#### April 30, 2023

# Ferguson Avenue Baptist Church

10050 Ferguson Avenue Savannah, Georgia 31406

Where Christ Is Exalted and the Fellowship Is Exciting

# **Announcements**

#### **Evening Worship**

Evening Worship begins at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall tonight! Bring your prayer needs and your readiness to sing! Also during this service, a representative from the Gideons will give a short presentation. Hope to see you here!

#### Joy Class

The ladies will meet on Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. Bring your handicrafts (or not!) and join them for good fellowship.

## Wednesday Night

Sign up for this Wednesday's **Pork Chop** meal in the hall. Adventure Club starts in the gym at 6:20 p.m. Youth begins at 6:30. Adult Bible Study begins at 6:45.

#### Senior Saints' Lunch trip & Low Country Boil

The Senior Saints will be visiting Alex and Nicole Morris' farm on Tuesday, **May 16**, and having lunch at a local restaurant. Meet at the church at 9:45 a.m. They will also have a Low Country Boil at the Fowlers' on **May 19**, at 6:00 p.m. Save the dates! More info and signup sheets to come!

## Home Fellowships!

We plan to have Home Fellowships the evening of **May 28**. Let Dawn know if you would like to host a group. We need at least 4 homes. These are great times of fun and fellowship!

#### Secret Church

Shawn Champion has a few books left over from Secret Church if anyone would like one. This year it was a really good expositional study on Jonah as well as a time to pray for Iran. He has printed instructions on how to access the link, which is accessible until May 31st, and placed them inside each book. Books are on the platform.

#### Graduate Info Needed!

If you are graduating from High School or College, please send your name, a picture, your school and a short summation of your future plans to dawn@fabchurch.com. We will recognize you during the Evening Worship time on **June 11**, at 7:00 p.m. the service will be followed by an After Church Fellowship.

#### **FABC Elders**

Bob Dimmitt Senior Pastor 912-398-4363 bob@fabchurch.com Tom Keller
Assoc. Pastor/Senior Adults
912-308-3767
tom@fabchurch.com

Church Phone: 912-355-0949 office@fabchurch.com www.fabchurch.com

## Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship Galatians 6:14 Pew Bible p. 975

## Hymn, bulletin p. 4 "Rock of Ages"

Prayer of General Confession **Bob Dimmitt** John 3:16-18 Pew Bible pp. 888

## Hymn, bulletin p. 5 "Come, Thou Fount"

Scripture Reading

Psalm 78:59-72 Glen Martin Pew Bible p. 490

# Hymn, bulletin pp. 6-7

"Once for All"

Message **Bob Dimmitt** What to Do While Waiting Lamentations #8 Lamentations 3:40-51, Pew Bible pp. 688-689

# Hymn, bulletin pp. 8-9

"Benediction"

## A.M. Notes

# What To Do While Waiting Lamentations #8 Lamentations 3:40-51

Jer	emiah counseled self-examination, repentance, and returning to the LORD.
Sev	en principles:
1)	Affliction should be
2)	Affliction is only
3)	God does not
4)	If affliction comes because
5)	Affliction is always in
6)	Affliction ultimately came
7)	Affliction should accomplish the
No	where in Lamentations, and perhaps in the entire Bible, is God's

Lam 3:52-57

**Verse 57** is the first and only time in Lamentations that God speaks to those suffering and gives evidence of hearing and answering their prayers.

Lam 3:58-66

# Rock of Ages

Augustus Montague Toplady

**Thomas Hastings** 



**Public Domain** 

# Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing





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# Benediction, p. 2



# Articles

# The Secret Benefit of Depression: Depression can be the gift of God if it drives you to Him.

by Pastor Rob Golding

I have noticed a world of difference between visiting the depressed and visiting the physically sick. If we evaluate these types of sicknesses—mental and physical—it is easy to see that one type lends itself to an openness to the Lord. Of course, as Lewis says, "God shouts to us in our pains." We hear God, like Job, when we physically suffer. But mental pain (that is, depression) can make us alert to God in a heightened way.

If you have cancer, you will think about death. You will worry. You will ask your pastor to pray. You will turn to doctors and hope that they can fix you. Cancer can be a gift, which is why John Piper says, "Don't Waste Your Cancer."

But when you are depressed, and the depression does not lift, you are backed into the corner of hell. Behind you are the flames, and no doctor extends a hand to help. There are none to pull you from the flames but Christ.

Your conscience is burdened with the feeling that you are to blame for your predicament. The guilt weighs upon you like a thousand-pound weight. Every thought is another burden added to the weight, increasing the pain until it becomes unbearable.

This pain vents itself in cries of desperation, "God, please help me!" When He does not answer, the weight pushes you through the floor.

People with cancer know nothing of this desperation. People with cancer want to live, but people with depression want to die.

We wonder how Paul was able to say, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me." We marvel at the humility of John: "He must increase, and I must decrease." The Psalmist outshines our spirituality on its best day when he says, "There is nothing on earth I desire besides You." How are these people able to say such glitteringly spiritual things?

They walked through the valley of the shadow of death. They have experienced life without God. Like the title of Martin Lloyd Jones's book, they have tasted *Spiritual Depression*.

It is staggering to see how many people are depressed today. Someone recently told me that, on average, Americans are more suicidal than those interned at the Nazi concentration camps. Could this be a grace, a gift of God?

I just heard a pastor say that revival always occurs when a society loses the most hope. When people look around and say to one another, "There is no hope left for us!" The eagles of Christ's mercy swoop down with healing in their wings.

When we are depressed, we sprint toward the medicine cabinet. When we do not feel well, we turn to the bottle. When anxiety strikes, we open the refrigerator. Like a doctor striking our knee, we have instant responses to depression—and they are always to *mask* it.

But what if our depression is actually preparation? What if the Lord is preparing our hearts to be humble and meek, like His? What if this collective cultural malaise is really just the tremor of God's work of redemption which will shake the earth?

Does He not deserve our desperation? Wicked creatures we are; Holy, Holy, Holy is He! Shouldn't we grovel at His feet in self-loathing despair? Shouldn't we shout, "Wicked men that we are! Who will save us from these bodies of death!?"

Jesus said it is better to lose a limb and enter heaven without it than to be cast into hell whole. If that is true, then it is better to be depressed and crying out to God than healthy and cruising to destruction.

Look at how many people around you are happy—nice cars, a nice house, a pretty little family, nice jobs, fun vacations, nice clothes, entertained and fed. But if that is you and you do not have Christ, what a terrible life! This kind of Christless existence is like sitting in a Bentley, listening to your favorite song, eating your favorite food, and driving toward a cliff. How irrational to be happy in such a state!

Yet, how many people around us are in exactly this position? How much better it would be to be carless, foodless, songless, yet hopeful in Christ! **Depression can be the gift of God if it drives you to Him.** "*It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting*" (Ecc 7:2).

If you are depressed, God loves you. He is guiding you. He is showing you life outside of Him so that you will run to Him, where there at pleasures forevermore. Do not mask this grace but embrace it. Allow the weight of your depression to dash you upon the Rock of Ages. Press into Christ. Let the sadness press you toward Him. Abandon everything but hope in Jesus. Run into His arms because there is nothing good anywhere else. You have been given clarity that very few people have. You understand that there is nothing good anywhere without God. Everything is death and decay without Him. Sports, entertainment, career, and even family have lost their luster because you see what they are without Him. All these things are but filthy rags compared to Christ. They cannot save you. You are a rock falling into a bottomless pit, and everything but Christ is a spider's web. Your career, family, hobbies, and health can do nothing to even slow your descent, let alone stop it. But His hands are strong. His love is deep. Cast yourself upon Him. You must let go of everything else to do this, and your depression is the hand of God tearing all else from you. This causes great pain, and some cannot bear it. But those that open their hands and release their lives find them in Christ. Depression brings about desperation, and God loves those who are desperate for Him. The heart of Christ bled for such ones. The heavenly Father will move earth and sky to hold you in His arms. Be desperate for Him.

Depression makes the worries of life seem terrifying. Getting out of bed, speaking to that certain person (or any person for that matter), going to work, dealing with problems, and dealing with financial issues all seem like voracious demons skulking toward us. Each task is daunting and frightening. This brings about depression's best friend—anxiety. So we look through the windows of our sanctuaries into a world that offers no joy yet threatens us constantly. This is to see the world as it really is, without Christ.

However, when we abandon all hope that is not in Christ, we cling to Him, and

we feel His hand hold ours, and the demons vanish. The Psalmist was terrified of the evildoers that sought to kill him. He trembled before them. But when He went to the house of the Lord and heard God's plan for him and them, he said: "O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms" (Ps 73). We get scared, but when God stands up, the "scary" things of life are like little holograms without any true substance. They cannot even touch us! The dreary landscape of listless existence transforms into the loving household of God, at whose right hand there are pleasures forevermore. What was once depressing and anxiety-producing becomes joyful and peaceful. But we never get there without recognizing that life without Christ is nothing.

Our world says, "You are a highly evolved monkey without purpose. You should be happy all the time!" The people who believe this (sometimes Christians believe this for a season) are often depressed. The world looks at that depression as a strange deficiency, something to be solved as quickly as possible with medicine and increased self-esteem. But perhaps you are saner than anyone. Maybe you see the horrific reality of life without Christ, though they do not. Thank God for that—God is pulling you by the heart away from the world you have been cemented to. It is unbelievably painful. But when we come to the end of ourselves and give up every single desire we have, He catches us. He holds us. He cherishes us and brings us to His heart. Do not stop your freefall with lies—life is really meaningless without Him. Dive deeper instead—give Him everything, and He will give all of Himself to you.

# Why I Left Atheism for Christianity

By Jonathan Noyes

I'm often asked what led to my converting from atheism to Christianity. The answer sometimes surprises: reality. Reality is the way the world really is. It doesn't change according to our likes and dislikes. Because of this, when you don't live according to reality, you bump into it. As an atheist, when looking for answers to important questions, I bumped hard into reality.

The first bump came as I tried to explain what caused the beginning of the universe. It's not as complicated as you might think. There are only two options: something or nothing. This put me in a tough spot as an atheist. I didn't want to say *something* caused the universe because that something would have to be immensely powerful, incredibly creative, and outside its own creation (i.e., outside time and space). That *something* was starting to look like God, and I did not want to say God caused the universe. Instead, I wanted to say *nothing* caused the universe. This is unreasonable, though.

As an atheist, I believed everything that exists is the product of blind, physical processes. I couldn't explain where the universe came from because all I had to start with was *nothing*. But nothing comes from nothing. To say the universe came from nothing goes against our basic intuitions about reality. However, on Christian theism, there was more than nothing to start with. There was an uncaused cause. The Christian explanation lines up perfectly with the way the world really is.

That was the first bump. The next bump was the most difficult for me.

As an atheist, I knew certain things were actually wrong. I would have agreed that what happened in the furnaces of Auschwitz was wrong. What did I mean when I said it was wrong, though? I wasn't merely describing my personal opinion or an emotion. I was describing the actions themselves. I was saying these things were wicked and evil, not the way they're supposed to be. Notice something important here. For me to say anything was wrong in an ultimate sense, I had to appeal to an objective standard outside of myself. Right and wrong, good and bad, need to be details of the external world and not just personal opinions, but on atheism, there is no objective standard.

Every worldview needs to give an adequate explanation for the objective morality we perceive in the world. Every time I objected to something being bad, I bumped hard into reality. Eventually, I realized atheism couldn't explain the existence of objective morality. Christian theism does. But there's more.

As I wrestled with the idea that there was an objective oughtness to the world we live in, and I came to understand the universe had to come from something or "Someone," I found myself bumping into another part of reality I couldn't explain: the soul.

Souls are real, and this was a major problem for me. The existence of souls is not hard to recognize when we think carefully about reality. Let me show you what I mean. Have you ever had a song stuck in your head? To get that song out, do you crack open your skull, sift through your brain, and extract the song? Of course not. The song doesn't exist physically. It exists in your mind. Your soul.

Not only was I aware of my soul, but I also knew there was something special about being human.

We all know humans are special. That's why we cry out for justice in the face of injustice. I couldn't ground this in my worldview. Remember, I believed that all things—even you and I—are the result of purely physical processes. In the end, atheism reduces human beings to cosmic junk, moist robots with no ultimate purpose or meaning. This is where my struggle came in. On atheism, nothing quenched my thirst for significance or my desire for justice. Nothing ultimately matters on atheism. This wasn't the testimony of my soul, though. I knew life had meaning. I knew people were valuable.

I knew something else, too. I knew souls were real and they were special, but they're also broken.

My soul testified to the knowledge that the brokenness I complained about "out there" in the world was also "in here" in me. I was broken and in desperate need of a rescue. In unguarded moments, I would let the desire for things to be made right slip because I had to live in reality. I knew I needed something atheism couldn't offer. I needed forgiveness. Atheism does nothing to explain what makes humans special, and it has no answer to human brokenness. Atheism has no offer of true forgiveness. Christian theism does, though.

So why did I leave atheism for Christianity? As an atheist, I bumped into reality and started chasing the answers to my most difficult questions. In each case, atheism came up short. It's simple: I'm a Christian because it's the true story of reality.

# Missionary of the Week

# Kendra Stanford World Horizons - South Asia

"Trust in the Lord and do good. Then you will live safely in the land and prosper. Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you." ~ Psalm 37:3-5

It's hard to believe how quickly time has passed over the past few months. I've had incredible experiences working with various teams in so many new places and it's been exciting to see how God is working in each of those countries. I've been incredibly blessed and encouraged in this season as I've had various opportunities to serve in different communities, study new languages, learn about new cultures and seek God's direction for my future. After spending time in Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, and Indonesia, and being open to settling in those places, God has led me in the (unexpected for me!) direction of returning to India and pursuing being rooted here for as long as He allows me to be serving here. I'm so thankful and excited to be back and while I



I had the opportunity to visit with my old house mate and her daughter.

know there will be challenges ahead, I feel confident that this is the place I should be calling home in this next season of my life. I'm currently back in India until June, at which point I'll be going on a short term trip with some friends to Northern Iraq (I'll share more about that later). Later this summer I'll be heading back to the US in order to apply for a new visa for moving back to India. While I'm here now, I'll begin setting up an apartment and having meetings to determine the best visa to apply for returning long term. Thank you so much for your faithful prayers and financial partnership and words and messages of encouragement over the past few months as I've been serving and seeking direction for where to put down roots.

After being in Himachal Pradesh, I moved on to Uttarakhand to spend time with friends there. Shortly after I arrived, some friends unexpectedly and tragically lost their father to a heart attack. It was very sad to attend the traditional pooja funeral and cremation services. I was also able to catch up with a few other friends and visit my church fellowship there which is always very special to attend. I also had encouraging and lifegiving chats with other cross cultural workers and it was great that we could encourage each other. After my time there, I traveled back to the area where I previously lived in Uttar Pradesh. It's exciting to be back and while the city has changed a lot since I lived here, it still feels like home. I'm excited to be staying in my first apartment here again with my original host family. It's completely unfurnished so there are essentials I need to buy, but I'm excited about being back with the family and continuing to build into those friendships.

Over the next few weeks, I'll be setting up a living space here and having meetings to determine my next steps for returning to India on a more permanent visa. There are many logistical things to consider and pray through as I determine which city and work options to pursue moving forward. Please be praying for me as I seek to figure out what my future work should look like and who I should be partnering alongside. Thanks so much for your continued prayers and partnership!

#### **Prayer Points:**

- 1. Please pray for clear guidance and direction about specific location and work opportunities for moving forward.
- 2. Please pray for guidance and wisdom in a local team to partner with for support and accountability as my company doesn't have a team here currently as it did before.
- 3. Please pray for relationships to go deeper with friends I've already made here before as well as for new friendships to be established in this season.
- 4. Please pray for financial provision as I have some big but essential purchases that I need to make for my living space here that I hadn't planned on needing to buy this early. In order to buy essential items like a water filter, refrigerator, bed and mattress and cylinder for a stove top cooker I need about \$650. If you'd like to help with a donation towards helping with this cost please reach out to me directly or make a donation through World Horizons.

As mentioned above, in June I am going on a short term trip to Northern Iraq! I've been working with a group of likeminded business people for the past couple of years and we have had many meetings and times of prayer about starting a new business hub in Iraq. Late last year, a small team went on a vision trip and in June another trip will be happening to seek to make more connections and move plans forward for starting something new. Since I will need to come back to the US in the summer to change visas, I've been praying about and feel led to being part of this short term team. I've learned a lot from the process of being on the team leading up to this trip and I'm excited to see how God will work during our time there! If you want more information about the project, you can see the website at https://treesnroots.com

# Kendra Stanford

# Nursery April 30 Babies:

Donna Martin, Ceci Sheffield, Susan Su

#### **Toddlers:**

Logan & Stacey Kelly
Preschoolers:
Jim & Heather Schraeder

# Nursery May 7

#### Babies:

Carolyn Blanton, Sonja Clements, Cindy Wise

#### **Toddlers:**

Jan DeLoach, Rebekah Helmick **Preschoolers:** 

Rachel Beatty, Amy Keller

## Right Now Media

If you would like a free subscription to Right Now Media use this link:

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If you have any questions concerning the message from today, or are interested in obtaining information about church membership, please see any of the pastors after the service,

drop a note in the offering plate indicating your desire to talk with a pastor, or call the church office.



Video and audio recordings of the messages are available for listening or downloading from

www.fabchurch.com/sermons

This Week at F	ABC		
Today			
Coffee Fellowship	9:00 a.m.		
Sunday School	9:30 a.m.		
Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.		
Evening Worship	6:00 p.m.		
Tuesday			
Joy Class	9:00 a.m.		
Men's Bible Study	6:30 p.m.		
Women's Bible Study	6:30 p.m.		
Wednesday			
Supper: Pork Chops	5:30 p.m.		
Adventure Club (in gym)	6:20 p.m.		
Youth (in Fellowship Hall)	6:30 p.m.		
Bible Study (in Sanctuary)	6:45 p.m.		
Thursday			
Senior Adult Bible Study	10:00 a.m.		
Women's Bible Study	6:15 p.m.		



Lockup Deacons for April:

Joe Morris, Jim Schraeder
Lockup Deacons for May:

Michael Walker, Ric Zittrouer

## **Sunday School Classes and Descriptions**

Kay Stanford, Saundra Bridges

#### Adult

Babies

"Systematic Theology" Fellowship Hall: Bob Dimmitt
"Young Marrieds" Gym Overhang: Tom Keller
"John" Piano Overflow: Steve Jackson
"Gratitude" (Women) Organ Overflow: Tamera Smith

Room 3:

#### **Children and Students**

Toddlers Room 24: Lynn Ernst, Kelly Zittrouer Pre-K Room 25: Emily Wise, Kamee Roberson/ Michael and Ruth Kleinpeter K, 1st and 2nd Grade Room 28: John and Pam Humphrey 3rd-6th Grade Boys Ric Zittrouer, Richie Mills Room 202: 3rd-6th Grade Girls Room 204: Mary Ann Fowler, Amy Horton Youth Guvs Room 206: Bobby DeLoach, Shawn Champion Youth Girls Room 206: Jessica Dimmitt, Avalon DeLoach