One of the most common complaints that parents have is **too much homework**, or my child doesn’t understand the homework.

What do you do when you too share these concerns? Are you, as a parent, doing your part to foster a healthy and productive learning environment at home? In order for your child to be successful in school think: routine, routine, routine! There’s a routine in the mornings when we get up, routine for dinner, routine for buying groceries! There needs to be a routine for learning. Teachers are usually successful because they have a routine structure to which your child has grown accustomed. When little Johnny or teen Johnny comes

home, establish a routine that works for your family. A typical routine could be snack, homework, chore, dinner, bath, reading time, but at times of your specifications. Keep in mind that everyone’s family is not like the Cosby’s or the Beavers.

Another key component is consistency. Do what works for your family but keep it consistent. If it is inconsistent, it sends a message of less importance. Imagine if every Sunday church started or ended at unpredictable times? Pastor sometimes, showed up... maybe forgot it was Sunday? Imagine the kind of impact that would have on our spiritual lives? What message does that send about the word of God? Similarly, we send the same message if there is no consistency in our children’s academic lives. Genesis 1: 1-31 shows us how the Lord Himself established consistency and routine through his creation of the world. Likewise, even in our imperfection we can strive for consistency.

Prepare a workspace. Dining room table? Computer desk? It’s your choice.

The space should be uncluttered and comfortable but not relaxing. Be sure that all necessary supplies are present such as sharpeners, extra pencils , paper, dictionary, etc. The idea is to reduce unscheduled breaks—too much getting up.

Remember that younger students need to have breaks but they need to be scheduled breaks. You might say: work for 15 minutes and then you will get a 5 minute break.

Older children are able to sit

longer and are encouraged to be more disciplined.

Pay attention to constant jitters, sighing; the needing to go to the bathroom (constantly). These are sometimes signs of distress and cry for help. Maybe your child doesn’t understand the directions or the content of the assignment. This is where you intervene.

Offer your help if it is just a matter of restating directions or offering reassurance. What if you, yourself, do not understand the work? There is nothing to be embarrassed about. I **suggest** you not become overwhelmed by it either.

Write a note to the teacher asking for clarification or re-teach of the content. If this becomes a constant problem, it is time to set up a parent conference to take a closer look at what might be happening.

Are you a parent that needs **more homework**? My answer is simple: know thy child. Do what you know works best while keeping in mind that “all work and no play, makes Jack a dull boy”.

As an educator, I believe that homework is something that a student should be able to do independently with very minimal help from a parent. It shouldn’t be the torturous valley of the shadow of death that it has become.



By Sis Marsha Wilson

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

1. Who founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)?

- a) Dr. Ralph David Abernathy
- b) Richard Allen
- c) Coleman A. Young
- d) Barbara Jordan

2. President Jimmy Carter appointed him Secretary of the Army in 1977...

- a) Charles C. Rogers
- b) Colin Powell
- c) Clifford Alexander
- d) Benjamin L. Hooks



3. Ida B. Wells-Barnett was a crusader for African American civil rights and for equal rights for women primarily by...

- a) Singing at concerts
- b) Preaching in church
- c) holding elected office
- d) writing newspaper articles

4. Attorney Constance Baker Motley started her brilliant civil rights career with...

- a) The NAACP Legal Defense Fund
- b) SNCC
- c) SCLC
- d) Opposition from the American Bar Association

5. She founded the National Council of Negro Women in 1935:

- a) Mary McLeod Bethune
- b) Sara Washington
- c) C. Delores Tucker
- d) Hazel W. Johnson



6. Vernon E. Jordan Jr. had a colorful career as a noted civil rights leader and as a...

- a) strong union boss
- b) well respected lobbyist
- c) powerful Washington, D.C. lawyer
- d) mayor of Los Angeles, California

Answers in reverse—#’s 6-1
c, a, a, d, c, a

IMPACT—SOLID ROCK'S YOUTH MINISTRY

UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

- ◆ *February 26th Youth Black History Program 3pm – 6pm and Book signing: Author/Poet Frank Ambroise II*
- ◆ *March 4th Parent meeting 7:00pm*
- ◆ *March 18th and 19th Girls Revolve Tour Lakeland , Fl 6:00pm*
- ◆ *March 21st - March 25th , Spring break week Boat Ride Project 9:00am*
- ◆ *March 26th Youth Mission Project Habitat for Humanity 10:00am*
- ◆ *April 1st Parent meeting 7:00pm*
- ◆ *April 30th H.E.A.R.T Mission Awareness Project Lake Wales Fl. 9:00am*

Young Adult Connection (YAC)

This newly developed ministry is for young adults between the ages of 19 - 25. This ministry meets every Sunday at 10:00am during Sunday School and every 1st Friday evening of the month for fellowship, bonding and enrichment. For more information see Stephanie Solis, Jelesa Jack and Keisha Browne.

Mark Nelson, Youth Pastor



HEALTH & NUTRITION: CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Many parents are only just beginning to understand the long term implications of childhood obesity. Recently, we have begun to see serious health consequences develop. Research has shown that some obese children now have lower life expectancy than their parents!

First Lady Michelle Obama said a few months ago in Florida that the “Let’s Move Fitness Campaign” for kids needs to be a main priority in parents’ weekly schedule. To reinforce this campaign, she cultivates a green garden in the back yard of the White House. Once in a while, she invites middle

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school kids to come and experience the fruits and vegetables grown there.

After my serious liver disease, I also decided to “go green” on a daily basis. Let me give seven good habits for parents to teach our “fast food loving children” about good choice and healthy eating.

- 1) Cut out sugary drinks. They already find it in school from vending machines.
- 2) Make sure the whole family can take a walk after dinner or ride bikes together.
- 3) Limit your weekly trips to the drive through and decrease fried food

consumption by keeping frozen food in the freezer

- 4) Encourage your kids to walk at least 30 minutes to an hour daily
- 5) Be well informed as a parent, because our guidance in their lives will help them to make positive, healthy choices
- 6) Give your children more fruits and vegetables on a daily basis
- 7) Devote one day to planning a menu for the week so you save time and money

By Bro Frank Ambroise, NC

Women's Prayer Breakfast—Golden Corral



Solid Rock Church of God • 1904 N. Michigan Ave. • Kissimmee, FL 34744

Ph: 407-847-3500 • Fax: 407-931-0958

www. Solidrockchurchofgod.org • Email: office@srcog.org