

NSD

NEWSLETTER

Sunday, April 20, 2008**BIBLE STUDY**..... 10 a.m.
"Gospel of Luke"**MORNING WORSHIP**..... 11 a.m.
TBA**EVENING SERVICE**.... 6 p.m.
TBA**WEDNESDAY MEETING**..... 7 p.m.
"Parables"**HEBREWS 11**
W. Frank Walton

Hebrews is written to Jewish Christians whose faith in Jesus is wavering. They are about to apostatize (Heb. 3:12; 4:1; 10:23, 35-36). They desperately needed a "faith lift," a Christ-centered "faith to the preserving of the soul" (Heb. 10:39; 12:2). Hebrews 11 is the uplifting summit of the power of faith in God.

Enshrined here is the transcendent power of thrilling, faithful examples who "gained approval" from God (Heb. 11:2, 39). None of us may be famous before men, but any of us can be famous by faith to God!

News & Notes

Please keep our military personnel in your prayers. **Logan Harper** is deployed in the Middle East and, **Sam Barton** is on a ship headed for the Middle East.

Ron and Marie Adams are out of town this week. Please pray for their safe return.

We encourage everyone to peruse the books in the library located in the room to the right of the podium. Donations of additional books are welcome and if you would like to borrow a book, check-out is on the honor system.

Faith Defined

There are three distinct aspects of wholesome, dynamic faith defined here. "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen...without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (vv. 1, 6).

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Gestures of Faith

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, Selah.

Psalm 67:1

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A Good Spring Cleaning

Bubba Garner

The trees are starting to bud. Little green blades of grass are peaking out where the lawn had gone dormant for the winter. People are beginning to notice pollen and mold spores and other allergens floating toward their nasal passages. These are all signs of spring. Soon, even our clocks will “spring forward.” And that means it time for a good spring cleaning.

When I was growing up, I soon learned the difference between spring cleaning and just a normal Saturday cleaning. The curtains and drapes would come down for washing. The eaves on the outside of the house would be swept for cobwebs and dirt daubers’ nests. Toys and clothes that were no longer used or seldom worn were piled up and hauled off. It was just a sign of spring.

Perhaps it’s time that all of us to engage in a little spiritual spring cleaning, the kind that removes the buildup and clutter. While the world around us awakens from winter, we, too, can spring back to life. It is not just a sign of the season, but of seasoning, growing, and maturing. As you gather your supplies, may I offer four quick cleaning tips?

Remember that you are renting. The reason we must keep our body, our earthly house, in good shape is because we are borrowing it from the Owner. “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own” (1 Cor. 6:19)? Nobody has the right to say, “it’s my body, I can do whatever I want to with it.” You belong to God. Everything you have is from Him. That means you’re going to have to give it all back. So, “glorify God in you body” (1 Cor. 6:20). The best way to do that is by keeping it clean.

Start at home, not your neighbor’s. Spring cleaning sometimes doesn’t go very deep because we start noticing what bad shape everyone else is in. We’ll think, “I have weeds in my flowerbeds, but they’re not as high as his.” Or, “my shelves are dusty, but look at the cobwebs in her closet.” Jesus said that you don’t have the right to criticize other peoples’ imperfections when you have not even addressed your own. “Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye” (Matt. 7:3)? Stay focused on your own messes. If you’re like me, that ought to be enough to keep you busy.

Throw out the junk drawer. Surely you have one, don’t you? That’s the one where you put things that don’t have a place. Twist ties, used batteries, expired coupons, and little plastic pieces that we have no idea what they go to. Why do we feel the need to keep stuff around that has no value or use? We are instructed to “run with endurance the race that is set before us” only after we “lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us” (Heb. 12:1). If it’s junk, if it has no use, if it’s a piece from the past, throw it away. Get rid of it. Just because you’ve found a hiding place for it does not mean that it’s no longer there.

Get a good finish. Discouragement is a big deterrent to spring cleaning. When you start pulling everything out, it can look more cluttered than when you started. Progress is often slow. Before long, you get overwhelmed and just put it all back where you found it. Paul commended the church in Corinth for the benevolent work they had begun. But a good beginning was not good enough. “Now finish doing it also, so that just there was the readiness to desire it, so there may be also the completion of it by your ability” (2 Cor. 8:11). Any job worth doing is going to have its moments where you want to turn back. But we must press through the difficulties and press along to our destination.

You won’t regret a good spring cleaning. It will bring seasons of refreshing. It will bring you back to life.