TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Bobby Rader /Opening Prayer by: Jerry Mallernee

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#469 Faith Is the Victory
#470 Victory in Jesus

Scripture Reading by:
#586 My Faith Looks Up to Thee
Lord's Supper and Contribution

#586 Standing on the Promises
Sermon: "Deacons: Their Qualifications"
1 Timothy 3:8-13

#911 Bring Christ Your Broken Life
#480 Blessed Assurance

Closing Prayer by: James Scott

Welcome by: Bobby Rader

Evening Assembly Song Leader: Danny Balch

#539 Higher Ground
#552 Have Thine Own Way

Opening Prayer: Ken Coleman
#611 Heavenly Sunlight

Sermon: "To What Shall I Compare This Generation?"
Matthew 11:16-19

#902 Nothing But the Blood
#615 He Keeps Me Singing

Closing Prayer: Wayne Noonkester

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 5:00pm — Worship
Wednesday: 6:30pm — Bible Study Classes

April 3, 2022

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

Proficiency Test

For the last two years, we have been holding prayer meetings on Facebook Live during the week. We originally began them at the outset of the pandemic, when we could not get together at all for awhile, as a way to keep everyone somewhat connected and encouraged. We persisted in broadcasting Monday-Friday for the next year; as things began to open back up last Spring, including the resumption of our own Sunday and Wednesday evening services, we scaled them back to only Tuesday and Thursday evenings. But the reason we continue to produce what was originally only an ad hoc program is that so many people told us they found value in it and asked us to maintain it. If you have not done so, I would encourage you to check it out on those days at 7 pm.

The elders typically rotate through those twice-weekly sessions on a schedule (except for when I occasionally fill in for one of them). And those of you who regularly watch know that each one of them has their own particular style that they bring to their night: Don Taylor often greets people by name and welcomes them to watching; Ken Coleman usually talks about the events of the day or week; Robert Ward always signs off with a blessing and often includes a Bible passage.

Bobby Rader famously closes with a couple of questions of Bible trivia, but he always opens with a devotional thought or story. This week, he mentioned that the Liberty County Sheriff's Office has proficiency tests for their weapons coming soon. He used that to make an excellent point, drawing from Paul's writings in **Philippians 3,** about ignoring distractions and focusing single-mindedly on the target.

But listening to him prompted some thoughts of my own in a slightly different direction. As Christians, we are told more than once we have a spiritual weapon that we wield: Scripture. Paul urges us to be equipped to battle those dark, cosmic forces opposed to us: *Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.* **(Eph 6:14-17)** Employing similar imagery, the Hebrews writer reminds us that *the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.* **(Heb 4:12)**

Family News & Notes

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH YOUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our Sick

Joe Edd Stifflemire is taking chemo treatments.

Linda Frank is recovering from covid.

Ka'Leisha Jones has been having health problems and will see a specialist on April 14th.

Continued Prayers
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Harold & Geri Cryer, Steve Ward, Frank & Tina Garcia, Oscar Cantu, Caitlin Smith, Gary Nielsen, Virginia Cole

Shut Ins
(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Catherine Parker, Peggy McIntosh

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Montepuez, Mozambique , Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Deacons, Minister meeting this Monday, Apr. 4th at 6:30 p.m.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Tuesday, April 5th at 8:00 a.m.

We will have a fellowship meal on Wednesday, Apr. 6th at 5:30 p.m. in the family life center.

New Movers Program

We are starting a new movers program. We will have a list of people that have moved into the area. If you are interested in helping with this, see Bryant Perkins.

Elders	Deacons	Minister
Ken Coleman	Daniel Balch	Bryant Perkins
Bobby Rader	Danny Balch	
Don Taylor		
Robert Ward		

"Stand Firm in…Liberty"
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If God's Word is our weapon, then how do we become proficient in using it? We typically think of hitting a target as a matter of accuracy. But to do so consistently actually requires both accuracy and precision, which are slightly different things. Accuracy is how close you are to the target; precision is how close your attempts are to each other. So you can be accurate and imprecise, if you are near the center but in completely different locations, and you can be precise but inaccurate, if you miss in the same spot repeatedly. But to hit the bullseye every time, you need both.

In other words, consistent, repeatable, and correct actions are required. In handling Scripture, that means that we need to study it deeply and regularly. We likely all know that the Bible encourages us toward that often. I just want to give you one less familiar example that I find particularly instructive from **Deuteronomy 17:**

> *When you come to the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, 'I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,' you may indeed set a king over you whom the Lord your God will choose… And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel***. (Deut 17:14-15a, 18-20)**

When it came time for Israel to have a king, he was to have his own copy of the law. He was to read it regularly, so that he might learn to fear God and keep the law; that would keep him humble and faithful. If Israel's kings were to have their own personal copies of the Law to guide them, shouldn't we have—and read—our own personal copies of God's word?

That is the sort of regular practice that is required for us to demonstrate proficiency with our spiritual weapon. Would we pass a test?

Bryant Perkins