Swimming In Shallow Water

This past week I saw a video of my three-year-old grand-son diving into a pool that was approximately eighteen inches deep. He did a classic belly flop and I was duly proud of him. You know I suppose a little guy like him could swim in eighteen inches of water, but I think it might be a stretch for me to do it. But suppose I could swim in eighteen inches, how do you think I would do in just three inches? If you are now picturing me flaying away at the water with my belly firmly anchored to the bottom of the pool you can take note of it and move on. Remember, “Be ye kind.”

That ridiculous scenario somewhat captures what it is like to build a church in our shallow, post-modern world. The lack of depth of truth in our society is hardly enough to get people to the point of spiritual buoyancy and to keep them there. Even many who profess to be swimming still have their big toe touching the bottom. They are not confirmed in the faith or established in grace; they have not been lifted up into a new life and cut clean loose from the old life.

And even those who have been lifted seem to find themselves in rather shallow waters. Our culture is not conducive to truth and is becoming increasingly shallow as a result of its anti-God posture. Many churches have accommodated this shallowness in our day and as a result are becoming increasingly more like mud puddles than swimming pools. Members of these culturally relevant, cutting edge, fashion-driven churches have their members playing in the kiddie pool with their bellies dragging the bottom as they try to negotiate the challenges of life with the newest, most trendy church programs.

And these trends and fashions are coming so rapidly now that it is exceedingly difficult to keep pace. Even the politically correct have become somewhat confused about what “is” or “is not” correct. A couple of weeks ago I accidentally blew off some skin on one of my fingers by a power-washer. It is amazing what a little bit of water can do when it has some force behind it. And never has information come at us with the force it is coming today. We have entered into the rapids of treacherously fast moving shallow waters. This is a difficult scenario for anyone swimming in rapids. And soon we will begin to feel even in a more profound way the impact of “artificial information” (information accumulated by computers). The future impact of “a.i.” is enough to cause the info gurus such as Bill Gates to shudder with concern. Who knows what life will be like twenty years from now.

So here we have shallow waters, moving at lightening speed, with dangerous rocks (obstacles, problems, difficulties) lying just beneath the surface of the stream of our lives. The end result is not encouraging. The jagged rocks of family problems, psychological problems, economic problems, social problems are all lying down stream from anyone who tries to live in these shallow waters. And they all conspire to knock the spiritual life out of anyone who dares to face them with faith in God. As might be expected the casualty rate among such professors of faith is very high. Many start the journey but are sunk somewhere along the way. The result is that the average church has as big a back door as it does a front door.

What is the answer to this dilemma? Is there a way out of the problem? Yes, there is. The way out is to go deep. Ezekiel saw a vision in his 47th chapter — of waters that were ankle deep, then a little further they were knee deep, further still and the water was up to the loins, and finally they were swimming waters. If we want to survive in this shallow day we must press on out till we are in water deep enough to allow for someone to swim. By that I mean we must be immersed in truth so much that it can buoy us up above the forces of swiftly moving currents and above the jagged rocks of temporal and material concerns. God’s truth must be sufficient to bear us along safely to our destined harbor. We need to know the depth and the height and the length and the width of the love of God in Christ. We need to feel the weight of eternity, of heaven and hell in our souls. In short, we need to be borne along by the Bible if we would not be borne along by the world. Nothing but faith in the great themes of Scripture will sustain us in the challenges that lay before us.

May God help us to be people with a depth of soul that results from interacting deeply with the Truth of God. By God’s grace we may all launch out into the deep where there is sufficient truth to bear us up through all the challenges that are sure to come against us in this fallen world. — Pastor Glen Johnson
### Missions and Ministry News

**Pray for and Support (Through Sunday School Program)**  
**Our Missionary of the Month**

Rev. Diego Cueva  
(571) 991-5508  
Email: discipulos6@yahoo.com  
3713 Pennington Lane, Woodbridge, VA 22192

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**Pray for Our Ministry of the Month— AWANA Club**  
**Director: Keith Houser**

- **Training for Leaders**  
  Wed, Sept. 6th
- **Opening Night for Children**  
  Wed, Sept 13th
- **Volunteer Leaders Needed**

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**Learn More About —**  
**Free Will Baptist Family Ministries**  
**On Sunday, August 27th, 6 PM**

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#### August

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<th>SUNDAY</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
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<td>6</td>
<td>NO SS Meeting; First Sunday Fellowships in Host Homes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 Noon Study; Classes for Men, Women, Kids at 7:00 PM</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5 Sunday School Class Cleaning Day (Volunteer and Complete Jobs by this date)</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>9 Noon Study; Sch Board 1 PM; Classes for Men, Women, Kids at 7:00 PM</td>
<td>10 SPECIAL OUTREACH — Tract Stamping for China Mission Trip 6:30 p.m. — Library</td>
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<td>VCU Outreach 1-3 PM</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>YOUTH SUNDAY AM; Tract Ministry Loose Change Collection; Baptismal Service 6:00 PM</td>
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<td>Meeting of Trustees 7:00 PM</td>
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<td>16 Noon Study; Classes for Men, Women, Kids at 7:00 PM</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Outreach Service at Atlantic Retirement Home 2:30 PM; Ministry Fair 6:00 PM</td>
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<td>Budget Committee Meets 7:00 PM</td>
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<td>23 Noon Study; Classes for Men, Women, Kids at 7:00 PM</td>
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<td>30 Noon Study; Classes for Men, Women, Kids at 7:00 PM</td>
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**Ministry Fair Coming UP on Sunday, August 20, 6 PM**  
**Refreshments, Child Care and Door Prizes**  
**Visit Ministry Exhibits — Find Your “Gift of Service”**