

Pastoral REFLECTIONS

November 28, 2021

Being thankful towards the end of a year like this year can be hard because of what we did not gain or what we lost. Some of our church family suffered tremendous losses, while others experienced tremendous blessings. So, some of our church family will celebrate with great joy, while others will be thankful but struggle to feel happy.

A woman by the name of Greta Weissman was among the prisoners in a Nazi death camp. She recalled an episode one spring when she and her fellow inmates stood at roll call for hours on end, sometimes nearly collapsing with hunger and fatigue. One day in the corner of that same bleak, horrid, gray place, the concrete had broken and a flower had poked its head through. Now, the thousands of women there took great pain to avoid stepping on it. It was the only spot of beauty in their ugly and heinous world, and they were so thankful for it.

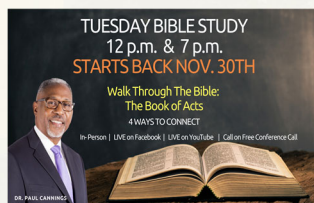
Later in a radio interview, Greta added: “When people ask me, ‘Why did you go on?’ I answered them by explaining the moment I stood at the window of my first camp and I asked myself, if by some miraculous power, one wish could be granted to me, what would it be? Then, with almost crystal clarity, the picture that came to my mind was a picture at home—my father smoking his pipe, my mother working at her needlepoint, with my brother and I doing our homework. I remember thinking, my goodness, it was just a boring evening at home. I had known countless evenings like that and I knew, that same boring picture, if I could keep it, would be the driving force of my survival.”

The devotional book, “Springs in the Valley” tells of a man who found a barn where satan kept his seeds ready to be sown in the human heart. He discovered that the seeds of discouragement were more numerous than the others and he learned that those seeds could be made to grow almost anywhere. But when satan was questioned, he reluctantly admitted that there was one place in which he could never get them to thrive. “And where is that?” asked the man. Satan replied sadly, “In the heart of a grateful person?” (Stories, Illustrations & Quotes by Robert J. Morgan; Page 735).

“Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit.” (1 Thessalonians 5:16-19)



UPCOMING Events



TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY—WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE
Bible Study will resume at 12 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Tuesday, November 30th with Pastor Paul Cannings' Series, Walk Through The Bible: The Book of Acts. Join us in-person in the Legacy Sanctuary, Live on Facebook, LIVE on YouTube or LIVE on Free Conference Call. Follow along with Bible Study Notes here at www.lwfellowshipchurch.org/bible-study-notes

COUNSELING MINISTRY



Counseling Ministry

Are you resistant to change or facing any form of adversity or trial? Reach out to the Counseling Ministry as we seek to help you find the answers and solutions. Complete a green request form found at any Offering Table and drop it in or call the Living Word Fellowship Church office at **281-260-7402** or contact Cici Sharpe at cicisharpe@sbcglobal.net



CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

DECEMBER 24TH AT 6:00 P.M.

Living Word family join us for a Christmas Program like no other. The LWFC Drama Ministry & Creative Jams Present “Returning to Your First Love” featuring music, dance, and a dynamic story about a family that has lost their way and Christmas brings them back together. Bring the entire family for a Living Word Christmas family tradition.



Finance Ministry

Are you in need of calculating your budget? Getting ready to start a family and want to keep your finances in order? Reach out to our Finance Ministry today. Contact Jeffrey Allen at jeffrey.allen@lwfellowshipchurch.org



Book Store Volunteers Needed

Living Word, we have something for you! Are you ready to connect with a unique ministry? The Book Store is looking for you. All those who are interested in volunteering, drop an email to Gail O'Neal at goneal@lwfellowshipchurch.org



ORDER OF WORSHIP

Announcements

Communion

Visitor's Welcome

Worship In Giving

Offering boxes are located at all perimeters under crosses

Special Music

Insurmountable

Numbers 14:1-10

Full sermon notes available online at www.lwfellowshipchurch.org

Click on the “Resources” tab and click “Sermon Notes”

Call to Discipleship

Please remain seated at this time

Benediction

Children are now required to check-in upon arrival. Please report to the registration desk located in the children's wing.

Ages 2—6th grade



Insurmountable
Numbers 14:1-10

A. Don't Fear (vs. 1-2):

1. All the people immediately vividly displayed their independence from Moses and Aaron by becoming loudly vocal.
2. When God's Word is not trusted our circumstances will overwhelm us.
3. They blamed God for putting them in this situation.
4. They were convinced by the spies that these circumstances were completely true. Lies lead to fear; faith provides us hope.
5. God did not allow them to experience the enemy before He consistently demonstrated His power and commitment to maintain His covenant relationship with them. Faith is based on the evidence of things not seen. God gave them evidence when He required faith (Hebrews 11:1).
6. Israel spent 40 years dying in the wilderness while running from an enemy who saw the power of God and was afraid of the Lord's power (Joshua 2:8-11). Their enemy had more respect for God's power than they did.
7. The word "to bring" means to bring an offering. They were implicitly saying that they had no power to overcome such a powerful set of giants that God would sacrifice them to.
8. There will always be leaders available to listen to whatever the majority wants them to do. In our time this is what Paul says because of the effects of the last days on believers; "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires.... (2 Tim. 4:3-8; NASU)

"Courage is not the absence of fear; it is the presence of faith"

9. We must not allow the insurmountable struggles we experience to turn us away from a loving God, who is slow to anger and is steadfast in His commitment towards us (vs. 11, 17-29; John 14:16-17).
 - a) Trust is not based on what we see, it is totally dependent on whether or not we will keep the faith, no matter what the circumstances may seem to dictate (1 Timothy 6:12-14).
 - We must learn to trust who He is (His nature) even when it seems like He is absent (silent; Exodus 34:6-7).
 - We must hold fast to His promises even when we seem like we can't hold up under the circumstances we may be experiencing (Hebrews 12:4; 1 Peter 1:22-25).
 - We must stay within His structure, manage our emotions so that we do not allow fear and anxiety to make us rebellious.
 - Circumstances should not define our faith. We must allow our faith to define how we apply ourselves through our circumstances (2 Corinthians 5:6-8; Hebrews 11:6).

When life is insurmountable believe that God can do the IMPOSSIBLE! (Luke 1:37; 18:27)

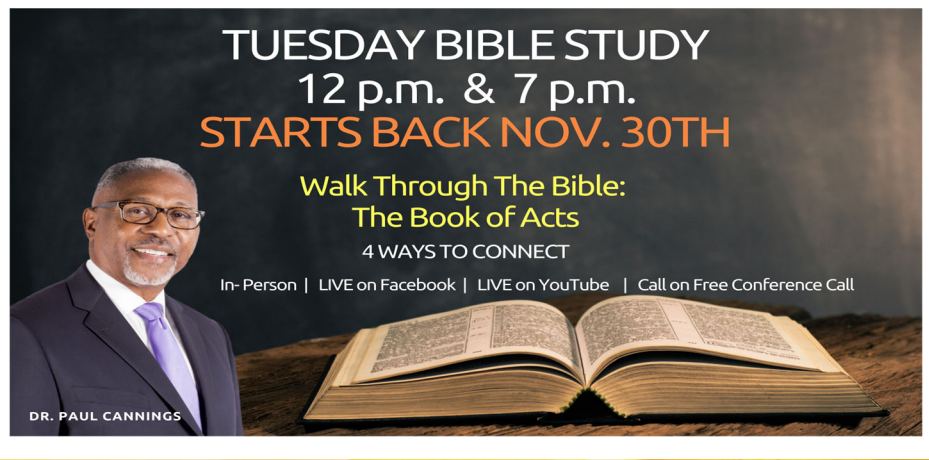
B. Learn to Listen (vs. 5-7):

1. Moses and Aaron bowing before the Lord represents that they did not see the people's attack as against them, but against God.
2. Caleb and Joshua kept speaking to the people as if they had no plans to stop trying to convince them to obey God.

3. Caleb and Joshua said that after seeing everything, they were convinced that the land was delightful and practically beneficial and excellent for everyone.
4. Everything God said about the land was true, so the people needed to go in and take possession, but they would not listen. Even when God proved it to be true, they held on to fear.

C. Defy the Odds (vs. 8-9):

1. Caleb and Joshua pled with the people telling them that if the Lord is completely delighted with them, He would provide victory, so there is no need to worry.
2. Both Caleb and Joshua pled with the people to not continually be disloyal to God by resisting His instruction while creating dysfunction among the people.
3. They must not allow themselves to become overwhelmed with terror.
4. God's presence is now vividly with His people so there is no need to fear. The Canaanites have served their purpose. God is no longer protecting them.
5. They said for them to be stoned, so they were going to intentionally make sure they no longer lead and that they stop talking - an obstinate heart.
5. God's imposing presence appeared as a supernatural event that was prevailing over them.
7. God had heard enough. He took over leading the people since they rejected Moses Aaron, Caleb and Joshua.
8. God constantly repeats who He has shown Himself to be. It is their rebellion that causes the Lord who is holy to execute justice. His full intent is to not spend His time with them in this manner because His desire is to be "compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth" (Exodus 34:6). "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13; NASU)



PRAYER REQUESTS

Grieving: Brenda Bonhame & family, Sherri Randle & family, Nicole Benjamin & family, Randy Hadnot & family, Eunice Johnson & family, and Lula Walker & family.

Health and Healing: Lurlean Lane, Florence Wiggins, Retha Amos, Octavia Scott, Margaret Baptiste, Cici Sharpe, Eunice Johnson, Jeffrey McQueen, Brittany Bullock, Barbara Gordon, Ella James, Pat Crawford, Lisa Roberts, Birdie Williams, Jon Heard, Eric White, Lakessia Davis, and Rutha Patrick.

