

# The Communicator

March/April 2010



## Modern Day Evangelism—Some Helpful Hints...

Can you summarize the Christian faith in one sentence?

We live in a sound-byte world which seems to be governed and moved by sound-bytes on the evening news or in the thirty second commercials. People seem adverse to long, detailed explanations or statements, and most in our culture opt for the shortened version of things. After all, it's easier to understand and easier to organize short pithy thoughts. I don't believe this is an issue of intelligence, but rather a symptom of a busy life that can only afford to stop long enough for a cliff-note version of things.

You might resist this in your soul—thinking that this is one of the primary problems of the world today—and you may be right—but you cannot deny that this is the reality. Since God calls us who comprise the Church to “...go and make disciples of all nations...” (Matt. 28:19), the attention span of our culture presents a great challenge for us in obeying God's command. After all, God has done so much throughout history and there is so much to talk about and explain about God, the Bible, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Jesus' sacrifice, His resurrection, the Church, sin, death, eternal life, etc. How in the world can we communicate these things to a culture that only has time for a sound-byte?

**First**, we need to realize that we don't convince people into faith, but God draws them and softens their heart toward the Gospel. Our part here is through prayer.

**Second**, when we realize that God is the ultimate force in conversions, then we can stop trying to force feed the truth via a fire hose. Too often we have so much to

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share with a non-believer, that we can easily overwhelm them with too much information (*see the above list*). Instead, find a verse that summarizes the Gospel (John 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:18-19; Col. 1:19-20) and share that. Normally, a person who is curious about Christ doesn't want a detailed theological explanation but rather a simple, concise reason that Christ is what they lack in life.

**Third**, ask questions. Let them talk and tell you what they think and why they haven't chosen Christ yet. If there is time, ask them what they think or know about the Bible, about church, about sin, about Jesus, about Jesus' death, about His resurrection, etc. Ask them what questions they have had about these things! It's amazing how many questions people have but are hesitant to ask anybody.

**Fourth**, share your story...your short story! Don't give the War and Peace version—you can do that later. Your testimony is unique and communicates how God has worked in a tangible, understandable way. It helps people recognize that God is closer than they think—and if He has worked in your life, maybe He could work in theirs!

The above list is not a magic formula—but it hopefully gives some guidance and encouragement in this area. One of the great ways to be encouraged in sharing the Gospel is through the upcoming SWCBA Annual Celebration on March 13th. I would love for you to join myself and others as we spend a day together in Tempe—celebrating what God is doing in our midst!

Blessings! *Pastor Steve*



## From Glory to Humility to Glory

By Pastor Ken Fahl

As we approach the Easter celebration, it's important to remember that the whole Christian faith rests on the fact of the resurrection.

The divinity of Christ Jesus is established by the resurrection. Paul says: "regarding His Son, who as to His human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by His resurrection from the dead: Jesus our Lord."

That Jesus is sovereign is also established by His being resurrected. Again Paul says: "For this very reason Christ died and returned to life so that He might be both Lord of the dead and the living." (Romans 14:9) Jesus is sovereign as verified by the resurrection.

Another very essential part of our faith is that we have been justified before God and are free. This, too, is established by the resurrection. "He (Jesus) was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification." (Romans 4:25) We have been set free by the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The sinner has been born again. His regeneration is evidenced by the resurrection of our Savior. "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..." (1 Peter 1:3) We are now a child of God through birth and are a permanent member of His family.

Will we live again if we die in Christ? The answer is "YES!" Our resurrection is assured by His resurrection. "And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who lives in you." (Romans 8:11) We have eternal life because of the resurrection of Jesus.

From beginning to the end of our faith and hope, rests the fact of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. As we approach this glorious celebration, I hope you have put your trust in the living Lord. If not, there's not a better time than now. If you need help, call one of us here at CDOBC (297-3900). Ask for Pastor Steve, Pastor Scott, Pastor Ken or Pastor Joseph. We will be pleased to help.

### **Alive & Active Activities:**

**Third Annual Ethnic Potluck-** March 6th– Join us at noon here at church. Entertainment will be by Alaskan entertainer, Joel Mattson.

**"Passion of the Christ"**- March 13th– Everyone is invited to join us at 4:00 p.m. to watch the movie "Passion of the Christ." *Due to the nature of this movie, it is not appropriate for young children.* No refreshments will be served.

**Home for Rent:** Spacious 1616 sq. ft. 2 bedroom/2 bath home for rent in quiet neighborhood near 1st Ave. & River Rd. Floy Grabner's home has been kept in immaculate condition. Large rooms, sunroom across the back and a large walk-in closet in the master bedroom. There is a 16X5.5 ft. storage room and a laundry room with storage. Asking \$1400 per month. Please call Floy's daughter, Margie Kersey, @ 722-2355 or e-mail her at [mjkersey@comcast.net](mailto:mjkersey@comcast.net) if you are interested.

### **CDOBC Lay Leadership**

#### **Elders**

Lew Backer  
Allen Birdsall  
Tom Cetas  
Jim Dover  
Dale Haralson  
Jim Penick  
Russ Tronstad

#### **Deacons**

Brent Avey  
George Ballesteros  
Tony Greco  
Lou Hall  
Kyle Randels  
Tom Trappman  
Bill Updike  
Brian Wilson

#### **Deaconesses**

Kathie Backer  
Sheryl Cottrell  
Sandy Harris  
Tonya Haynes  
Shirley Horner  
Beth Kolbuss  
Amie Oetter  
Beth Silveira  
Debra Wylie  
Leona Williams

## By Pastor Joseph Berko

I think I might be going blind...

Reading through the book of Proverbs recently, I came upon these verses in chapter 4: *“Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life...Mark out a straight path for your feet; stay on the safe path. Don’t get sidetracked; keep your feet from following evil.”* Directly following that reading was the clear impression of the Holy Spirit asking—“Joseph, what path have you marked out for yourself, and where exactly are you going? What are you allowing to influence your heart, and where do your affections lie?”

I often respond to the Word of God as if it were a melodic snippet of poetry, or some savvy financial advice. It’s amazing to me that passages of Scripture can become trite in the sense that I read them and have thoughts such as, “I like the sound of that” (as I underline it) or “hmmm...that makes sense!” It is downright easy to read “Guard your heart ABOVE ALL ELSE,” yet not take it literally. Can you relate? Sadly, this happens to me all the time, and I’m guessing I’m not alone. It’s a dangerous place to be.

I’ve come to believe that at the heart of why I so often don’t take the Word of God as seriously as I ought, is that my faith is weak.

When I officially moved to Tucson last summer, my friend Dave made the trip with me. He’s a little more adventure-some than I, and wanted to take a hike in the desert before flying back to Virginia. I quickly filled him in on some of the local threats, like poisonous spiders, rattle snakes, scorpions, mountain lions, killer bees, “the Javelina,” and heat stroke in an attempt to discourage him (I didn’t want to hike.) but his enthusiasm would not be dampened. So off we went to climb Pusch Ridge. We couldn’t find the trail, so we made our own and I think I tiptoed for the first hour or so of our trek—eyes diligently scouting for threats. It took some time, but I finally loosened up and actually began to have fun. My guard began to drop, and the paranoia began to slip away.

Just as I knew the desert was a perilous place and was hesitant to go on that hike, so I *know* that this fallen world we live in is filled with danger. And yet, it seems like the longer I live here, the more comfortable and less paranoid I become. I read the Word, hear it being preached, and pray, but sometimes it seems like I’m just trying to be a good person living a good life, instead of being a reconciled sinner who has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a future home in heaven. My problem is that my beliefs have softened as my perception of spiritual realities and threats have diminished. It’s no wonder I can read passages of Scripture, and have such a callous attitude! The trap that I fell into is one that easily ensnares. Just like the frog who is thrown into the pot of cold water, so we are daily exposed to numerous and seemingly harmless comforts and securities that dull our senses—softening us to the realities that EVERY choice we make has eternal consequences. Before we know it, just like the frog, it’s too late.

Don’t get me wrong. I am not issuing a call to asceticism. I believe we need to honestly and humbly acknowledge our blindness of spiritual realities to God, and ask Him for sight.

After Jesus told the parable of the sower in Matthew 13, His disciples asked Him why He spoke in parables as those listening were having trouble understanding. His answer was this: “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven have been given to you, but not to them...this is why I speak to them in parables: ‘Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.’” While the words Christ spoke could be heard by all, very few truly *understood*. There was a spiritual reality that remained hidden to them. Those that did understand made the effort to listen, but ultimately received this illumination from on high. Take Matthew 11:25 for example: “At that time Jesus said, ‘I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.’” A couple of chapters later, in response to Peter’s confession that He believed Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus said, “Blessed are you...for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.”

If we are to have any hope of being true followers of Christ, we need to surely pursue Him through our regular bible readings, prayer, and fellowship with believers, but we need to fervently beg for the gift of eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand and live according to the truths He has revealed to us.

*“Now all glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think..”*  
Ephesians 3:20

*“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect..”*  
Romans 12:2



## Are You Ready for the Curve Ball?

By Pastor Scott Nichols

How many times in life have you made plans and suddenly found them all go out the window as a curve ball has been thrown into your plans? It happens more often than we'd like, I'm sure. Instead of panicking and getting frustrated that our plans have changed, we should be instead trusting in God to lead us on the path He has chosen for us. This was a lesson that the Middle Schoolers had to learn recently on our way to our winter retreat.

We had been watching the weather in the days leading up to the retreat very carefully. We knew that a storm was coming in, but had no idea how powerful it would really be until the night before we left, when it hit. The day we were leaving, we saw a break in the weather and decided we should be able to get to our cabin in Overgaard before the next storm. We stopped for dinner in Globe. During dinner, it started snowing again. Big, heavy, wet flakes began to fall. We called ahead to a person that was traveling the road forty miles in front of us to get a road report. He said the roads had a bit of snow on them but were definitely passable. We loaded the Middle Schoolers back into the SUVs and started up the mountain toward Overgaard. We got about 10 miles in and decided that the roads were just not conducive to travelling. We turned back into Globe. Our first plan of going all the way through to the cabin that night had just been shut down. We had a backup plan in place, though. We had arranged a place to stay in Kerney, a small town forty miles south of Globe. We called the pastor there letting him know we were on our way. We had backtracked roughly ten miles, came upon a semi-truck that had lost traction, and were unable to go up the mountain pass any further. A state highway patrolman said we could continue but it was getting slick and the snow was still coming. We decided it would be prudent to turn back to Globe, yet again. By the time we got back to Globe, the storm had pretty much shut down the mountain passes for the night. We hadn't planned on it, but we would be spending the night in Globe. We found a hotel for the night and got some sleep. We woke up in the morning to find the roads plowed and cars getting through.

While it may have not been our plan to stay the night in Globe, we had been thrown a curve ball and we had to be flexible and adapt to our circumstances. Proverbs 3:5-6 tells us to: *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."* When we trust in God to lead us, we may have our plans changed, but they will always be for our best. The Middle Schoolers learned this lesson on their winter retreat. We had hoped to get up to the cabin on Friday night but did not make it until Saturday afternoon. We arrived late but had learned a crucial lesson in trusting God.

## HAITI RELIEF

**Missions Door** (formerly Missions To The Americas) thanks us for our faithful support and prayers for dear brothers and sisters in Haiti due to the earthquake on January 12th. Because of our financial support they have been able to provide help in the following ways:

- Food and water were distributed through nine mission-related churches. More than 600 families have been helped.
- Temporary shelters were provided to 126 families.
- Lilavois clinic was opened on January 15th and is serving 180-260 people every day. Because people are still afraid to go into buildings, Dr. Abdias and his team of nurses are taking care of people outside.
- A van was purchased to help with relief-related transportation needs between the Dominican Republic and Haiti.
- Evangelism is taking place hand-in-hand with assistance provided through local churches. Many have come to Christ, and church services have welcomed increased numbers since the earthquake.
- Three counselors were sent to Haiti on February 10th to spend 4 days in Port-au-Prince meeting with leaders to evaluate and train them on how to manage the grief, trauma, anxiety and depression which are consequences of a traumatic event such as this earthquake.

## Upcoming Events



**Between Time Snack Bar** on March 28th and April 25th. Come and enjoy special treats between worship services!!!

**Continental Breakfast** on Easter Sunday, April 4th. Join us between services for this delicious complimentary breakfast!

**SWCBA Annual Celebration 2010** on Saturday, March 13th, at First Baptist Church of Tempe, 4525 S. McClintock, Tempe, Arizona. The keynote speaker will be Tom Mercer of High Desert Church in Victorville, CA—*"The Oikocentric Life."* The day will begin at 9:30 a.m. and end at 4:00 p.m. The cost is \$25 by March 5th (\$30 at the door) which includes lunch. To register go to [www.southwestcba.com](http://www.southwestcba.com) or call 602-788-8090.

## **MEN'S MINISTRY NEWS:**

**Men Under Construction for Christ (MUCC)** meets on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. in room 2 for a study in the book of Jeremiah. Contact John Durako at 419-0535 or 219-9491 for more information.

**Men's Breakfast** meets the 2nd Saturday of each month at 7:00 a.m. in the GLOW room studying the book, Disciplines of a Godly Man.

**Men's Huddle** meets on the 1st, 3rd and 4th Fridays of each month at 6:00 a.m. in room 7, continuing in the study of I Samuel.

**Man in the Mirror Conference** is planned for June 3-5, 2010 at Community Church of Joy in Glendale, Arizona. For more information and to register, go to [www.maninthemirror.org](http://www.maninthemirror.org), or call 800-929-2536.

## **WOMEN'S MINISTRY NEWS:**

**Beth Moore Conference**—"Living Proof Live" is March 26-27th at the Tucson Convention Center. The conference will be Friday from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to noon. The cost is \$60 per person and you will need to register on your own at [www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com) or call Lifeway at 1-800-254-2022 (press 2). We will meet early and carpool to dinner downtown at El Charro, planning to be at the TCC by 6:00 p.m. If you would like to join us for dinner, please call Debbie Randels in the church office so she can count on you—297-3900 or e-mail her at [drandels@cdobaptist.org](mailto:drandels@cdobaptist.org).

**Women of Faith Conference**—This conference is all day Friday, October 1st and Saturday, October 2nd at the U.S. Airways Center in Phoenix, Arizona. Plan ahead for this exciting event! For more information and to purchase tickets (to get the group rate), call Michelle Racioppo ("Women of Faith" Leader) at 977-3381 or e-mail her at [Luv2uLord@aol.com](mailto:Luv2uLord@aol.com). Watch for more details to come!



## **Calling All Cooks!**

The *Fall Festival* is sponsoring a cookbook sale to raise funds for this year's festival. We will be collecting recipes through the end of March. All recipe entries **must** be typed and handed in at the cookbook table located in the courtyard, or sent through e-mail to [SDBeyer@aol.com](mailto:SDBeyer@aol.com). You may pre-order the cookbooks, however, all pre-orders **must** be paid for in advance (\$12.00+shipping, each). Sale date will be in August to help you get a jump start on your Christmas shopping! Please stop by the cookbook table for your instruction sheet. If you have any questions, please call Sheryl Beyer at 877-8611. Thank you for your support!

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Please contact us with your new address or if you no longer want to receive the newsletter.

*Committed to helping people  
become mature followers of Jesus*



**Step-Family Ministry**

This is a biblical based support group for step-parents, step-grandparents (and relatives), future step-parents and adult step-children. We meet Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. in room 7 while our children are in Wednesday night activities. We welcome all who have step-family involvement!

**College and Young Singles Ministry**

Come join us on Sundays at 9:00 a.m. We are presently meeting in the home of Tom and Betty Cetas—7725 Sendero de Juana. You can contact Tom and Betty at 297-7583 or [tcetas@gmail.com](mailto:tcetas@gmail.com) if you would like more information about this class.



**March/April Calendar of Events**

**March**

- 3—Big Night
- 10—Funky Footwear Night
- 17—No Club-Spring Break
- 24—Mystery Box
- 31—Drive-in Night

**April**

- 7—Sensational Shades
- 14—Wet-N-Wild
- 21—Sweet & Delicious
- 28—Buck Store #3