

Prepare for Rain

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



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Pastor's Word: Meeting Life's Challenges

No matter our season in life, we are going to face some challenges. Here are some pages we can take from the life of Joshua as we prepare ourselves to meet those challenges head on.



- A) First, be a Joshua wherever you are. That means that you learn to lean on God instead of man, just as Joshua had to learn to lean on God and not Moses. Practice the art of pondering some things in your heart, rather than immediately going out to seek the counsel of others.
- B) Then BELIEVE and KNOW that God is ALWAYS with you as He has promised.
- C) Understand that God is already at work in your situation, even if you are yet unable to see it. Indeed sometimes there are barriers between us and the fulfillment of the promise. Those barriers may include doubt and self-righteousness. Yet we must depend on God to pull down those barriers, and stay focused on the promise. Failure to do this results in the circling of our blessings without actual attainment of them.

D) Stay in the Word; each day it prepares us to face the challenge. Remember that His Word brings light, direction and strength. Trust in God's Word and not your circumstances.

E) Speak words of life and of victory; not defeat.

F) Learn from the failures of the past and say to the enemy, "I'm coming out of this." Reflect on the fact that when we meet His conditions, we are then ready to receive the PROMISE.

Pastor "B"

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Hold on...with Both Hands

By Sis Cheryl Clarke

Ever drive past a nervous person behind the wheel of a car? I can usually tell when a person is driving afraid. Here's the posture if you will: the driver is leaning forward, forehead almost touching the windshield, both hands are clenching the steering wheel, holding on for dear life, knuckles protruding.

The truth is we all hold on, and the questions are simple and few: to what or to whom are we holding on, and why? Etched in my mind is the image of a pair of hands—mine—holding on desperately to the edge of a cliff, feet dangling, afraid of falling. What if I let go? Will something miraculously stop my speedy descent? What lies beneath? Do I have the strength or the wisdom to save myself anyway? I somehow deceive myself that I do, if I just keep holding on. However, God in His infinite wisdom keeps sending experiences and challenges, all with the intent of getting me to let go, only I look desperately for something nearby that will keep me from letting go just a little bit longer.

Can I be honest here? I sometimes grasp on to foolish, temporal things or activities that will distract me from that which I do not want to face. Ever went to the mall just because? Don't need another pair of shoes, can't squeeze another dress into my closet, but there I am anyway. Funny thing is that God speaks at the mall too: "Let go completely, trust me fully." Oh don't get me wrong, I trust God, I have faith. But there is a completeness that God is now requiring of me and that's been downright scary. Letting go completely? Of the fear, of the familiar? And I plead, "Lord, what if..." Yet He persists in requiring me to let go completely; trust Him with my life, and what's ahead.

Afraid of falling? Me too. But I am reminded that God is a promise keeper, and falling is not the only possible outcome here. He promises to carry us, but how can He if we won't let go—both hands now. His arms are all encompassing. Come on, let's wrap our arms around our Daddy's neck, surrender all, and enjoy the ride. Its w-a-a-a-y better when He is in complete control. So no longer do I drive afraid. In fact, I'm not driving at all!



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Christian Women's Connection Retreat ~ 2011

On March 19, 2011, the Christian Women's Connection held its second annual retreat. The theme this year was "Get Connected!" The speakers for the event were three powerful anointed women of God, who brought forth messages that fed upon one another. Before our speakers began, our Spiritual Life Director Deaconess Avril Alexander opened and gave us a brief devotion on how we can connect. We were asked by Deaconess Avril to get into a circle and connect our arms interlocking it with the person next to us. This was an awesome exercise because it reminded us of our Prayer Breakfast when Deaconess Noel spoke on "Sisterhood." She told us that as sisters in Christ we are to connect to each other shoulder to shoulder so that the enemy cannot get in and attempt to destroy our sisterly love.

Our First Lady did a phenomenal job; her message was entitled "How Do I Connect?" First lady told us that for us to be able to connect we must be transparent. We must be able to let people see the real us. She told us that there are benefits and challenges to connecting. The benefits are increased happiness, better health, and longer life. For us to be able to enjoy these benefits, the challenges to connecting are you can get hurt, and it includes transparency. We must not be afraid of sharing; we must lay aside our fears because they can make us defensive. She gave us the four "ings" of connecting. 1) Listening, we must show others that we care, 2) Observing – we must always show eye contact when someone is speaking with us, 3) Discovering – we must recognize the right words, and 4) Speaking – we communicate a thought by body language. One phenomenal statement made by our First Lady was that "we must work to complete, not to Compete." Amen First Lady Blenman.

Minister Inocencia Chisolm delivered the message entitled, "Where Do I Fit?" There were several points she addressed, but the one point she stressed was that "we need to first become spiritually disciplined." We do this by breaking bad habits and releasing ill spirits. She also advised us that smiling was healthy, as it took more muscles and energy to frown than it does to smile. Next, she stated that we needed to strip away all the non-essentials. By doing this, we would be able to endure the spiritual journey to the end. Both of these things can be done by building healthy relationships that do not compromise our faith and then by getting involved within the church. God has blessed each of us with a talent, and what better way to use it, than to build the kingdom of God. In closing, she reminded all of us that we are like puzzle pieces, and when all the pieces come together, not only is the puzzle whole, but it creates a beautiful picture.

The Holy Spirit was very evident in our speakers because their messages were tied into each other so much that Dr. Morgan recapped what was said between our speakers. Dr. Morgan said "First Lady and Minister Chisolm basically touched on what she was going to say." Dr. Morgan then proceeded to give us the history of the women in the Church of God. She told us the Women's Ministry arose predominantly out of the need to support missionaries and plant churches. The women's Ministry has grown vastly over the years and has changed the name from "Women's Ministry" to "Christian Women Connection."

Our prayer is that as God continues to bless us, and that younger women would become a part of this ministry. Our meetings are held on the first Saturday of every month. Come, fellowship with us. Will we see you at our next meeting?

Be blessed and be a blessing,

The Planning Committee

Love Is A Decision

By Rachel Nelson

Somebody once said that "love is a many splendored thing," and certainly it is. Just take a look at two people in love and you will understand. When everything is going well, both are happy and excited but have you ever witnessed those same two individuals when things weren't going so well? You would be shocked to see how lovebirds can change their tune. When times like these happen it is important to know that love is way more than just a feeling. Dr. Gary Chapman says love is a decision.

I am sure we would all agree that we have been taught that love is a feeling. It is also true that when we fall in love we experience all kinds of feelings that we didn't know existed but it is just as important to know that just because you don't feel "in love" at the moment does not mean you do not love the person. I can remember at my wedding Dr. Levorn Aaron said to us "no matter how the storms rage or the winds blow, through thick or thin you will stick with each other until the very end." He also told us that "he was not standing here just to be standing here. The only one who could break this union is us." I must commend that old preacher who has gone home to be with the Lord. I have pondered those words many times over the past two decades.

You have to decide to love your spouse no matter how you feel....period! You have to tell yourself that even though you may be tired of a situation or upset you cannot throw in the towel because you feel like it. Feelings are fickle, they change with the wind. Some days you are happy and some days you are not. Why would you leave the fate of your marriage in the hands of something as unstable as your feelings? If you listened to them you would never go to work, witness to others or even come to church at times. Make up in your mind in advance that you will love your spouse, even on those days when you feel you don't like them; this way the decision is already made before the devil gets the chance to convince you otherwise. I know you may be thinking that your situation is different and it may be. There may be some who are experiencing extenuating circumstances that cannot be swept under the rug. God will have to guide you on how to proceed in these areas. However, many people today are

breaking up over silly things. We must come to a point where we mature in Christ and in our relationships. This is not a game; marriage is serious business. It is a covenant between a **man and a woman** and God. Once you have asked the Lord and believe you have found the person that He has for you it is important to be sure that you understand what marriage is and what it is not. It's important to spend time with God in prayer so he can speak to your heart and tell you if this is the right one. Also ask God when is the time is right to marry. Christian marriage counseling (preferably from your pastor) is also a must for believers who want to have good success in marriage. Be open to hear what the pastor has to say and do not ignore any warning signs that he may give you. Work on them before walking down that aisle. I implore those who are considering marriage to heed this advice. Marriage is not a fad, a game or a means by which to gain status. You have to know, that you know, that you know that God has put this relationship together. If you don't have God in the picture you are only fooling yourself and you will suffer the consequences. The reason I am saying this is so that you can weed out as many problems in the beginning as you can because marriage is not easy but if done right it is the most rewarding relationship you can have. Once you have responsibly prepared yourself for marriage you must trust God to guide you through it and decide that no matter what, you will not let your feelings dictate to you.

When your spouse irritates you, whisper a prayer and ask God for strength to endure. When you are tempted to speak angry words, remember a soft answer turns away wrath. Husbands when you are tempted to be rough, remember, God says love your wife as Christ loves the church. Wives, when you are tempted to nag and complain about everything your husband does wrong, remember that the Word says, "wives respect your husbands." God has set things in place so that we will know how we are supposed to act and react to our spouses. Despite how you feel allow God's word to teach you that love is not a feeling but a decision. There is a radio broadcast on Family radio that ends with this phrase "remember marriage is for better, for worse and for keeps."

Developing a Positive Self-Esteem in Your child—Part 1

Wednesday's Child

**Mondays child is fair of face,
Tuesdays child is full of grace,
Wednesdays child is full of woe,
Thursdays child has far to go,
Fridays child is loving and giving,
Saturdays child works hard for his living,
And the child that is born on the Sabbath day
Is bonny and blithe, and good and gay[happy].
Author unknown**

A quick online research of this poem, which originated sometime in the 1500's, revealed a rather rich history and suggested that it was written primarily to teach children the days of the week. It has lived on and has become somewhat of a metaphor on a very narrow spectrum of outcomes that a child's life can possibly take. I've always felt a little sad for Wednesday's child.

What parent wouldn't love to see his/her children exhibit the grace of Tuesday's child, having the characteristics described in leadersdirect.com: being *confident without being overbearing, not devastated by criticism, not overly defensive when questioned, active and achievement oriented without being driven, mostly happy with themselves as they are, not easily defeated by setbacks and obstacles*. This is not to say that those possessing a healthy, well balanced self-esteem do not on occasion display contrary behaviors. The **difference** is that they typically do not stay there, but revert to a happy, healthy, stable state. Not Wednesday's child. They are the children who are usually overwhelmed with the pace of life, feel unsuccessful compared to others, are unwilling to take chances for fear of failure, depend on others to look after them so as not to face the realities of life. On the other end of the pendulum, there exists within them a level of anger and need to get even with others. There is a quickness to get angry, start a fight, blame others, find faults, nothing is good, enjoys hearing about other people's negative situations, will belabor and argue petty issues.

The question is how do we help Wednesday's child? Remember that it is an accepted conclusion that children live what they learn and with that in mind, we must look at ourselves--their caregivers--whether it is an ideal situation or not. We desire our children to be whole human beings. Notice, I didn't say perfect, just whole. The entire chapter of Psalm 139 should be a motivation for us to put out the effort to ensure that not only are our children living up to their full potential, but that we as parents are as well. *For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting Psalm 139:13-14; 23).*

What type of parent are you?

Demanding? --"Do it now!"

Critical? "What were you thinking when you did that?"

Overprotective? --"Do you think you are ready for that?"

Inadequate? --"I'll make you pay for this."

Disengaged?--"I'm too tired; maybe tomorrow."

Validating?--"I'm so proud of you; I really like the way you did that."

Honestly ask yourself, how would your child describe you? Typically we parent the way we were parented. This parenting job came with no manual or app so we will have to work at it by first making an honest assessment of ourselves. This is not to suggest that we are the sole reason our children are the way they are, but we want to check to see to what extent, if any, we have contributed. An honest assessment demands that some of us discard the sentimentality of our upbringing and be reminded that this is a new generation. After a good look at ourselves then we may be able to move forward.

By Marsha Wilson

—In His Own Words—

Bro James Alexander



I was diagnosed with prostate cancer in October, 1997 while living in Montgomery, Alabama with a PSA of 53.6. I was treated by external radiation

and oral hormonal medication from December 1997 through March 1998. My PSA was generally below 4 and less than 10 with occasional hormone injections through 2009 in Alabama and Florida where we moved in 2006, while I was under the care of a Urologist.

From about October 2009 my PSA results started to climb and my urologist referred me to an oncologist in February 2010. In July 2010 my PSA was 379.2. The cancer had become hormone refractory (or resistant). The oncologist recommended I be put on Chemotherapy, but I decided to wait.

In October 2010, I was having difficulty with just breathing. I was then taken to the Emergency Room at Osceola Regional. I spent a week at Osceola and various tests showed that the prostate cancer had metastasized and spread to my left lung, which had developed pleural fluids. 2 liters of fluid was drained from my lungs! By then, my PSA was 900+.

With the increasing severity of my illness and subsequent chemotherapy treatments, I was unable to return to work in Tallahassee. However I was given special permission to do limited work from home via the computer. But in January 2011, I was readmitted to Osceola with pleural fluids in the lung. Both in the hospital and at home, over 6 liters of fluid was being withdrawn via a catheter that was placed in my lung. Alarmingly, a PSA sample on Feb 1, 2011 was 1114.85; on March 1 the PSA was 944.4, 148 on May 4, and on May 31 the PSA was down to 91.5. On June 22, my oncologist found both lungs clear. God is an awesome God!

All praise and glory go to God, for healing me. I thank Him for the care and support of my wonderful wife and family members throughout my illness. Thanks also for the prayers of the saints at Solid Rock, and my email contacts throughout the world.

Health and Nutrition: The Facts about Sugar

*Contrary to common belief, ingesting sugar is not a direct cause of diabetes. However, it does play a significant role in the development of the disease. Consequently, special sugar diets can lead to weight gain and obesity. According to Dr. Mehmet Oz, cardiac surgeon, overconsumption of sugar and other poor eating habits have led to an obesity epidemic in the USA. For this reason, type 2 **diabetes** remains the fastest growing disease in history. Many experts now say the current generation of American children may be the first generation in history that may not live as long as their parents! Just how much sugar do Americans consume daily? Some experts recommend that women should consume no more than six teaspoons-- about 100 calories per day. Men should consume no more than nine teaspoons--about 150 calories. Unfortunately, many of us consume at least 22 packets of sugar before the end of the day. That is almost a half cup of sugar. Teens consume even more; a whopping 34 teaspoons of sugar daily according to American Heart Association. These amounts are two to three times higher than what is recommended. Parents, watch out for common favorites like sweetened iced tea, soda, and cake.*

According to Ms. Lee, an Atlanta based dietitian who specializes in weight management, sugar substitutes are not a cure at all. If you are replacing sugary foods with artificially sweetened substances, you are not doing yourself any favors. Because artificial sweeteners are often sweeter than sugar, some doctors say the sugar substitutes may fuel our desire for sweets. Most experts recommend you get your blood sugar tested at least every three years starting at age 45. However, recent studies suggest screening can begin as early age 30 and repeated every three years.

As most of you know, if you have type 2 diabetes there is no cure for that disease. Eating right, exercise, and maintaining a healthy weight can help you bring blood sugar levels down. Cut back on white sugar and white bread, mashed potatoes, and white rice. Try to increase on fruits, non starchy vegetables, organic food, legumes and nuts. So what is the bottom line on sugar? The reality is you do not have to eliminate sweets from your diet. By making smart choices you can indulge your sweet tooth if you eat oatmeal with blueberries, walnuts, and a little brown sugar. The bottom line is: use moderation when consuming sugar.

By Frank Ambroise

IMPACT—SOLID ROCK'S YOUTH MINISTRY

August 6, 2011, 11 AM to 4 PM—BACK 2 SCHOOL EXTRAVAGANZA

August 10, 2011, 7 PM to 8:45 P M —PRIME TIME BIBLE STUDY ages 9-18

September 3, 2011, 9:00 AM-5 :00 PM—GIRL'S EMPOWERMENT

MOTIVATION SEMINAR (GEMS) ages 13-21

October 1, 2011, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM—WATCH MY SWAIG—

BOYS WORKSHOP ages 13-21

Solid Rock Welcomes New Members

APRIL

Jessica Moton
Charlene Steele
Brandon Charles
Trevor Bess
Linnette Carrol
Louis Conserve
Arlene Edmond
Dennis & Kay Gaskins
Glen Graham
Violette Larione
Melissa Jasmag
Michael & Sharlene Starling

JUNE

Aida Maxwell
Alisa Valientin
Reenie Ferraro
Nancy Ramos
Kristal Walker
Cheryl Poprilo
Isabel DeJesus
Marcus Carr

Up & Coming

- Evangelism Workshop -
July 23rd - 10:00am -
1:00pm
- Appreciation BBQ—July
30th - 11:00am - 4:00pm
- Back to School - August
6th - 11:00am - 4:00pm
- Women's Connection
Weekend - Sept. 10th &
11th

MEN OF HONOR ~ RETREAT ~ 2011

“THE ROLE of GODLY MEN”

