



**NSD**

# NEWSLETTER

**Sunday, July 13, 2008**

**BIBLE STUDY**..... 10 a.m.  
“Gospel of Luke”

**MORNING WORSHIP**..... 11 a.m.  
Speaker: Dan Austin

**EVENING SERVICE**.... 6 p.m.  
Great Expectations Series  
Dan Austin

**WEDNESDAY MEETING**..... 7 p.m.  
“The Parables of Jesus”

*... singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Col 3:16*

We have heard with our ears, O God,  
Our fathers have told us,  
The deeds You did in their days,  
In days of old:

You drove out the nations with Your hand,  
But them You planted;  
You afflicted the peoples,  
and cast them out.

For they did not gain possession of the land  
by their own sword,  
Nor did their own arm save them;  
But it was Your right hand,  
Your arm,  
and the light of Your countenance

Because You favored them.

**Psalm 44:1-3 (NKJV)**

Savior like a shepherd lead us  
Much we need thy tend' rest care  
In thy pleasant pasture feed us  
For our use thy folds prepare

Early let us seek thy favor  
Early let us do thy will  
Blessed Lord and only savior  
With thy love our bosoms fill

**Thrupp/Bradbury**

## News & Notes

**Welcome Visitors.** If you are a visitor in our congregation today we welcome you and invite you to stay for a while after service.

Please continue to pray for our deployed military members and their families: **Sam Barton, Logan Harper, Matt Wells** and **Earnest Peeples**.

Members who are away this week: **Dema Franklin, Janna Wells** and **Yedid Minjares**.

Web Stats: Our **www.nsdca.com** home page currently gets an average of 120 visitors and an average of 300 page views per month.

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<http://nsdca.com>

*where the Bible is the source of faith, where Jesus is Lord, where Christianity is a way of life!*

# *Intimacy With God*

Randy Harshbarger

"*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called My son*" (**Hosea 11:1**). The constancy of God's love should have been strong motivation for Israel to love their Creator in return. But it wasn't. In spite of God's constant overtures of love, grace, and mercy, His own children turned away. Israel perverted their relationship with God by worshiping idols. God loved His people, even when they were rebelling against Him. Yes, the Israelites had to suffer the consequences of their sin; this did not mean, though, that God had ever stopped loving them. Even when He was seeking to correct their way, God loved them.

The word *love* evokes pleasant and comforting thoughts. Or, at least it should. The Bible speaks often about God's love for His creation. His love was present in the lives of His children—those who had responded to Him in obedience. Early in their history Israel wanted to be God's children; they longed for an intimate relationship with God (Exodus 19:5-6). God called Israel "My firstborn son" (**Exodus 4:22-23**). God told Pharaoh, "Let My son go!" Israel was Jehovah's special people. Yet, the fact that God loved Israel did not prevent them from rebelling. God's love was not an insurance policy that would always keep Israel from harm—a harm that was many times self-inflicted. Over and over again, God enabled His people to see that He still loved them. He wanted them to come back.

The word *love* evokes thoughts of intimacy. The intimacy shared between a husband and wife is a special bond. That unique relationship is special. It mirrors the relationship God desires to have with His children (the book of Hosea; cf. Ephesians 5:22-33). This relationship is so special that severe, harsh consequences are meted out to those who fail to cherish the bonds of love and intimacy. " '*For the LORD God of Israel says that He hates divorce, For it covers one's garment with violence,*' says the LORD of hosts. '*Therefore take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously*' " (**Malachi 2:16**).

The bond of love between brethren should be viewed as a special blessing. Love of the brethren is a special kind of love—love that is peculiar to the in-Christ relationship we share as members of the same spiritual family. Instead of living in isolation, we need to cultivate a sense of dependency, a sense of family among our fellow Christians. Loving each other is a matter of spiritual life or death.

Sin destroys the intimacy of love. This was true of Israel's alienation from God. It is true in human, earthly families. It is true in the spiritual family of God. The alienating consequences of sin can only be overcome by God's love. God through Christ seeks our reconciliation. What God desires for us cannot be experienced when we refuse to return. If that is so, then why do we stay away?