



INFO

Words From The Path.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

These words taken from Psalms 46:4-5 were spoken by President Obama at the Memorial service for the victims of what has become known as The Arizona Massacre.

When our nation struggles through trying to understand such violence and devastation, it is good to hear our national leaders, the clergy, and those of national celebrity status speak words of comfort and encouragement. Yes, we are struggling with this and other catastrophes. Here in Virginia, the rampage on the Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg still rings in our ears from 2007. On that fateful day I was at the hospital attending a surgery for a church member. In the waiting area for families, the program on the television was interrupted with the first reports. In all, 32 persons lost their lives. Thirty two souls thrust into eternity by the hand of one mad killer. In Arizona, a United States Congresswoman was shot and critically wounded. A federal judge and a nine year old child were killed. Six deaths in all and at least thirteen wounded including the Congresswoman. But struggle we must because unless we live under a rock or in a cave we cannot avoid the national coverage of the media circus that surrounds such tragedies. Ideas for the reason for this tragedy have ranged from hate rhetoric from prominent personalities to mental illness and everything in between. Blame

has been placed on former Governor Sarah Palin, talk show host Rush Limbaugh, Adolph Hitler, and let's see, who else, probably Casey Stengel or maybe Dallas Green, former Philadelphia Phillies manager and grandfather of the murdered child. People are screaming from the right and left for more gun control. "That'll fix 'em!" they rail! But no one has yet mentioned (outside of the pulpit perhaps) a single word about what the real problem is. The problem very simply is SIN! PERIOD! The six killed in Arizona and the thirty two killed in Blacksburg, a president of the United States killed in Dallas in 1963, and the Lindbergh baby kidnapped and subsequently found dead in 1932 are all results of the sin found in man, not the Smith & Wesson Corporation!

President Obama also spoke to this in his Memorial Speech. He said and I quote: "You see, when a tragedy like this strikes, it is part of our nature to demand explanations -- to try and pose some order on the chaos and make sense out of that which seems senseless. Already we've seen a national conversation commence, not only about the motivations behind these killings, but about everything from the merits of gun safety laws to the adequacy of our mental health system. And much of this process, of debating what might be done to prevent such tragedies in the future, is an essential ingredient in our exercise of self-government. But at a time when our discourse has become so sharply polarized -- at a time when we are far too eager to lay the blame for all that ails the world at the feet of those who happen to think differently than we do -- it's important for us to pause for a moment and make sure that we're talking with each other in a way that

heals, not in a way that wounds. Scripture tells us that there is evil in the world, and that terrible things happen for reasons that defy human understanding. In the words of Job, "When I looked for light, then came darkness." Bad things happen, and we have to guard against simple explanations in the aftermath."

We can make little or no sense of these tragedies, but we can know who is to blame if we are man enough and woman enough to speak the words. Sin lies directly at the feet of Satan who is still operating in this world. Again paraphrasing President Obama, 'let's talk in ways that heal, not hurt.' Let's point the finger at the real culprit!

The first movements of sin began of course back in the Garden of Eden. There, man's image of God became marred. There are also millions of explanations and theories about why that happened. But man had gotten along well with God and the laws of God. Then, enter Satan. Man fell, and the seed of sin fell to every soul in every generation to come. Paul said in Romans 3:23; "For all have sinned....." David cried out, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity." (Ps. 51:5) What we are observing today is a mis-shapened view of sin. We forget that it started with Adam. But it was perpetrated as deception upon Adam and Eve by Satan.

You see, breaking it down fundamentally, the very word sin implies the presence of law; and law presupposes a law giver. Our Law Giver is God, not congress! If we obey the first law, the law of God, we will

By Pastor Ben Murphy

Newsletter

Articles or information to be published in the Newsletter are due by the third Sunday of the month. Please submit to the church office.

Singers and Musicians

If you are on the monthly music schedule to sing and find you cannot do so, it is your responsibility to find a replacement. Please notify the church office of such a change. Our thanks to each of you who serve.

—The Ministries & Programming Council

When There Is A Death In The Family

If there is a death in your immediate family, (Parent, Sibling, Spouse, Child,) or in the family of a church member, please notify a member of the Benevolence Committee (listed below) so the church may send flowers and for food preparation when applicable.

—The Benevolence Committee

Mona Orr—Chair

Phyllis Belcher

Sue Ellen Fleming

Diania Murphy

Diana Mullins

“INFO” GUEST COLUMN***Christianity
and
Medicine***

By Chris Basham, MD

Being a physician has been a wonderful way to experience Christianity. God provides daily opportunities for us to grow spiritually, and the field of medicine is a great place to feel His presence in many ways. Every encounter, whether in the office, hospital, nursing home, or patient's home, is a new opportunity to put what is studied and learned about being a Christian into action. From earlier in my life, until now, I have been able to feel God's hand at work in my life.

Many similarities exist between medicine and Christianity. In both of these are daily chances to serve God. Specific to medicine are chances to help others with physical as well as emotional illnesses. I get great satisfaction from being able to help others in this way. There are often opportunities to reach out to others spiritually when they are in their greatest distress and greatest need. This is often when someone is the most receptive to God's salvation plan, or to get serious about their spiritual living. Patients come from a variety of religious backgrounds, ranging from atheist, agnostic, backslidden, faithful, and others. Encounters that involve discussions about Christ are limited or even absent for many outside of healthcare settings. Some illnesses are fixed on the same day, some the same week, and others much later. This is the same for the fruits of spiritual labor that are sometimes seen quickly and sometimes much later. An important part of medicine is prevention, like controlling blood pressure, cholesterol,

diabetes, providing vaccination, performing tests, and teaching healthy habits. This prevents severe illnesses, and satisfaction comes from the faith that these actions prevent is avoided. In a similar way, we often teach others the Gospel message through Bible school, Sunday school, and personal witness opportunities, and we prevent these people from falling away or taking the wrong spiritual path in life. The long term achievements are not seen instantly, but the effects are real just the same. In this way, the actions of a physician and of a Christian definitely complement each other.

Many of the tough questions about life are ever-present when dealing with illnesses. (Why do bad things happen to good people? - Why did my prayers seem to go unanswered?) Tragic conditions and situations are encountered. Lives change direction in an instant. Answers to these questions are as much a part of healing as physical recovery. Through prayer and Bible study, many answers to life's questions are available, but mere knowledge of why things happen is only part of coping. Through the experiences of patients with their illnesses, I have learned more about the relationship needed with Christ to endure difficult times. In addition, I have also learned that difficult times allow us to focus on Christ first, with all other things after. It truly is hard to keep in mind that Jesus is all that you need until He is all that you have. The reward in Heaven will far surpass even our wildest imagination of what perfection is here on earth. Sometimes God's will is for instant healing, and sometimes it is for healing after surgeries and medications. Sometimes His grace is enough, as the best and most lasting healing is not of the body but of the spirit.

I am grateful for many parts of being a physician, but the best is the spiritual growth that I receive from God through each day's opportunities.

obey the law of the land! Law is given to us according to the will and nature of God. And when that law is given by God's free and sovereign will, it clearly implies that man then has the freedom to obey or disobey the law of God. When man disobeys the laws of God, it stands to reason that there will be consequences to pay, as evidenced in the Garden. All creation suffers the consequences of disobedience to God's law. You see, God had nothing but the best intended for man at the beginning, but man refused it. He went against the law. He did not break the law, as some say. You can't break God's law, you can only go against it. It is the law that breaks the man. And when one goes against the law of God, there will be temporal destruction as well as far reaching retribution by God for the one who goes against the law.

That in essence is what is going on in today's world. It is so prevalent in our American society. When evil atrocities arise, it is because someone goes against the law of God. The only way this can be thwarted is through the redemptive blood of Jesus Christ. Greg Nelson and Phil McHugh wrote a song that we sing occasionally in our services here, *People Need The Lord*. In it is says, "At the end of broken dreams.....He's the open door. When will we realize, people need the Lord.

We as Christians must realize that it is still people who need the Lord. Yes, their ways are evil, but evil can be replaced by the blood of Christ and the infilling of the Holy Spirit. But it certainly will not be replaced by us pointing fingers at one another in cases of tragedy such as has been displayed over the past few years.

I truly like what President Obama said in his Arizona speech. I have already heard some trying to put a spin on the speech and say it was not from the heart. But like it or not, the words rang true when he said, "But what

we can't do is use this tragedy to turn on one another."

There have been multitudes of prayers ascending for Gabby Giffords and the victims of The Arizona Massacre, as well there should be. I wonder though how many have prayed for the parents of the young man who shot these people? I wonder how many have prayed for the young man's soul?

People. We do need the Lord, and we do need one another. It is time to place the blame where it should be, with the evil in our world brought by Satan. And it is time we begin to try to understand our differences with one another and work together and lift one another in prayer. If we can do that, we will be more enabled to stay on the path with Jesus!



Bi bl e Qui z

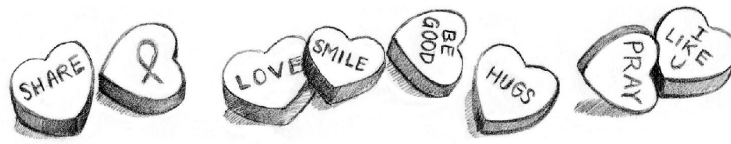


First Corinthians 13 is a popular Scripture reading at wedding ceremonies. The so-called "love chapter" provides an extended definition of what Paul calls "the greatest" gift (verse 13).

Which of the following characteristics of love isn't found in 1 Corinthians 13?

- A. Love is patient.
- B. Love rejoices in the truth.
- C. Love believes all things.
- D. Love is childlike.

Answer: D



Love Conquers All

The love for equals is a human thing — of friend for friend, brother for brother. It is to love what is loving and lovely. The world smiles.

The love for the less fortunate is a beautiful thing — the love for those who suffer, for those who are poor, the sick, the failures, the unlovely. This is compassion, and it touches the heart of the world.

The love for the more fortunate is a rare thing — to love those who succeed where we fail, to rejoice without envy with those who rejoice, the love of the poor for the rich The world is always bewildered by its saints.

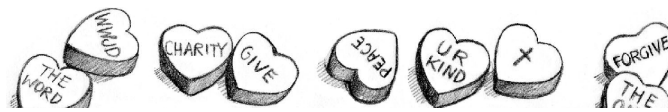
And then there is the love for the enemy — love for the one who does not love you but mocks, threatens and inflicts pain. The tortured's love for the torturer. This is God's love. It conquers the world.

—Frederick Buechner,
The Magnificent Defeat



Encouraging Words

- I am made in God's image, and he doesn't make any junk. God loves me and wants me to live a fulfilled life.
- Communing with God constantly brings light, direction and blessings from him.
- Life is astonishingly wonderful. Even the rough spots often turn out to be pluses. Hard lessons make me wiser, kinder and more fruitful.
- When I feel boxed-in or blocked, I can know that in God's good time, he will help me be victorious.



Hang On!

When a couple received a rose bush as a gift, they planted and cared for it, eagerly waiting for it to bloom. A few months later, a bud finally appeared. Day by day, it began to fill out. The couple's anticipation grew when they could see that the rose would be bright red.

One day, they were surprised to notice that the green around the bud had been pulled away and the flower petals were torn apart. They asked their young daughter if she knew what had happened. "I just couldn't wait any longer," she said, "so I blossomed it myself."

The psalmist tells us to "Wait for the LORD ..." (Psalm 27:14, NRSV). Instead of trying to help God along, let him bring things to fulfillment in his perfect time.

