

Why Vacation Bible School?

Today we close out Vacation Bible School. We thank God for many who were saved and those who rededicated their lives to Christ. The workers were giving of their time, talent and tasks. Our theme, Sea Quest was a winner. The first day of Bible School our five year old grandson came home telling us “I’m God’s treasure.” Every year the boys compete against the girls in the annual “Penny Weigh.” We give God thanks for \$2,464.70 given to send Bibles to Haiti. Our children have learned the secret of giving.

As we come to the close of another Vacation Bible School, we are thrilled for these many decades Christchurch has remained a shining light in this summer tradition. Please, workers, accept my gratitude from the bottom of my heart for all you have done this year. As we already look forward to next year’s VBS, let’s be pumped, primed and ready to do it all over again. Let’s talk about why we sponsor and participate in VBS.

1. We do this for the good it does for our community.

Vacation Bible School is often looked at by people who do not attend our church as non—threatening, neutral ground. It is one of the few times the community will participate in our evangelism. It is a golden opportunity to “carpe deum” (seize the day). The Bible says, *“I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all”*(Ecclesiastes 9:11).

We need to take advantage of each and every moment that God gives us to reach people for Christ in salvation and discipleship.

2. We do this because of the good it does for our church.

As I have observed the teens helping with puppets, the ladies helping with food preparation, the nursery workers, teachers and helpers, I am reminded of the eternal good it does for our people. VBS affords Christians to let their light shine!

Jesus said, *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”* (Matthew 5:16). Jesus also said, *“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again”* (Luke 6:38). Paul said, *“But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully”* (II Corinthians 9:6). All of us need the opportunity to give our all to the Lord Jesus in whatever capacity we can. For all the good it will do, we receive so much good ourselves. The more we give, the more we get! *“Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it”* (Proverbs 3:27). *“There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty”* (Proverbs 11:24).

3. We do this because of eternity.

In a recent survey, for every one person who said they would go to Hell when they died, 120 said they would go to Heaven when asked where they would spend eternity. Jesus said, "*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat*" (Matthew 7:13). The truth is, Jesus plainly says here that more people are going to Hell rather than Heaven. And the even sadder reality is that most people think they are fine.

The title of Robert Bork's book is a play on the last couplet of W. B. Yeat's poem The Second Coming: "And what rough beast, its hour come round at last, slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?" Bork contends that the "rough beast of decadence ... now sends us slouching towards our new home, not Bethlehem but Gomorrah." Even the secular world understands that we in America are leaning in the wrong direction, heading straight for perdition. It is more time than ever for God's people to step up and lead this lost world to the Savior and salvation. VBS is a great way to reach the young, tender hearts that have not been hardened by sin.

Billy Sunday was asked why he went all over the country to give forth the gospel. He paused during this interview and walked over to the window of the high-rise hotel in which he was staying and with tears in his eyes said, "Because they are going to Hell, they are going to Hell." I can say with Dr. Bob Jones Sr., "The greatest truth that ever changed my life was when I realized I had to live somewhere forever." Let us follow the example for Jesus who said, "*I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work*" (John 9:4).

4. We do this for the glory of God.

"*Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God*" (I Corinthians 10:31). What can give more glory to God than introducing children to Jesus? For our Lord said, "*...Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven*" (Matthew 19:14).

So as we close our Sea Quest adventure of VBS, we appropriately apply the promise of our Lord: "*And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men*" (Mark 1:17).

Have a great summer! I love you all!

-Pastor Pope-