

Women of the Word

Welcome

Would I say that being a follower of Christ has made my life better? The answer is a resounding "YES!!!" A thousand, million, bajillion times better!!! Would I also say that following Jesus removes obstacles or makes life easy? Absolutely not. This seems impossible, doesn't it? Chalk it up to another mystery of God.

We must understand that God is God, and we are not. I must understand the paradox of life being better and not simultaneously in the context of knowing that God is infinitely wiser than I. And He knows all things and sees all things. I do not. I can find rest and peace in the not understandable because I am resting in Him!!!

Blessings,

Melanie Woltje

Mission Statement

FBC Women's Ministry exists to empower our ladies to use their God-given gifts in accordance with God's will.

June Guest Column - Brooke Black

What is the chief end of man?

To glorify God and to enjoy him forever. (WSC Q&A 1)

There is no age requirement or age of retirement from glorifying God. My grandma, or Beppa in Dutch as we call her, has made it her life goal to make sure all of her family knows or at least has heard the gospel. She will be turning 90 this year. There are over 100 of us, including her kids, grandkids, great-grandkids and great-great-grandkids. My grandpa, or Paka in Dutch, passed away 6 years ago. It seems that since then, Beppa knows that her time going on to eternal glory is getting closer. She has handwritten many letters sharing the gospel and expressing her love for each of us. She had those letters copied and mailed to each individual family member. She gifts each family Christian books. She assigned all 105 (and counting) of us another member of the family to pray for with a handwritten notecard. She had a picture taken of a large iron sign of the 10 Commandments in her hometown, and had it printed and mailed to each one of us. She asked us to display it in our homes. Beppa had each one of her kids, including spouses, share their plan of salvation Bible verses and including her own, had it all typed up and sent out to us. Beppa traced her own hand with her shaky writing and wrote 5 gratitudes, one on each finger. Faith, family, friends, finances and future. She wrote with it, "This is my hand to serve Jesus even at the age of 89. Even with Parkinson's. Thank you Father, Jesus, and Holy Spirit you're letting me to still be used to serve you."

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She is using every bit of her time and energy to witness to and encourage her family and their relationship with the Lord. What a blessing she is to her entire family and how great that she is striving to glorify the Lord, at the age of 90, and will be enjoying him forever.

From the toddlers memorizing verses in Sunday school and kids church, to the older ladies serving how they are able, God can use it all to his glory. I love the attitude of, "God is not done with me yet. I still have kingdom work to do!" May we all continue pressing on no matter our age, serving however the Lord leads, and being a light for Jesus in our homes, church and community.

Beppa's favorite verse. "Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13



Bible Studies

Summer Bible Study -

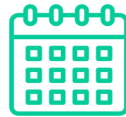
Ruth: Fields of Grace

Mondays starting June 9th at 6pm

in the Fellowship Hall

See Melanie if you haven't signed up yet!

Wednesdays at 9:30 AM - Joan Little's House



Upcoming Events

Saturday June 7th - 9AM Fellowship Hall

Summer Women's Event

Love God, Love Others

Lunch Provided

2nd Tuesday of each month - Jhett's at 11:30

****These dates are subject to change****

First Baptist Church Women's Ministry Team

Team Leader: Melanie Woltje

Brooke Black, Christi Boyden, Donna Jewell, Erin Lassey,

Caitlin Murrow, Vanessa Wisdom

Contact Us: womensministry@fbcholton.com

Original Sin

It is commonplace to hear the statement, “people are basically good.” Though it is admitted that no one is perfect, human wickedness is minimized. Yet if people are basically good, why is sin so universal?

It is often suggested that everybody sins because society has such a negative influence upon us. The problem is seen with our environment, not with our nature. This explanation for the universality of sin raises the question, how did society become corrupt in the first place? If people are born good or innocent, we would expect at least a percentage of them to remain good and sinless. We should be able to find societies that are not corrupt, where the environment has been conditioned by sinlessness rather than sinfulness. Yet the most dedicated-to-righteousness communes we can find still have provisions for dealing with the guilt of sin.

Since the fruit is universally corrupt we look for the root of the problem in the tree. Jesus indicated that a good tree does not produce corrupt fruit. The Bible clearly teaches that our original parents, Adam and Eve, fell in sin. Subsequently, every human being has been born with a sinful and corrupt nature. If the Bible didn't explicitly teach this, we would have to deduce it rationally from the bare fact of the universality of sin.

Yet the Fall is not simply a question of rational deduction. It is a point of divine revelation. It refers to what we can original sin. Original sin does not refer primarily to the first or original sin committed by Adam and Eve. Original sin refers to the result of the first sin—the corruption of the human race. Original sin refers to the fallen condition in which we are born. That the Fall occurred is clear in Scripture. The Fall was devastating. How it came to pass is open to dispute even among Reformed thinkers. The Westminster Confession explains the event simply, much in the manner that Scripture explains it:

Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, sinned, in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin, God was pleased, according to His wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to His own glory (Westminster Confession 6:1).

Thus, the Fall occurred. The results, however, reached far beyond Adam and Eve. They not only touched all mankind but decimated all mankind. We are sinners in Adam. We cannot ask, “When does the individual become a sinner?” For the truth is that human beings come into existence in a state of sinfulness. They are seen by God as sinful because of their solidarity with Adam.

The Westminster Confession again elegantly expresses the results of the Fall, particularly as it relates to human beings:

By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the parts and faculties of soul and body. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin, and corrupted nature, conveyed to all their posterity descending from them by ordinary generation. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions (WCF 6:1-4).

The last phrase is crucial. We are sinners not because we sin. Rather, we sin because we are sinners. Thus, David laments, “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Ps. 51:5).

(ESV Reformation Study Bible; Theological Notes)

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Spiritual Disciplines: Silence and Solitude

Contemporary life is characterized by busyness and noise. For some, a moment alone is hard to come by, and there is no silence to be found. When we do have a quiet moment alone, we are often quick to fill it by habitually reaching for a phone, busying ourselves with some task, or turning on music or the television as background noise. To practice silence and solitude is to intentionally withdraw for a time, uninterrupted by people, noise, or social media. The spiritual disciplines of silence and solitude are largely countercultural, but they can provide fruitful benefits for the believer.

Jesus was a man who gave fully of Himself. He served sacrificially, teaching, healing, and even dying for the sake of others. Even so, Jesus habitually withdrew to a quiet place alone. Scripture says that He prayed in desolate places, rising early in the morning or departing from crowds in order to experience solitude. If we desire to grow in Christlikeness, we must follow His example.

This discipline may sound appealing to some and dreadful to others. Either way, spending time alone in silence is more challenging than we may think.

We may find ourselves reaching to check our phones almost involuntarily with just minutes. For some, being alone with our thoughts can seem almost unbearable. We are forced to face our fears, our doubts, and our shame. Perhaps we fear that total silence and isolation will confirm our fear that we are actually alone. So, we fill the silence with music or podcasts. Anything to avoid silence and make us feel less alone.

Intentionally and regularly practicing silence and solitude provides space for busy minds to be quieted to make room for practices that contribute to spiritual growth. We are able to see our sin more clearly and confess it to God, who promises to forgive us (1 John 1:9). This discipline makes way for other spiritual disciplines like Bible study, meditation, and prayer to be practiced without distraction so that they cannot

merely be outward actions, but disciplines done from the heart.

1 Chronicles 16:11 calls us to "Seek the Lord and His strength; seek His face always." Without disciplining ourselves to practice silence and solitude, we can find ourselves forgetting to seek the Lord at all. When we retreat to a quiet place, our tendency to fill the space with distractions can be replaced by reaching out to God. When we see God in lonely places, we will find that we are not alone at all. The awareness of His presence as we draw near to Him spills over into the rest of our lives, and we will likely find ourselves calling out to Him in the busy and overwhelming moments when we seek Him in the quiet ones.

In Psalm 62, David seeks the Lord from a place of silence. He waits on the Lord in confidence that He alone is his refuge, his rock, and his salvation. When we come to God in silence, we can press into Him, confident that our hope is in Him alone and not in people, not in our work, and not in entertainment. David invites us to pour out our hearts before God.

We often seek to numb our pain through distractions, but God invites us to feel it all and lay it all before Him because He is a safe place. He is a refuge and a strong tower.

A daily discipline of silence and solitude can facilitate significant spiritual growth. Silence and solitude are a way of practicing in quiet and stillness what we should exhibit in busyness and noise. We practice being slow to speak and quick to listen (James 1:19). We practice resting in God and not our own work. We practice turning to God and seeking His face instead of looking for comfort elsewhere.

Additional reading... Psalm 62, Mark 1:35 (Growing in Grace: Knowing and Loving God Through Spiritual Disciplines)



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