

The Messenger

COLDWATER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Nov. 4, 2012



Do you think we're "small"?

by Torrey Clark

The apostle Paul was in imminent danger. He was being held captive because of false allegations against him. An angry mob had formed and swore not to eat until they made sure Paul was dead. If it had not been for what happened next, they may have gotten their wish. Paul's nephew, who was in all likelihood a young teenager, heard of the dastardly plot and came to warn his uncle. Because of this boy's fortitude, courage and love for his uncle, Paul enjoyed a heavy-duty entourage that foiled the planned attack by the mob. Therefore, Paul was enabled to preach, teach, testify, encourage, and pen more books of our Bible for years to come (Read Acts 23). *What if this boy did not speak up?*

Naaman had a debilitating (or at least humiliating) disease. Under his roof was a "little maid" that was a captive taken from Israel in a Syrian raid. She apparently desired to see her master healed because she told Naaman's wife, "I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy." (2 Kings 5:3 NASB). She was referring to the dear prophet Elisha from her homeland. As a result of her recommendation, Naaman was eventually healed of his ailment. *What if this "little" maid did not show compassion?*

The Bible has its share of "big name" heroes (e.g. Moses, David, Joshua, Paul, et al). But generally speaking, the Bible tells a story of God doing great things through apparently "insignificant" people. The nation of Israel was relatively small and militarily weak, yet God used them to bring forth the Christ. Gideon was, by his own admission, the "least in his father's house", which was "poor in Manasseh" (Jdg. 6:15). Yet, God used Gideon to bring...

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you... (1 John 1:5).

**VISITORS,
WELCOME!**

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Class

10:30 a.m. WORSHIP

1:00 p.m. WORSHIP

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Class

We have Bible classes for
all ages & Pew Packers
each Sunday at 12:30

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PREACHER

Clifton Angel

...His people out of the Midianite oppression. Jesus had a lowly birth, grew up in a lower stratum of society, and lived in the insignificant town of Nazareth (Jn. 1:46).

If God could work His plan through these examples (which many would consider “insignificant” or “weak”), why can’t He work His plan in *our* lives? How about *our* families? How about at the (*insert location*) congregation? Is it the case that we have to be “big” or “great” in order to do the Lord’s will? Is being “big” how God defines success? If so, is it a bad thing that we are a small congregation?

By inspiration, Paul said, “but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the **weak** (*emp. mine, TJC*) things of the world to shame the things which are strong,” (1 Cor 1:27 NASB).

In one of His beloved parables, Jesus taught, “The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the **least** (*emp. mine, TJC*) of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.” (Matt 13:31–32 KJV)

Apparently, these two passages from the Holy Writ indicate that God may operate and measure greatness differently than we do.

As humans, and especially as post-modern Americans, we view success in terms of how much quantity is produced. Financial bonuses for salesmen are based on number of sales. Promotions on the production lines are based on quotas being met. Professional athletes are compensated on the basis of how much they produce on the ball field. This is not necessarily a negative thing, but it *does* mean that we are a “results-oriented” people.

It is my *opinion* that this mindset has led some of us to believe that more “warm bodies” in the pews must equal success for God. While we would like to have every soul in LaGrange present in our building for worship, their being there does not necessarily mean that we have achieved biblical success. We could do a lot of things that are not scriptural to entice people to attend our worship, but what has that accomplished? A danger with a “numbers-focused” success model is that there may be a temptation to be too quick to baptize people out of desperation to add them to the “church roster”. As a result, we might cut corners in teaching someone and fail to impress upon them the commitment Christianity requires. In that case, are they truly converted to Christianity? Jesus did not tell us to get warm bodies in the pews, He told us to **make disciples** (i.e. people who will actually follow Him, fully realizing what they must give up and what they must put on in order to do so) (Mt. 28:18-20, ASV).

The truth of the matter is that the Lord’s faithful will always be a minority. Our Lord...

...promised it (Mt. 7:13-14). This does not mean that we are to take on an isolationist mindset (i.e. glorying in the fact that we are small and detached). That would be self-righteousness. The church needs to think big because the mission is big. The gospel is for **all** (Titus 2:11-14, ESV). Jesus died for the bodies in the pews as well as the couch potatoes. He died for the busy executive as well as the lazy inmate. The Lord will not hold us accountable for others' decisions not to obey the gospel, but He *will* hold us accountable for not giving them a chance to hear (cf. 1 Cor. 9:16).

We need to stop focusing on how "big" or "little" we are and start focusing on *what* we are. If the church follows God and does what it was designed to do (i.e. make disciples of the lost; teach, edify, and rebuke the saved; and care for those in need) it will serve God's purpose, as great or small the results may seem to us.

May we have the ***mind*** to convert the whole world and the ***meekness*** to accept the results of faithful effort.

**Torrey Clark preaches for the Northside church of Christ in LaGrange, Georgia.

This Week's Daily Bible Reading:

Sunday:	John 1 — 2
Monday:	John 3 — 4
Tuesday:	John 5 — 6
Wednesday:	John 7 — 8
Thursday:	John 9 — 10
Friday:	John 11 — 12
Saturday:	John 13 — 15

Sermon Review

God: He is All-Knowing
(Psalm 139:1-6)

- I. His Knowledge is Not Met
- II. He Does Not Forget
- III. To Him, Nothing is Secret

God: He is All-Powerful
(Revelation 19:6)

- I. Meaning
- II. Measuring

NEWS & NOTES

Please Pray

Nora Boling, Wiley & Betty Tuggle; Sara Norris; Herbert & Helen Bowman; Sue Cobern

**OpenDoor Ministry
Fishers of Men
Far East Missions**

Family & Friends

Tate Williams family, in the loss of Tate; also remember Sam Pace (driver of car Tate was in), Kayleigh Dunn (Tate's girlfriend), Jodie & Holly Belknap (two girls that hit Sam's car), and many friends. **Herman King**, battling cancer, Billy met this man's wife and son during Saturday's door-knocking. **Easley family**, car accident--Doris, Molly's grandmother, is going to be put in some form of long-term rehab. **Carla Carlson** and her battle with cancer. **Gema Winchester** has stomach cancer, currently on a rest from treatments. **Matthew Canada**, young boy who has down syndrome and acute lymphoblastic leukemia. **Wes**, brother of Deb Peeler, cancer; **Mickey Knockart Lauren Jackson; Paul Perkins; Curtis A. Cates; Frederick Bland; Eli Williams; Ray Maples; Wayne Collinsworth; Andrew Hagewood; Janie Brister; Chuck Tharp; Renee Loya; Aubree Harris; Virginia Mayfield; Peyton Harville; Bob Spurlin; David Bragg.**

November Birthdays

11/05 Rachel Wilkes
11/14 Shirley Yarbro
11/14 Kara Johnson
11/18 Timothy Wilkes, Sr.
11/25 Wiley Tuggle
11/26 Virginia Sowell

November Anniversaries

11/8 Jeremy & Mindy Moore

Get Involved!

Daily Bible Reading Calendar 2012

Let's continue to read and study together!!

Sunday Afternoon for the Savior -- Nov. 4

Bible Bowl -- Nov. 10 -- 10:30 AM

Genesis 1-3, Study Hard!

Bonfire at the Jackson's -- Nov. 10

Providence Place Devo -- Nov. 11 -- 2 PM

Privileged to Serve

Sunday, November 4

Morning

Prayer Before Class	Jeremy Moore
Announcements	Jerry Davis
Song Leader	Jared Brown
Lord's Supper:	
Preside	Joe Owen
	Andy Ratliff
Assist	Daniel Owen
	Jason Bayless
Opening Prayer	Timothy Wilkes, Sr.
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Closing Prayer	Jim Jackson

Afternoon

Song Leader	Jared Brown
Opening Prayer	Billy Bland
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Lord's Supper	Andy Ratliff
	Jason Bayless
Closing Prayer	Jeffrey Ferrell

Wednesday, November 7

Song Leader	Jared Brown
Prayer	Seth Daniel
Invitation	Clifton Angel
Prayer	Wiley Tuggle