

Women of the Word

Welcome

In Psalm 107:1, we are told, “Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!” We know we are to thank and praise God, but how often do we look deeper at the why? God is inherently good. He cannot be anything but good. His goodness is constant and should be a source of great comfort to us. And what exactly is steadfast love? God’s love is unwavering and eternal!! God’s goodness and steadfast love give us sound reason to be filled with hope and assurance. God’s goodness and love should be foundational in our lives as we are tossed about by circumstances. If we stand firmly on His goodness and love, we can surely understand why we are to thank God and glorify Him!

In Christ,

Melanie Woltje

Women’s Ministry Team Leader

Mission Statement

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

Gratitude - Melanie Woltje

Gratitude becomes a hot topic every year around this time. This makes sense in some ways when you consider the lives of people throughout the ages. Today, we probably don’t understand it as well, but in earlier times when surviving depended upon good harvests, it becomes easier to understand why many cultures focused on giving thanks in autumn when harvest was concluding and before snow started to fly.

Early American Christians knew exactly who to thank for bountiful harvests. They recognized the provision and providence of their good and gracious heavenly Father. This begs the question—in biblical terms, what is gratitude?

Gratitude is far, far more than just saying thank you. When the Bible tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 to, “Give *thanks* in all circumstances; for this is the *will* of God in Christ Jesus for you,” it is instructing us about the posture of our hearts. That may sound a little strange, but as Christians, we are to take special notice of God’s goodness, provision, and faithfulness. Even in difficult times, we are to gratefully worship and trust God and to walk in obedience.

In recognizing God’s goodness, we acknowledge the blessings he has bestowed on us and the lovingkindness He has poured out over us. This is where we must humbly recall that God does not owe us anything. We are fallen creatures. Our Creator could, in perfect justice, wash His hands of us because of our sin, but He does not do this. Instead, in His unfathomable mercy, God does a work in our hearts and declares us just in His sight. Praise Jesus for this!

In Colossians 3:15-17, we are told, “And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be *thankful*. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with *thankfulness* in your *hearts* to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving *thanks* to God the Father through him.”

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When we consider the state of our eternal souls without God's intervention, we should be filled to overflowing with gratitude! But our glorious Redeemer doesn't stop there. We are told throughout Scripture that God delights in His children, that He provides for us, that He knows our every need and want—and that He delights in giving us good gifts. And so, the only proper response is grateful worship.

Psalm 100:4 says, "Enter His gates with *thanksgiving*, and His courts with praise! Give thanks to Him; bless His name!" Who else should we praise? Who else should we bless? No one! God is the only one worthy to be worshiped. We can sing to Him and worship Him corporately, but how much more should we pour our hearts out to Him in prayer?

Our gratitude to God can also mingle with our needs and wants. According to Philippians 4:6-7, we are instructed, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with *thanksgiving* let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Even in areas where we are unsettled, we can have peace and assurance as we turn to God and thank Him.

We can thank God for ways He has already worked in our lives. We can thank Him for being our Rock when times are hard or scary. We can express trust as we thank Him for however He is going to work out the concerns and anxieties we have—because that is God's specialty. God takes the things we mess up, the things that are done to us, and the things that are out of our control, and He works them together for His glory and our good. If that is not a reason for a heart filled with gratitude, then I don't know what is. Praise God!



Bible Studies

Mondays at 6pm - Fellowship Hall

Pray Bible Study - started September 14th

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

(26675 P Road) - Topic Varies



Upcoming Events

Women's Fellowship Fall Event

Gather, Create and Connect

Saturday October 17th at 9am in the Fellowship Hall

Join us for a morning of devotion, creativity and fellowship. Please sign up by October 12th through the church center app so we ensure enough supplies!

Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Packing Party November 21st - Fellowship Hall

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

First Baptist Church Women's Ministry Team

Team Leader: Melanie Woltje
Christi Boyden, Danica Haverkamp, Lisa Haverkamp,
Donna Jewell, Erin Lassey, Vanessa Wisdom

Miracles

The term miracle tends to be used loosely today. But the word miracle can be used in three distinct ways. The first describes common, but nevertheless impressive, events. We speak of the birth of a baby, for instance, as a miracle. In so doing, we honor God for the intricacy and beauty of His creation. We stand in awe of the majesty of the cosmos as God works through the secondary means of natural laws, which are themselves creations of God. Here the term miracle refers to common things that point to an uncommon cause in the power of God.

A second way in which we use the term miracle is similar to the first. Often in Scripture we read of God's working through secondary means at a most opportune time or place. The star of Bethlehem, for instance, perhaps had a natural, scientific cause. The extraordinary alignment of a group of stars, or a supernova may explain its brightness. To concede this possibility, however, makes the event no less a miracle. The light radiated its brilliance at the time of Christ's birth. It pointed the magi to Bethlehem. The star is then a miracle of timing and placement. Such a miracle honors God as He weaves the tapestry of history in such a way that the event occurred in a miraculous way.

Thirdly, miracles refer to acts of God against nature. This is the more technical usage of the term. Jesus' turning water into wine or raising Lazarus from the dead are examples of God working against His laws of nature. There can be no natural explanation for these events. They serve to validate Christ as the divine Son of God.

The Bible uses several words to capture the concept contained in the single word miracle. The Bible speaks of signs, wonders, and powers. In its narrowest sense, we link miracle to the biblical word for sign. Miracles are called signs because like all signs they point beyond themselves to something more significant. God used miracles to prove or attest His agents of divine revelation (Heb. 2:3-4). God gave Moses the power to perform miracles in order to demonstrate that He had sent Moses. So also, the Father authenticated the Son through the signs that He performed.

Today there are three distinct views of miracles. The first is the skeptical view that denies that miracles can even happen. The second view argues that miracles happened in Bible times and continue to happen today. The third view is that true miracles happened in the Bible, but God ceased performing miracles once His revelation was established in Scripture. The view holds that God still works in the world in a supernatural way but no longer grants miracle-working power to human beings.

(ESV Reformation Study Bible; Theological Notes)

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The Heart of Christ: Inviting

“Follow me,” Jesus said. Matthew was undoubtedly shocked at this invitation, but he went. True astonishment came when Jesus then told Matthew that He wanted to dine at his home. Likely, he thought, Dinner? With me? But I’m a tax collector! As they sat amongst the sinners and tax collectors in Matthew’s home, Jesus showed unrelenting acceptance to the people He came to save. His inviting heart was on display for all to see, including the Pharisees who peered through Matthew’s window with disdain, wondering how a man claiming to be of such high morality could dine with the least of these.

Jesus invited the lowly into His presence—not the prideful or self-righteous. He had a meal that would only fill the humble: the main course was salvation, and abundant life followed for dessert. Attendees of this dinner party shared in Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection. Jesus bore their sin on the cross so that, through their faith in Him, they could be seated by Him for all of eternity. His goal was not a meal and good company. His goal was the completion of His mission: to bring the wayward home.

Accomplishing that goal would take everything, but He was prepared to lay His life down for His people—the Creator dying for the created. And yet, through the bruising and bleeding and burial cloths came the invitation, “Follow me.” And even now, He is still in the business of inviting. Jesus continues to desire the hearts of those who rejected Him, of those who have turned against His Word and way and have called themselves gods. He invites us into His heart. He invites us into an eternal relationship with the one holy God with whom we can both dine and fellowship through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. His invitation is always standing. His heart is always inviting. He knows our past and still chooses to invite us into His family. It is a family of believers whose names have changed from sinner to saint and whose lives are now radically changed by the most simple of invitations: “Follow me.”

Additional reading... Matthew 9:10-13, Luke 14:12-14, Luke 11:9-10, Matthew 12:48-50
(The Heart of Christ from The Daily Grace Co.)



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