

UNTIL CHRIST IS ALL

JULY - AUGUST 2017

# THE CORNERSTONEPIQUA CONNECTION

Welcome to the newsletter of CornerstonePiqua. This periodical is meant to inform you of upcoming events in our church community, to discuss community matters, and to address issues relevant to the culture. Each letter includes a personal letter from Pastor Jamie, an article or two on theological matters, as well as an occasional article from a special guest. These newsletters are also available in digital form online at [CornerstonePiqua.org](http://CornerstonePiqua.org).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

:: **FELLOWSHIP & FIREWORKS** | July 4th, 7-11p  
| @CornerstonePiqua & Lock 9 Park

:: **CORNERSTONEKIDS YOUTH CAMP** | July 6-8  
| @Lighthouse Camp, St. Mary's Ohio

:: **ELDER-LED PRAYER** | July 30th & August  
27th, 6p | @CornerstonePiqua

:: **HOPE OVER HEROIN** | August 11-12th |  
@Mote Park

:: **BONFIRE** | July 29th & August 26th | 6p



CornerstonePiqua exists to proclaim the excellencies of Jesus Christ through gospel-centered preaching, Christ-exalting worship, Christ-forming discipleship, and Christlike service in Piqua, Miami County, and the world until Christ is all and in all.

## From Pastor Jamie

**“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”** (2Timothy 3:16-17)

Wiley Brooks is a breatharian. He teaches that enlightened humans can survive without food, replacing it with sun-rays and the passive inhalation of cosmic micro-dust. Wiley Brooks is also a salesman. He sells bottles of water for \$10,000 and runs an immortality workshop with a \$1,000,000 entrance fee. Brooks allows himself exceptions to the air-only diet. A quarter-pounder with cheese and a diet coke is his favorite (the only non-radioactive foodstuffs).

Jesus said **“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”** (Mt. 4:4) Despite what breatharians claim, all humans must

eat food to live. Not only must we eat food, we must various types of food. We can't survive on just bread, or just meat, or just candy...or even just coffee (*verified!*). We can't survive on only vitamins, either. God made us to require a balanced diet of fruits and vegetables and grains and proteins.

In the same way, Christians must have a balanced diet of God's word to survive spiritually. In the passage above, Jesus is not talking about a meal plan, He is talking about what is necessary for spiritual life—every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God: in other words, the Bible. Every word of the Bible. I take that to mean, lots of Bible. By lots of the Bible, I mean all of it. Every word of it.

Some Christians read the Bible piecemeal. They read fragments they find relevant to their present situation. When feeling sad, they look for a verse or two to make them happy.

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When struggling with anger, they search for a passage on peace. When hoping for a promotion, they forage for verses about God's favor. But the Bible is not meant to be read piecemeal; it's meant to be read as a whole.

The Bible is a collection of books that is one book. It tells one big story. Individual sections can be taken as individual units and understood to some extent, but the truest beauty of a passage is realized when its particular truth is set within the grand scope of God's redemptive work throughout the whole Bible. As one piece of a puzzle only makes sense where it fits into the whole puzzle, one particular verse makes the most sense when it is seen in its surrounding context [chapter, book, theme, author, etc.].

### **Read Big; Study Little**

I recommend reading big long sections of Scripture, chapters at a time. This is the best way to catch an author's intent. Reading entire sections of the Bible keep verses in context. Without context, meaning is easily misconstrued.

For example, Philippians 4:13 is a great verse and frequently cited, often for the wrong reason. **"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."** Meaning: if you want to do something hard, like run a marathon or deadlift 300 pounds, you can do it because Jesus will strengthen you. However, in the preceding verses Paul writes, **"...I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need."** (v11b-12) The meaning of 4:13 is not strength to do something great, but strength to be content amidst any and all hardships. The promise of Philippians 4:13 shines so much brighter when it is kept in the context the Holy Spirit placed it.

Read long sections of scripture and look for overarching themes. Listen for repeated phrases and words. Watch concepts develop. Ask questions like, 'Why is this here? Why now? How do the preceding paragraphs build up to this? How do they flow out of this passage?'. These are elements of scripture which emerge only when you read big.

And when you study the Bible, study little. By study little I mean study small sections at a time: verse by verse, phrase by phrase, word by word. A book like Romans will not give up its greatest glory until its major themes are broken down into their constituent parts.

When you study the Bible, ask the Holy Spirit to help you really see what is there. Like Sherlock Holmes on the scene of a crime, look at every detail. Ponder the meaning of words. Meditate on phrasing. Ask questions like, 'Why write it/say it like this?' *What does this tell me about God? How does this reveal how much I am not like God?* When you've got something, keep looking. There is so much more. The wonders of God's word are inexhaustible.

All this takes work. It takes time. Everything worthwhile does.

Sadly, many of us are accustomed to reading snippets, 140 characters or less, or as much as can fit into a Facebook post. God's word need to be examined, thought through, worked-on, and applied to be understood. I recommend setting aside an hour or so every day to read and study and meditate. If you don't have an hour, take a half-hour. I promise, it is well worth the time and effort.

Breatharians are wrong. Humans can't live on water and star dust. And Christians can't live on tiny piecemeal pick-me-ups in the Bible. The nutrition you need for fruitfulness, and Christian flourishing is found in a lifetime diet of reading big sections and studying small sections of Scripture every day.

Eat well, friends. ❖

## **JESUS-MADE SCIENCE**

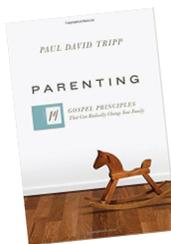
**CREATION CREATES WORSHIP**

Studying creation creates worship of the Creator. Consider bacteria. Bacteria are one-celled microorganisms found everywhere on earth. God didn't give them brains, but He did give them an immune system and a memory.

When a bacteria defeats a virus, it absorbs a portion of that virus' DNA into its own, creating a log book of that particular virus. This enables the bacteria to identify that virus in the future. Think of it like a mugshot. It takes a picture of the virus and stores it as a mugshot for future reference.

The next time that bacteria (or it's offspring) encounter that virus, it releases a protein that wraps around the virus' invader DNA and neutralizes the attack.

Isn't God amazing! Creation creates worship.



### **BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS**

"One book is enough, but a thousand is not too many."  
- Martin Luther

#### *Parenting: 14 Gospel Principles That Can Radically Change Your Family*

Paul David Tripp | Crossway, 2016 | 224pp

What does the gospel have to do with parenting? Everything. In his latest book, Paul Tripp proves some helpful ways Christian parents can keep the gospel central in parenting.

I have read a handful of parenting books, this is one of the best. It is accessible and helpful (albeit redundant at times). Tripp reminds us that parenting is primarily about discipleship, leading sinful little people to cherish Jesus. A child's primary issue is not dishonoring their parents, but dishonoring their God.

For me, most helpful was Tripp's admonishments of grace in parenting. Many parents (myself included) expect the law to accomplish what only grace can do. Laws cannot change a heart, but God's grace does. The chapter on the law was worth the price of the whole book.

# THE GREAT PARENTAL FREAKOUT

By Kevin DeYoung

How can parenting be this hard? It's exhausting. It's all consuming. It's the worst job you've ever loved having. Either kids have gotten much more demanding over the years, or parents have decided to make their lives more difficult than they have to be. Most parents I know—including the two that live in my house—are often bothered, usually stressed, and always tired.

No doubt, some of this is unavoidable. From running them around town, to helping with homework, to breaking up fights, to cleaning up puke, to mending broken hearts, raising kids is a lot of work.

But if we are going to work hard, let's make sure we are working hard at the right things. The average Christian parent in the West is probably more involved in the day to day demands of parenting than almost any other parents in the history of the world. And yet, these same parents are likely more worried about being terrible parents than were their parents or grandparents, let alone their great or great-great-grandparents.

We are all about to freak out. And it may not be over any of the right things.

I seldom feel like a really good parent. I love my wife and love my kids deeply, but being a husband has always seemed pretty straightforward (thanks to my wife, no doubt), while I've always felt much more inadequate as a parent. There are dozens of things I wish I did better. Not many, however, are worth fretting and fussing.

Here are four things parents should stop freaking out about:

1. **Food.** I know you read an article once about how bubble gum stays in the small intestines for 73 years and that kids these days aren't getting enough flax in their diet, but it will be okay. Be sensible. Make them try new things. Keep the complaining to a minimum. Put some apples or carrots in the lunch box. But after that, let's take a deep breath and relax. So what if McDonald's food looks the same after sitting on the counter for three years. Don't leave it on the counter for three years! Everyone knows you are supposed to eat the fries while they're hot.
2. **Sleep Methods.** Kids need sleep, probably more than they are getting. But don't freak out about how you train your little ones to sleep. Some methods will tax the parents more than others. Find one that works for you. Don't let your toddler run your life. Eventually they go to sleep. Have you ever met a teenager who can't sleep in in the morning because his parents never taught him well as a 9-month-old?
3. **Clean Rooms.** I hate messes. I keep my desk pretty tidy. As soon as I get to my hotel room, I unpack my suitcase, hang up all the fancy clothes, and place everything else neatly into drawers. I like order. I want my kids to clean their rooms. Mom (or Dad) shouldn't have to do everything for them. But in the grand scheme of things, their toddler or

teenage pigpen isn't going to make or break them as a follower of Christ. World War III should not be fought over clothes on the floor.

4. **Measuring Up.** It looks like every other family is excelling while yours is failing. And you know what? It looks like that to those excelling families too. Their kids are so polite. Theirs are always reading. Theirs can do any sport they try. Theirs can play the piano. Theirs are so friendly. Theirs are so respectful. Theirs are so smart. Let's be honest: some kids do play their musical instrument better. Some are more athletic. Some are more spiritual. But wishing your kid was another kid is a pretty bad way to love your kid. In reality, the proud parents almost always have less to be proud of than they think, and the woe-is-us parents doth protest too much.

So does that mean parenting is a laissez-faire experiment in letting children do whatever they want? Of course, not. There are things every Christian parent should work hard to have in place. They just don't have to do with how much ice cream the kids eat and whether you can breastfeed on roller skates. Work hard for the things that matter.

Things like going to church every Sunday, no matter if its the Super Bowl or if soccer practice starts at 10 a.m. The best way to raise kids who put church first is to be a parent who puts church first.

And discipline. As in, have some. You are bound to be stricter than some of your friends and looser than others. You'll be amazed by the family that allows seven minutes of screen time every month and by the family who has the kids in bed by 8 p.m. sharp every night. We will make different rules. But have rules and enforce them. Kids need boundaries

(adults too, come to think of it).

Work at making true spirituality a part of the home. This may mean a wonderful discipline of family worship around the table or stories at bed time or long walks every night. The important part is that our kids see that following Jesus is not just for Sundays.

In all and through all and surrounding all of this, let your home be a place of fun and laughter. Talk to your kids. Tease them. Let them tease you. Show them how much you love your spouse. Be affectionate. Play games. Wrestle on the ground. Kiss their owies. Stay up late when the teenager is finally ready to open up. What matters most are the things the kids think about least--the things that are such a regular part of their lives that their whole world is being shaped by them whether they realize it or not. If the home feels safe, if mom and dad love each other, if your children trust you, if there is some basic semblance of routine and some palpable, even if not totally explainable, sense that these weird people actually like each other, then that's a whole lot to be thankful for.

The world doesn't depend on you being perfect. And neither do your kids. So do what you can, be grateful for what you have, and pray like crazy.

*[Article originally appeared on The Gospel Coalition blog site, April 5, 2016]*

## THEOLOGY MATTERS:

**PROPIATION** [*pruh-pish-ee-ey-shuh n*] : Propitiation means the turning away of wrath by an offering. In Christianity, it means placating or satisfying the wrath of God on sin through the atoning sacrifice of Christ. The word carries the idea of appeasement, or satisfaction, specifically toward God. Propitiation is a two-part act that involves appeasing the wrath of an offended person and being reconciled to them. 1John 4:10, **"In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."** On the cross, Jesus became our substitute, assuming our obligations to endure God's wrath for our sin. He was punished in our place. We are forgiven by placing our trust in His atonement, His death, His propitiation. Paul wrote we are **"justified by [God's] grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith."** Propitiation is an important and precious doctrine.

# CHRIST & CULTURE

## ON 'EDITING' OUT SUFFERING

If you met a hungry person, should you feed them? If you could rescue a person from a house fire, should you? If you could program a baby's DNA to be immune to heart defects, should you do it?

In the "Jesus-Made Science" article on page 2, you learned that bacteria have the ability to store information. They take mugshots of their enemies for future reference. They do this by cutting out a portion of the virus DNA and splicing it into their own, like copy and paste on your computer. The process is called CRISPR which stands for Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats.

Using a particular form of CRISPR, scientists have developed a way to cut and paste DNA segments into the cells of living organisms. Like a film editor on a movie, sections of DNA can be cut out and new DNA spliced in. Precise modifications of identified DNA can be made simply, cheaply, and without harm to the organism. This is known as gene editing.

Gene editing could be used to identify genes that cause disease and replace them with 'good' DNA. CRISPR could program a person's immune system to identify genetic-based diseases and inoculate them. It could be used to cure cystic fibrosis, HIV, even cancer. Theoretically, embryonic genes could be programmed for height, eye-color, IQ, athletic ability, and more. The implications are vast.

What about the ethics of gene editing? What should Christians think about CRISPR being used to prevent disease and fix genetic mutations? Could genetic modification lead to "designer babies"? If we could prevent suffering through genetic manipulation, should we? Is this technology just another form of modern medicine like antibiotics, or is CRISPR something else?

The ethical implications are complex. Humans are created in the image of God. God is the one Who has woven our DNA together in our mothers womb (Ps. 139:13). If we turn to bio-modeling babies, we are turning children from God's precious gifts into commodities of our own making. The modification of human genomes for personal preference is unethical. I think most would agree. But where the matter becomes less clear is with regard to disease prevention.

Imagine sitting in the office of your OBGYN and learning your unborn child has Down Syndrome. If the technology existed to "cure" your child, should you? Is his/her disorder a condition that should be treated like RSV or Strep Throat? Or are genetic "defects" God's will for His people to depend on Him while living in a sin-wrecked, fallen world?

Christians are not promised a life devoid of hardship and suffering. The Bible teaches that God uses suffering (like disease and birth defects) to produce Christ-centered, God-glorifying fruit in our lives. For example 2Corinthians 1:8-9, "**We were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.**" Additionally, suffering prepares us to minister to others. God "**comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.**" (2Cor. 1:4) God uses suffering to bring us eternal rewards, "**This light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.**" (2Cor. 4:7; cf. Rom. 8:28) These are just a few of the many reasons God allows His people to suffer.

So is it sinful to seek relief from God-ordained suffering? That depends on the reason. Paul instructed Timothy to use a little wine to all his stomach problems (1Tim. 5:23). Medicine is not wrong, taking antibiotics is not wrong, but it can be. If the reason you seek medication is to disconnect from life's pain for your own sake, it may be sinful. But, if you seek relief from a headache or heart-disease or cancer is so you can serve the Lord more faithfully, serve your family effectively, and serve your church fruitfully, then the reasons are not sinful. They are God-glorifying and good.

CRISPR is not wrong, but the implications ought to be thought through carefully.

# BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

## JULY

## AUGUST

### BIRTHDAYS

2 :: Connie Crowell  
14 :: Bri McSwain  
15 :: Mary Breth  
:: Brennan McSwain  
:: Lucas Nitschke  
17 :: Sean Gradel  
28 :: Joe Powers  
31 :: Caroll Crowell

### ANNIVERSARIES

5 :: Joe & Jessica Powers  
8 :: Jamie & Sara Wellman  
16 :: Michael & Brooke Deeren  
20 :: Todd & Claudine Lehmann

### BIRTHDAYS

12 :: Chloe McSwain  
15 :: Hadleigh Deeren  
24 :: Dan Larger  
28 :: Yvonne Arling  
29 :: Kim Watkins

### ANNIVERSARIES

17 :: Michael & Ashley Gray