

Notes from sermon delivered by Rev. Brian Gregory

SLINGS, ARROWS, CROSS, GOSPEL
1 CORINTHIANS 1:18 - 25

The title is taken from Shakespeare’s play “Hamlet”, Act 3, scene 1. Hamlet contemplates the pain and unfairness of life “...to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune...”. Slings hit and kill or maim. Arrows penetrate the flesh causing unbearable pain.

For 3 1/2 years Bryan’s church has suffered from things that happened: Covid, murder of George Floyd, contentious elections, staff turnover, legal case against an elder, people died, and a friend and elder was struck by a bus. Things happened again and again, slings and arrows.

Vs. 18. “For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing but to us who are being saved it is the power of God”.

All who have turned from God have fallen short and deserve judgment. None avoid guilt and are justly condemned. Yet, God loves us. He allowed Jesus to be put to death to absorb the slings and arrows of this world. Faith in Him, through His death on the cross reconciles us back to Him. God saves us. The mortal wounds of Jesus saves us.

This is foolish to the world. Things of the world are done by the great and powerful. Saved by great speech, money, armies, political leverage. It is ludicrous to the world that salvation should come from painful and mortal wounds. The cross was for the killing of the despised and criminals. They were looking for a Messiah to establish God’s Kingdom, spiritual endowment, charismatic. It was ludicrous - crucifixion. Foolish. To us it is the very power of God. The theologian N. T. Wright was quoted. “How did one man’s bleeding body change everything in the Universe?” Good? How? Why? We do know. It is the very power of God. We have experienced the life transforming power: love, joy, peace, hope, freedom.

Vs. 19. Quoting Isaiah 29:14. “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent. I will frustrate”. Bryan told the story of Hezekiah, King of Judah. Assyrians were invading Judah; Jerusalem was soon to be taken. Hezekiah was calling for common sense actions. Isaiah instructed them to do nothing. To watch God save you. You cannot save yourselves. Watch Him save you. Watching in Jerusalem, the Assyrians turned on themselves. Jerusalem was saved.

That is how God saves people. The wisdom of the world is decreased to foolishness.

Vs. 21-22. The Jews needed authenticity displayed. The Greeks, wisdom, human reason. Christ is not human power or wisdom. It is astonishing the way God saved us. By wounds!

Vs. 23-25. The foolishness of God soars above man. The strength of God, above man’s strength.

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WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR US?

1. Lean into the gospel. It is most needed. It is the power of God, foolishness to the rest of the world. The one and only thing: the power of God, the gospel.

Bryan gave an example of his experience in campus ministry. Coca-Cola was located in a very large building nearby. The feeling was "Coke can do it better". They have the means to attract people including money and people. But we came to realize that we have the gospel! Brother and sisters, that is what it is all about. The power of God. Lean into it. Make it your life blood.

2. Lean into one another. When we are suffering the slings and arrows, there is a tendency to turn against one another. Bryan shared a podcast in which the listeners were cautioned about approaching a wounded animal. It will lash out even if they should know you love them. Hurt people hurt people, as a result of the slings and arrows. Divisions such as pastor alignment, worship style cause fault lines to develop.

Paul starts with the gospel, the power of God. It will heal divisions. Die to selves. Love to other. Forbear. Serve. Repent to one another.

Bryan shared the advice given to a seminary student in response to the student's question. "How do we prevent our kids from hating the church, turning from God?" The professor answered, "You can't do anything but repent to and in front of the kids. The best church is where people repent to and in front of each other.

3. Lean into mission - observation. During a crisis and/or transition people tend to turn inwards - wounds, issues, decisions consume us. This is the worst thing to do.

Keep living as salt and light, the herald of good news. St. Joseph, Buchanan County needs Brookdale. Pull hard to resist turning inwards. Don't lose the mission. The gospel is the power of God. You have the gospel, and the gospel is enough.

Bryan chose Romans 8 as his text for a particularly difficult funeral. A young woman had died unexpectedly. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution...?" No, ...we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." (Vs. 35,37). Our only hope is that the gospel is true.

An elder, speaking with Bryan after the funeral commented to Bryan that it was good that, at such a painful time, Bryan brought the audience back to the gospel. Bryan said he answered, from his heart to his mouth, "Well that's all we have but it is enough."

You have the gospel - the power of God - it is enough. Thank you that you have chosen not to remain silent. -Notes taken by Elizabeth Dean

Rev. Brian Gregory's Visit...

A bountiful pot luck meal filled the table for the many brothers and sisters who gathered after worship with Bryan June 11. It was a joyful reunion with Bryan and the many congregants who had had the pleasure of experiencing the leadership of Bryan at BROOKDALE.



Our youngest participant was Lola



Brandon's interview of Bryan was fun



The Greatest of These is Love

Elizabeth Dean

This is written in follow up to last month's article entitled, "The Fruit of the Spirit: The Case for Love." In it we explored love's virtues, (components, elements, ingredients, attributes, as found in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and the correlation with Paul's description of the fruit of the Spirit. We saw further the importance of love in the following verses: "God is Love" (John 14:16) Jesus said that the most important commandments is "to love the Lord your God...the second ...your neighbor." (Mark 12:33) 2. Jesus told His disciples" ...Love on another..." John 13:34. 3. Paul said" ...But the greatest of these is love."

If love is the greatest, how do we as Christians demonstrate this love, become characterized by the fruit of the Spirit? How does this transformation take place? Answer, discipleship.

Discipleship is the process by which disciples grow in the Lord Jesus Christ and are equipped by the Holy Spirit . . . growth in godly character is dependent on the Holy Spirit's presence and power and a consistent habitual practice of spiritual disciplines.

How does the disciple activate the power of the Holy Spirit? We know the disciple can quench and grieve the Spirit. As Paul instructed the Ephesians (5:18) ". . . let the Holy Spirit fill and control you."

Billy Graham, in his book, *The Holy Spirit*, states, "All Christians are committed to be filled with the Spirit. Anything short of a Spirit-filled life is less than God's plan for each believer. To be Spirit-filled means to be controlled or dominated by the Spirit's presence and power. Rev. Graham says that this is the heart of the matter, learning what it means to be filled with the Spirit.

How is a disciple filled with the Spirit? He summarizes the New Testament teachings on how to be filled with the Holy Spirit in three terms: understanding, submission, and walking in faith.

1. Understanding
 - A. Accept by faith the fact that the Spirit of God lives within you if you belong to Christ.
 - B. Understand that God commands us to be filled with the Spirit.
 - C. Before we can be filled with the Holy Spirit, we must deal honestly and completely with every known sin in our lives including ". . . the deepest sin of all - our failure to let Christ rule our lives."
2. Submission
 - A. Confession of sin and repentance
 - B. Yielding ourselves to God's will (Romans 6).
3. Faith
 - A. Know that filling of the Spirit is not a matter of feeling but faith.
 - B. It does not mean we are perfect. We may be blameless in our desire to serve Christ, but that does not make us without fault.
 - C. The process of filling includes seeking God daily through a consistent, habitual practice of the spiritual disciplines such as Bible study, prayer, fasting, meditation, worship, study.

In his book, *Celebration of Discipline*, Richard Foster explains our need for the Holy Spirit this way. "Willpower will never succeed in dealing with the deeply engrained habits of sin . . . When we despair of gaining inner transformation through human powers of will and determination, we are open to a wonderful realization: inner righteousness is a gift from God to be graciously received."

We are dependent on the Holy Spirit's presence and power. We are called to live a spirit-filled life. That is we are called to discipleship, love God and our neighbor.

Sources

Billy Graham, [The Holy Spirit: Activating God's Power in Your Life](#)

Richard J. Foster, [Celebration of Discipline](#)



Fall Women's Retreat

Brookdale Presbyterian—Women 2 Women

Great Adventure of Experiencing the Holy Spirit

Guest retreat presents: Julie Wiemann

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.” Romans 8:14

Date: September 8 – 10, 2023 Friday evening thru Sunday worship

Location: Heartland Retreat Center (Parkville) - Pete’s cabin 16965 NW Highway 45, Parkville, MO 64152

Cost: \$120 (2 nights lodging & meal) Commuter cost: \$60 (meals) Scholarships are available for those that need it, please indicate on registration form. \$25 deposit due at time of registration. Full payment is due by August 25th . Meals: Friday night, Saturday breakfast, snack through day, Saturday evening meal, Sunday breakfast are provided.

General information: Pete’s cabin at the Heartland Center has Approx. 6/7 bunk style sleeping rooms, each room has a

bath to share. There will be 2-3 teaching sessions, breakout/journaling/ reflection time, worship, time for activities, meals and great Brookdale style fellowshipping. Don’t miss out on this adventure and be sure to invite a friend. Contact Julie Schmitt, 816-244-4041 if you have questions. Complete registration page and turn in with your down payment by August 6th.

SALT

The Senior Adult Leadership Team took 10 seniors to the Patee House. Where they saw many things from St. Joseph’s past. It was a very interesting tour. They were going to picnic after but by majority rule they returned to the church and ate their lunches. They all had a fun time talking without flies, bugs or summer heat.



Brookdale has a new resident moving in the Pivotal Point Apartment. Kaneshia Johnson will be moving in next Thursday, 7/6/2023. Her two daughters (9yo, 15yo) are currently living with their grandma in Texas but will be moving in once Kaneshia starts the program. Please be in prayer for her family.

July Birthdays

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1- Jenny Hudgens, Kaden Miller | 21- Susie Thornton, Blake Weddle |
| 3- Ron Bachman, Marianne Field | 22- Renee Lawhon |
| 4- Will Blazer, Amelia Funk | 25- Sam Hudgens |
| 10- Andy Burnham | 26- Rosalie Handle |
| 11- Maci Burton | 27- Barry Birr, Kris Larson |
| 12- Austin Miller | 28- Don Gladhart, Catherine Hague |
| 16- Joshua Peek | 30- Pam Nelson |
| 17- Matt Austin | 31- Mack Furlong |
| 18- Bill Scroggins | August |
| 19- Brett Bachman, Jeff Bachman,
Brecklynn Burnham | 1- Mark Sheperd |
| | 3- Nadienne Hoffman |
| | 4- Caitlyn Butler |

Session Summary-June 2023

Session voted to continue to search for a transitional pastor, but agreed that if we have no viable candidates by August 31st to begin the search for a senior pastor.

Revisions to the Student Ministries Center Rental Agreement and policies were reviewed. The fee for church members will be reduced to \$20 per hour and increased to \$30 per hour for non-members.

We will celebrate communion on Sunday, July 2, 2023, with guest speaker Drew Henderson officiating.

This fall there will be an adult Sunday school class on 2 Corinthians and another on Judges and Ruth.

Vernalee Carter has resigned from the personnel committee. We thank her for her faithful service.

Children's Ministry Director reported on summer activities planned for the youth and children including pool parties and the Going Local mission trip scheduled for August 1-4. Consideration is being made to make some of the projects and events open to the whole church. She also reported that the summer interns are doing a fantastic job.

Men's Ministry will have a camping/hiking trip at Indian Cave State Park in Nebraska on October 6-8, 2023.

Elder Ann Weston reported on the General Assembly meeting.

Listening groups will be forming as a result of the PIR Leadership Retreat held earlier this year.

Next Scheduled Session Meeting is July 18, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2 Communion 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	3 10:00am Women's Bible Study	4 Happy Independence Day	5 6:30 Men's Prayer Breakfast 1:30 SALT 5:30 Dance Fit 6:00 Meal/The Chosen	6 1:30-4 Pool Party/Bible Study 3-6 grade	7 6:30 Mens Bible Study 8:00 4-6th Grade Day- trip to Chillicothe 2:00 Book Club at Doris Wyckoff's	1 10:00 Dance Fit
9 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	10 10:00am Women's Bible Study 11:00am Mom. Me. My Friends Pool Party 5:15 Finance	11 5:30 Dance Fit 6:00 Trustees 7:00 Square Dance	12 6:30 Men's Prayer Breakfast 9:00-Noon WOW Wednes- days K-6 at SMC 11:00 Daytimers Meet in Fellowship Hall Bring a lunch 5:30 Dance Fit 6:00 Meal/The Chosen	13 Haven House Food Kitchen 1:30-4 Pool Party/Bible Study 3-6 grade	14 6:30 Men's Bible Study	15 10:00 Dance Fit
16 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	17 10:00am Women's Bible Study	18 5:30 Dance Fit 6:30 Session 7:00 Square Dance	19 6:30 Men's Prayer Breakfast 9:00-Noon WOW Wednes- days K-6 at SMC 5:30 Dance Fit 7:00 Prayer Night	20 1:30-4 Pool Party/Bible Study 3-6 grade	21 6:30 Men's Bible study	22 10:00 Dance Fit
23 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	24 10:00am Women's Bible Study	25 5:30 Dance Fit 7:00 Square Dance	26 6:30 Men's Prayer Breakfast 9:00-Noon WOW Wednes- days K-6 at SMC 11:00 Daytimers at Senior Center 5:30 Dance Fit 6:00 Meal/The Chosen	27 1:30-4 Pool Party/Bible Study 3-6 grade	28 6:30 Men's Bible study	29 10:00 Dance Fit
30 9:15 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	31 10:00am Women's Bible Study 11:00am Mom. Me. My Friends Pool Party					



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*Brookdale Church is called to
bring the beauty of the Gospel
to the brokenness of life.*



On June 17th this happy group filled 2 vehicles to the brim then took off for South Dakota at precisely 8:31 am! The Youth Mission Trip was on there way.