

Sabbath Recorder



A Seventh Day Baptist Publication
February 2018

This is what love looks like. . .

If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don't love, I'm nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. If I speak God's Word with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if I have faith that says to a mountain, "Jump," and it jumps, but I don't love, I'm nothing. If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere.

So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love.

Love never gives up.
Love cares more for others than for self.
Love doesn't want what it doesn't have.
Love doesn't strut,
Doesn't have a swelled head,
Doesn't force itself on others,
Isn't always "me first,"
Doesn't fly off the handle,
Doesn't keep score of the sins of others,
Doesn't revel when others grovel,
Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth,
Puts up with anything,
Trusts God always,
Always looks for the best,
Never looks back,
But keeps going to the end.

Love never dies. Inspired speech will be over some day; praying in tongues will end; understanding will reach its limit. We know only a portion of the truth, and what we say about God is always incomplete. But when the Complete arrives, our incompletes will be canceled. When I was an infant at my mother's breast, I gurgled and cooed like any infant. When I grew up, I left those infant ways for good. We don't yet see things clearly. We're squinting in a fog, peering through a mist. But it won't be long before the weather clears and the sun shines bright! We'll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing him directly just as he knows us! But for right now, until that completeness, we have three things to do to lead us toward that consummation:

Trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly.
And the best of the three is love.

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WHO ARE SEVENTH DAY BAPTISTS?

If you've never read *The Sabbath Recorder* before, you might be wondering who Seventh Day Baptists are.

Like other Baptists, we believe in:

- salvation by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.
- the Bible as the inspired word of God. The Bible is our authority for our faith and daily conduct.
- baptism of believers, by immersion, witnessing to our acceptance of Christ as Savior and Lord.
- freedom of thought under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- the congregational form of church government. Every church member has the right to participate in the decision-making process of the church.

THE SEVENTH DAY

God commanded that the seventh day (Saturday) be kept holy. Jesus agreed by keeping it as a day of worship. We observe the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as God's Holy Day as an act of loving obedience – not as a means of salvation. Salvation is the free gift of God through Jesus our Lord. It is the joy of the Sabbath that makes SDBs a people with a difference.

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*Less talk
More action*

*What's Love got to do
with Action?*

Everything!

Love in action—It doesn't happen by more talk...
it happens by more action!

It's All About Loving God and Loving Others!

—Pastor Tim Smothers



In July of 1984, Tina Turner released a hit song “What’s Love Got To Do With It?” By September of that year it had reached the coveted #1 spot on the charts and then went on to garner a Grammy Award the following year. In the eyes of the music world, it was wildly successful, yet the overall message of the song was nothing new. The world has always equated love with a feeling, a longing for something that can be present one moment and gone the next... It is a very sad commentary on our culture.

God takes a much different view on love than what our culture does... Talk is cheap.

Less talk, more action...

John writes in 1 John 3:16-18: *By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.*

What’s love have to do with it? Everything! The love of Christ goes way beyond feelings and goes much deeper than words. We were not saved by God’s feelings. We were rescued by the blood of Christ—God’s love in action! Christ did much more than just talk about what love looks like; He demonstrated that love on the cross. I am thankful for that active love that Christ has shown me, yet in my thankfulness I all too often stop there and rest on His sacrifice without considering what I am supposed to do with that. How do I “lay down my life for my brothers”?

1 John 3:17 puts it very simply—it is done by helping those in need. We certainly do not need to go very far to see great need, whether it is in our homes, our churches, or our communities. Scripture tells us to help, to show compassion and kindness to a brother or sister in need. What does that look like for you?

I am thankful for the opportunities that we have to share as a church in our community. Several years ago, we were approached by the leaders of a medical complex across the street from us. They had started a food bank for the community, which was originally being done outdoors. With the cold weather approaching, they needed a place to set up. We opened our doors on November 23, 2015, for them to use during the winter months. In March of the following year they asked if they could use our building year around. Each Monday and Thursday, we collaborate with Grace Health to distribute food to those who are in need.

In addition to meeting their physical needs, we have been able to minister in other ways as well. This has led to opportunities to cultivate relationships not only with those who come for assistance, but with those who volunteer their time and resources to help. We have Bibles that we give away, activity books for the children, and helpful information that we hand out. While these things are “good” things, the best ministry by far is being able to introduce people to the Savior, to offer them Hope in what may be for them a very helpless situation.

This is just an example of what it looks like for us at Battle Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church. I pray that we as the church would take 1 John 3:16-18 and make this one of our defining characteristics in the days, months, and years ahead. [SR](#)

How's Your "Love Life"?

*The love the Bible calls for is a love of substance —
a love that you walk into and never walk out of.*

Forty years of marriage. That's what the Lord had so graciously allowed Debbie & me to celebrate this past December.

How can a marriage work for that long when started by two teenagers from broken homes with lots of odds stacked against them? As I once heard John Maxwell say, "For a marriage to work, it takes work!"

As two followers of Jesus who were "madly in love" with each other—we learned early in our marriage that love is more than emotions and attraction.

Yes—God has wired us to experience and enjoy deep emotions of "love" as a couple. But love is more than emotion. It is motion.

Yes, God has wired us to experience strong attractions of "love." But love is more than attraction. It is action.

In fact, action is what gives love traction.

It's because true love is built on motion and action that God can command us to love Him and love one another. (Matthew 22:36-40)

"Surface-level" love, that which is nothing more than intense emotion and attraction, can indeed be something that you "fall into" and "fall out of."

It's like the kindling used to make a fire: it only starts it—it isn't made to sustain it. You can't get much done with just kindling. A sustainable fire needs substantial pieces of wood.

In the same way, the love the Bible calls for is a love of substance—a love that you walk into and never walk out of.

God's love is this way. He loved us and proved it by action: that of giving up His only Son for our good. (John 3:16) When we were the most unattractive, and not the least bit deserving, He gave His all for us out of love. (Romans 5:6-8)

Our love for others is based on God's love for us: giving up ourselves for the good of others. (1 John 3:16)

True love is provable: love leaves evidence. God left a trail in Christ. We are to leave a trail as Christians.

Jesus said that if we loved Him, we would obey Him. (John 14:15) We aren't to just feel all emotional about Him, or be attracted to Him: we are to move and act for Him!

The same thing is true towards others, whether they are our spouse, family members, friends, church family, etc. We aren't to love just with words but with our walk. (1 John 3:18) Jesus set the bar high. We are to love others AS He loved us. (John 13:34-35) This kind of love, the love that Jesus proved towards us, is a love that only God's grace can produce within us.

So what does true love, a love of substance, motion and action, "look" like? One place to look at is 1 Corinthians 13—often called the "love" chapter. After stressing the importance and impact of true love in vs. 1-3, Paul then describes love.

Love is patient, kind, not jealous, not a bragger, not rude, seeks to give, isn't easily ticked off, doesn't keep a record of wrongs; isn't happy over what is sinful, but over what is right; it is always supportive, gives the benefit of the doubt, looks positively forward, and remains committed. No wonder Paul caps it all off with the statement that this kind of love will never lose its impact.

I've often heard that, just as we put our names in the "whosoever" places of John 3:16, we should put our names in before each description of love in that passage.

May God's grace enable us to express and experience true love: a love of motion and action (which then only intensifies the emotions and attraction)!^[SR]

—Pastor Steven James

A Different Way of Thinking About Love

— Rev. Dr. Kenneth Chroniger

“Hey, have you heard this is the month for candy and flowers?” It’s also the month for those cards, from elementary school classrooms to the man and woman married for 70 years—they seem to all echo the same words, “Would you be my Valentine?” We are told from an American Express Survey that nearly 6 million proposals are made on Valentine’s Day. Love is truly in the air.

For a few minutes would you consider with me, not a better, but a different way of thinking concerning love? According to the Gospel of John, Jesus spoke, “greater love has no man than this that he lay down his life for a friend” (John 15:13). Come with me to Arlington National Cemetery and view the row upon row of white grave markers in perfect alignment. Experience with me the grave site service with the military precision of the snap and folding of the United States of America flag that had draped the coffin, the sound of the exacting firing of the rifles in salute, and the finality of the trumpeter playing taps. Come with me on a short trip from northern Virginia to “The Wall” and see your image reflected among the names of those killed or MIA in Vietnam. Walk the 70 panels that make up the wall and “weep with those who weep.” Come with me to western New York and walk the Alfred Rural Cemetery, pausing by the headstone of one who served his country in the Armed Forces.

“Greater love has no man than this that he lay down his life for a friend”

—John 15:13



Dunham scales a wall during training in 2000

Let me introduce you to Jason Dunham, who grew up less than a half hour from the Alfred Station Seventh Day Baptist Church. Dunham joined the Marine Corps in 2000. After graduating from recruit training on 27 October 2000 from Gulf Company Platoon 2092, he served as a Security Force sentry at Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay in Georgia until 2003. In early 2004, he was serving as a squad leader with 4th Platoon, Company K, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force. His unit was based in Al-Karābilah.

On April 14, 2004, the battalion commander’s convoy came under attack near Husaybah, Iraq, and 4th Platoon was dispatched on patrol to investigate. Dunham and his squad intercepted a number of cars spotted near the scene of the attack, which the patrol detained to search for weapons. When the squad approached a white Toyota Land Cruiser and discovered AK-47s, the driver exited and attacked the Marines in an attempt to flee. Dunham responded by closing in for hand-to-hand combat to subdue him. During the fighting, the individual dropped an armed Mills 36M hand grenade. Dunham, to save the rest of his men, deliberately threw himself on the grenade, attempting to use his PASGT helmet to shield himself and others from the explosion, warning the others to “watch his hands.” Dunham, the insurgent, and two other Marines nearby were all wounded by grenade fragments. ... Corporal Dunham was severely wounded by the grenade blast, and was immediately evacuated. Within days, he arrived at National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, MD, in a coma, where he was being treated for his injuries. After being diagnosed with brain damage and deemed unlikely to recover, he was taken off of life support... (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jason_Dunham).

“Greater love has no man than this that he lay down his life for a friend”

—John 15:13



acted without hesitation or concern for their own lives and saved the lives of 33 Marines and 21 Iraqi police inside the compound: “Recognizing the danger to their fellow Marines and partnered Iraqi police, Cpl. Yale and Lance Cpl. Haerter fearlessly gave their lives in their defense.” (<http://jordan-haerter.com/>)

Let me introduce you to Jordan Haerter, the son of a family friend. On April 22, 2008, United States Marine Corps Lance Corporal Jordan Christian Haerter was killed in action in Ramadi, Iraq. At 19 years of age, Jordan was deployed to a Joint Security Station Nasser, in the Sophia district of Ramadi, which at one point was the center of insurgency in that city. The 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines were in the process of turning over this Joint Security Station to the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines. Jordan, a member of the fiercely proud and storied 1st Battalion, 9th Marines also known as ‘The Walking Dead’, and fellow marine, Corporal Jonathan T. Yale, a rifleman with 2nd Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, were standing guard at an Entry Control Point. At 0745, a large truck accelerated towards the Entry Control Point, careening off the protective serpentine, ignoring all signals and flares warning the driver to stop. When the truck failed to stop, Jordan and Cpl. Yale opened fire until the 2,000 lb. blast claimed their lives.

Because of the valiant effort by Jordan and Cpl. Yale, the truck bomber did not make it as far as the post they were protecting, therefore saving the 33 Marines and numerous police inside of the Joint Security Station and several civilians within proximity to the station. According to Major General John F. Kelly, “I spoke to several Iraqi police eyewitnesses and they all told the same story, but one more emotionally than the others. He said no sane man would have stood there directly in the path of a speeding truck firing their weapons—yet two did. His officers, some as close as ten feet initially from the Marines, fired and ran when it was obvious the truck could not be stopped—and they survived. The Marines stood their ground and stopped the truck before it detonated, and saved the lives of their buddies.” An official after-action report says the two

“Greater love has no man than this that he lay down his life for a friend”

John 15:13



The ultimate example of Jesus’ word was Jesus Himself. In John 15:13, He had just finished giving the message of greater love. Now Jesus says you are my friend if you do what I command you. (Sounds like this is “Less Talk More Action”) Jesus then goes on to tell the disciples that they are no longer servants but friends. Here is what we know:

1. There is no greater love but to die for a friend
2. If I do what Jesus commands I am His friend
3. Jesus through His death on the cross died for me
4. Jesus loves me this I know
5. There is no greater love

In this love month of February the message of Love in Action is simple, short and sweet:

“Greater love has no man than this that he lay down his life for a friend”

—John 15:13

SR

A Month Filled With Love

February is the month of love and appreciation for the people you have to cherish. I thought why not make this month special by filling every day with our love for God and his love for us (even though that should be an everyday occurrence). Take a verse every day in the morning and make your days focus on fully understanding the love inside it, because face it, the love that God has for us is the most love any of us will ever see.

- “We love because he first loved us” – **1 John 4:19**
- “So Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days because of the love he had for her” – **Genesis 29:20**
- “And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.” – **Colossians 3:14**
- “There are three things that amaze me—no, four things that I don’t understand: how an eagle glides through the sky, how a snake slithers on a rock, how a ship navigates the ocean, how a man loves a woman.” – **Proverbs 30:18-19**
- “My beloved is mine and I am his; he pastures his flock among the lilies.” – **Song of Solomon 2:16**
- “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails ...” – **1 Corinthians 13:4-8a**
- “And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.” – **1 Corinthians 13:13**
- “Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and truth.” – **1 John 3:18**
- “And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.” – **Romans 5:5**
- “Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.” – **1 John 4:7**
- “Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.” – **1 John 4:11**
- “The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self control.” – **Galatians 5:22-23**
- “Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations.” – **Deuteronomy 7:9**
- “But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.” – **Psalms 86:15**
- “Give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever.” – **Psalms 136:26**
- “The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing.” – **Zephaniah 3:17**
- “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” – **John 3:16**
- “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” – **Romans 5:8**
- “Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” – **Romans 5:2-5**
- “No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” – **Romans 8:37-39**
- “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.” – **Galatians 2:20**
- “But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ— by grace you have been saved.” – **Ephesians 2:4-5**

- “See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.” – **1 John 3:1**
- “Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.” – **Romans 12:9-10**
- “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” – **Mark 12:29-31**
- “Many claim to have unfailing love, but a faithful person who can find? The righteous lead blameless lives; blessed are their children after them.” – **Proverbs 20:6-7**
- “And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.” - **1 John 4:21**
- “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.” – **Jeremiah 29:11** ^{SR}

Ice Storm Inspiration

With a song You put in me, I praise You,

“O God our help in ages past, our Hope for years to come

Our Shelter from the stormy blast and our eternal home.”

I praise You and thank You for Your Holy Spirit living in me, giving me just the right song at just the right time, reinforcing the truth that You are with me at all times.

This is, after all, about the stormiest blast I can recall when it comes to what’s happening outside: our living room windows opaque like shower doors, the icicle fringe at the top thicker than yesterday; tree branches leaning, heaving; ice on limbs cracking, breaking; the wind whispering loudly, at times faintly whistling and then rolling in like a rushing tide.

The wind is a giant, playful child with manners. She wields a broom and sweeps through after playing pick-up-sticks with broken twigs which she’d brought crashing down from their places on high.

Our windows may be opaque, but I still can see six flying forms hasten by as the wind comes blustering through again. My honey sleeps in his chair, unaware. Sweet dreams, my Dear. The flame’s still on in our gas log fireplace — that dream was short — Nature’s Child splits more wood NOISILY (must be for someone else’s fire). My darling’s eyes blink open for just a moment, accompanied by a surprised grin. He rests now easily.

Thank You, Maker of wind and rain and icicles. Thank You for the gaslog fireplace especially now that the electric lines became jump ropes for Playful Wind. Thank You for the candles and flashlight, blankets, food and drink — even hot tea warmed over a candle. ^{SR}

*by Susan Bond
Written on 2-21-15*

Discipleship Requires Prayer

A friend of mine once told me an intriguing story from his childhood. One night while his family was returning from a trip, they got caught in a terrible storm. The visibility became so poor amidst the darkness and torrential rain that his father started guiding their vehicle based on the movements of the car in front of them. Since they seemed to be going in the right direction, they simply followed the taillights in front of them. They closely followed the movements of the leading car—until 'it' happened.

The car in front of them slowed down and came to a complete stop. This would be a complete stop in the middle of the road. The family wondered if there was some obstruction in the road or if the car ahead of them was having engine trouble. Then, the car ahead of them turned off the lights—as they sat in the middle of the road. And wondered what would happen next.

There was a knock at the driver's window, causing all sorts of alarm in the car. Why would someone come to their window in the pouring rain? What sinister motives might be at work here? My friend's father cracked the window and asked what the trouble seemed to be. The stranger at the window said that he was going to ask the same thing. At this point, the father became rather irritated, concerned about being stuck in the middle of a road with terrible visibility.

The father questioned this stranger quite directly—who in their right mind would stop in the middle of the road, let alone shut off their lights as well? Using churchy words, he expressed this concern "with much warmth," so to speak.

The stranger paused, crouched closer to the window, and said "Mister, you're not in the middle of the road, you're sitting in my driveway."

This story has been told to me a number of times, with varying details, but there is a common moral. It is important to choose the right leader and the right road. No matter your life journey, no matter how bad the storm, it is imperative to be following the right leader on the right road.

How are we doing at offering the right road as churches? Perhaps we raise our expectations and seek to join God in His work. We emphatically engage in outward focus and boldly speak the Gospel message. Where do we go from there? Is our only metric of spiritual growth whether or not people attend worship services consistently, or maybe whether or not they attend Sabbath School or a small group? There has to be more to discipleship than this.

A healthy church is passionate about people being life-long disciples of Jesus Christ. That seemed to be Jesus' intent with His disciples. In many ways, discipleship is the relationship between the student and the teacher which leads to following the right leader on the right road. A primary mission for the healthy church is the ongoing process of discipleship of her members. This is a mission that is not simply done by our own strength, but requires passionate prayer.

In Ephesians 3:14-19, Paul offers a prayer of discipleship as a way of life. The prayer begins with a clear establishment of Who is in control.

¹⁴ *For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,*
¹⁵ *from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named...* (ESV)

Paul is not resting on his own plans, a great five-step plan to discipleship, nor the endurance of the people he is writing to—Paul first and foremost relies upon the work of God. When it comes to discipleship, we too need to passionately rely upon God's work in prayer. Discipleship can be one of those things that we think "we have under control." After all, we might stink at evangelism, but discipleship is an area at which we excel. We offer Bible studies, we make people feel guilty when they don't come to worship services, we encourage spiritual disciplines... But do we as churches truly foster discipleship? Might it be possible that discipleship goes well beyond our strategies and requires an act of God? It seems as though Paul is pretty passionate about praying to the One "from whom every family in Heaven and on earth is named"—praying to the One who gives us our identity.

"You can't become the person God dreams for you to be in your own strength."

Remember, this letter to the Ephesians is mainly written to Christians who already have a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. They know they should be following Christ—but are struggling in how to follow as disciples. This is what Paul prays for—that God will spur them on in their discipleship. More specifically, Paul prays that their discipleship will be defined by three things: Power, Indwelling, and Knowledge.

POWER

Here is how Paul prays for power in discipleship in Ephesians 3:16: *"that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being."* (ESV) Fascinating—Paul's first turn for discipleship is to ask God for power, not that the lousy Ephesians would smarten up and learn a little faster.

This focus on power makes sense to me. Some years ago, my wife and I had a toaster that stopped working and needed to be replaced. We contacted the manufacturer since the toaster was still under warranty, but really did not want the cost of sending back the entire toaster. The manufacturer said they did not want the toaster—all they needed to verify that the toaster was dead was the electrical cord. By cutting off the electrical cord to the toaster, we made it clear that the toaster was unusable. No power, no functioning toaster. Power matters!

But, when it comes to discipleship, do you and I pray for this? I pray that God will change the behavior of my children. I pray that God will fix the outward problems of relationships within the church. I will pray that God brings more people to church or Bible Studies. Those are good prayers, but I am not asking for God's power to be at work.

Dr. Martin Sanders has said that "You can't become the person God dreams for you to be in your own strength." That is a powerful statement about discipleship. The discipleship process cries for praying for God's power to become the people He dreams for us to be.

This opens the door to a tangible step we can make in our churches towards deeper discipleship. Rather than asking "How are you?" at church each week, maybe we should aim to look for greater discipleship opportunities. After all, what response do we truly get from "How are you?" Rarely does anyone share what is truly on his heart with

that question—I usually get a bland non-answer. Once in a while someone might tell me that he is terrible, and even less often do I get a response of "finer than fur on a fish." Maybe the "How are you" question could be replaced by praying for power.

Dr. Martin Sanders recommends that we spend time praying for people during the week. Specifically, that we spend time praying for power in their discipleship process. Then, when we see them at church we replace the "How are you" question with: "I want to let you know that I see God at work in your life. I just want to affirm that and ask how I can continue praying for you."

That sounds somewhat potentially awkward—but does a healthy church thrive in the shallows of small talk? What if we sought active discipleship in our churches through prayer for power—and actively engaged people in conversation about how we can specifically pray for them in the discipleship process? I know for myself, simply knowing that someone is praying for me and cheering me on in the discipleship process goes a long way in encouraging growth over stagnation.

BEWARE OF IMITATIONS

Friends of ours on the other side of the globe recently gave us some candy. There was a Snickers Bar—which was yummy and full of caloric goodness. They also gave us an imitation Snickers Bar. It looked just like the Snickers Bar, had the same color scheme on the wrapper and a similar looking name. The imitation name did lack in quality though—it was named a "Stalkers Bar." The name gives an indication of the flavor quality as well. Rather than the sweet goodness of a Snickers Bar, biting into the imitation provides a dull, earthy flavor rather akin to eating clay. Something that looks so close, yet is miles apart.

The same is true when it comes to discipleship. As a church, we can provide imitation discipleship that has a bunch of glow words that sounds churchy, but does not truly lead someone in the path of discipleship. A critical first step is to pray passionately about the discipleship of our churches. And, to specifically pray for God's power to be at work in that process.

Next time, we'll continue through Paul's prayer of discipleship—looking at Power, Indwelling, and Knowledge. And, in the end, we'll also see what discipleship has to do with Processed Cheese Food. [SR](#)

THE LORD'S PRAYER



Deliver Us
From Evil...

**This is a passage
where Jesus relates
the ultimate purpose
of the Kingdom of God.**

10th in a series by Assistant Pastor Philip Lawton
Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh, NJ
Check out Phil's blog at contemplatingkenosis.blogspot.com

The last few months have been alarming. Hurricane Maria has left Puerto Rico without power to this day. California has had several fires and now a mudslide that left at least 17 dead. In New Jersey, we had a “bomb cyclone” that left the east coast covered in snow. North Korea gets ever closer to nuking the world. Just last month suicide bombers took out a church in Pakistan during a children’s Christmas program.

Evil is part of the sinful world that we live in. There are times that the world seems so dark we cannot imagine how God can be in control. We wonder if there is anything that can save us from the evil in this world. Every day we hear of another case of sexual assault and abuse of power. Some of us have experienced very real evil in our own homes. When we pray for deliverance from evil we often think of immediate evil. But what Jesus was teaching us was about so much more.

If there is one thing that we have learned from this study of the Lord’s Prayer, it is that what Jesus was teaching us is often much deeper than what we think when we recite the prayer. This is no different for the concept of evil. The real need for deliverance from the suffering in our lives at the hands of the evil in the world is only a fraction of what Jesus is teaching us here. In this simple phrase Jesus is reminding us of the cosmic significance of His coming to earth.

The Evil One

Any discussion of this part of the Lord’s Prayer must deal with the concept of Satan. A valid but not often used translation of this passage could be “deliver us from the evil one.” At first glance this might seem like a significant translation distinction. After all, if Jesus is talking specifically about Satan then He is referencing spiritual warfare. But the reality is that the whole of what Jesus did here on earth was spiritual warfare and the acknowledgement of Satan in the Lord’s Prayer does not change that.

From natural disasters, to tyrants with their hands on a red button, to public examples of sexual assault, to the horrors within our own homes — the world is full of evil.

We could, with this knowledge, claim that when we sin it is the result of the temptation of Satan and therefore not our fault. This is a hallow argument that removes our own agency in the temptation. Further, it can lead us to be in fear and give Satan far more credit than he is due. The sins we

commit are our own. The devil may be able to tempt us, but he cannot make us do anything.

This passage is not Jesus teaching us to pass the buck. Nor is it Jesus teaching us to be afraid that there are demons around every corner. Rather this is a passage where Jesus relates the ultimate purpose of the Kingdom of God.

The Evil Within

I began this entry with a list of some of the evils we see everywhere in the world. From natural disasters, to tyrants with their hands on a red button, to public examples of sexual assault, to the horrors within our own homes — the world is full of evil. Yet what all this ignores and what can be lost when we focus on Satan as the tempter is the evil we all have.

Just one verse earlier Jesus reminded us that we are in need of forgiveness just like those around us. We are not innocent. The evil that we see in the world exists within each of us. When we forget our own sinfulness we become like the Pharisee in Luke 7. We often talk about the Gospel as the message of forgiveness of sins, but that means that we have sins to begin with.

True and complete deliverance from evil means the return of the king. It means that Jesus reigns.

Yes, Jesus is teaching us to pray for deliverance from the devil. Yes, Jesus is teaching us to pray for deliverance from our own sins. But He is calling us to see the true purpose of His life, death and resurrection. Jesus is teaching us to look beyond our present circumstances to something much more beautiful than temporary relief from our present suffering.

The Return of the King

When Jesus taught us to pray for deliverance from evil He was teaching us to ask for the Kingdom of God. True and complete deliverance from evil means the return of the king. It means that Jesus reigns. It means that we give up our hold and submit to the king. I have already written about what the Kingdom of God looks like, but I want to remind you that it is a place where there is no evil.

This petition is not just about us. It is not just about being spared from pain and suffering. It is not just about keeping Satan at bay. This petition is a plea to God to come quickly. It is a cry out to the creator of the universe to come and set right all the wrongs in the world. This petition means that we must submit to the king. Asking to be delivered from evil means that we must accept the rule of another.

The Lord's Prayer is the Gospel

When I began this series I don't think I really understood what would come of it. I thought that I would just give some information on that prayer that we say nearly every week at church. Yet as I have researched and written, I have come to realize that the entirety of the Gospel is summed up in this prayer. It is a realization that we can do nothing without God. It is a cry to the creator to free us from the suffering of this life. It is a submission to the rule of the one true king.

Since the time of the Fall, humanity has tried to rule ourselves. We have tried kings and democracies and republics and communes. Each of these has failed us. We cannot save ourselves. This is the message of the Old Testament. This is the reality of daily bread. We need a savior. We need a king. This is the reality of deliverance from evil. Yet we cannot have that savior, we cannot have that king if we do not submit. This is the reality of "Thy will be done."

When we pray the Lord's Prayer — when we really understand it — we are preaching the Gospel. We are submitting to the only authority that matters. We are crying out to the only One who can really save us. Jesus taught us to pray in this way so that we would never forget what it means to follow Him. The Lord's Prayer is the Gospel.

*May you come to realize that evil
is not just all around you, but within you.
May you cry out to God for deliverance from evil.
May you understand that ultimate deliverance
comes only with the reign of Jesus.
And may God hear our prayer and come quickly.*

Amen!

SR

“Knowing We Are Pilgrims, as Our Fathers Were”: A New Look at the Hubbards

*First in a series of spinoff articles from recent research on the
Newport, Rhode Island, Seventh Day Baptists*

by Janet Thorngate

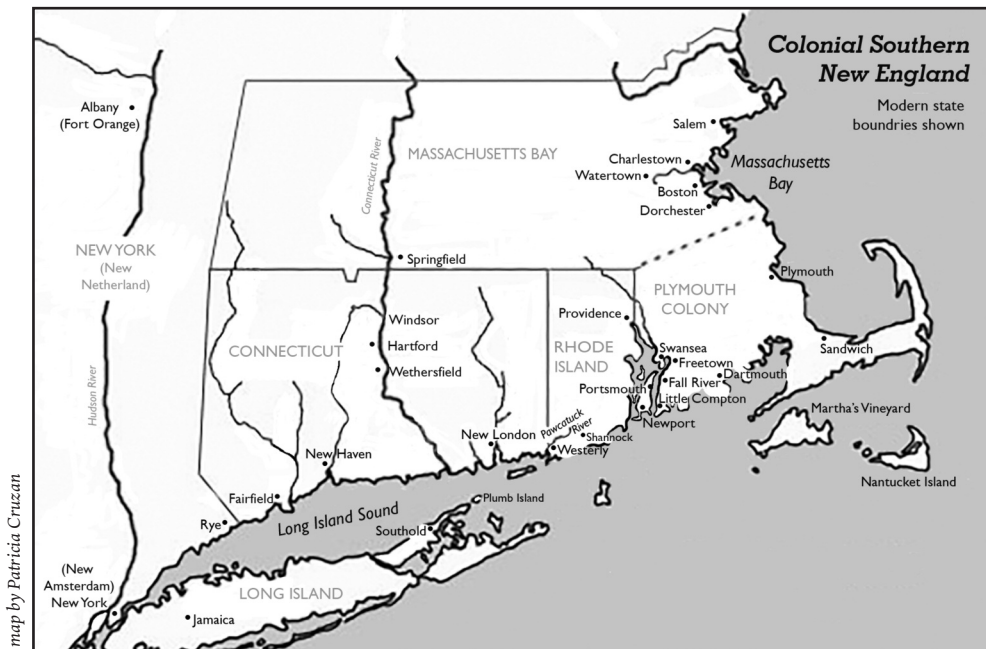
Most people who have even a smattering of American Seventh Day Baptist history know that the first Seventh Day Baptist church in America was founded in Newport, Rhode Island, in 1671 and that Samuel and Tacy Hubbard and their daughter Rachael Langworthy were three of the seven charter members. And anyone who has visited the Seventh Day Baptist museum in the last 100 years has seen the oldest book in our archives, the “Hubbard Bible,” of which Hubbard said, “Now 1675 I have a testament of my grandfather Cooke’s printed 1549, which he hid in his bed-straw lest it should be found and burnt in queen Mary’s days.” Those who have studied the history to any extent know that we would know little about the origins of the church and its first twenty-one years were it not for the extensive writings of Samuel Hubbard.

So, what is new? What emerges from recent research into the wider context of the seven places Hubbard lived before arriving in Newport at age thirty-eight? We find that he viewed his life as a pilgrimage, each new beginning growing from earlier roots. What emerges from closer examination of his writing is the strong force of family nurture as it influences a growing church. The courage to follow one’s conscience wherever it leads gathers strength from both of these themes.

Samuel Hubbard grew up in Mendelsham, Suffolk, England, an area known for religious dissent. He was aware that grandparents on both sides had suffered persecution for their faith, and he described his own Christian conversion at age sixteen as influenced particularly by his mother’s seeing to it that he heard “choice ministers.” It was apparently with older siblings that he joined the migration to Massachusetts Bay Colony at age twenty-three. Here he became acquainted with Roger Williams, whose radical opposition to the conscience-stifling practices of the Standing Order Congregational Church had not yet caused his banishment to what became Rhode Island. Hubbard’s own journey took him further and further away from the long arm of strict Puritan Boston to new frontiers.

First Hubbard moved west to Watertown where he was accepted in the Standing Order Church “by giving account of my faith,” but he shortly joined a migration south along the Connecticut River to form new settlements near what became Hartford. In Windsor he married Tacy Cooper during the harsh winter that sent most of the sixty settlers back to Massachusetts. After a short move north to Wethersfield, where their first two children died, they settled in Springfield, a fur-trading post at the intersection of several Indian trails. Here were born the three daughters who survived: Ruth (later Burdick), Rachael (later Langworthy), and Bethiah (later Clarke). Here Samuel was involved in establishment of the town church, again “giving account of my faith” along with four other male members, “my wife soon after added.”

Sources for all the information in this article may be found in *Baptists in Early North America: Newport, Rhode Island, Seventh Day Baptists* by Janet Thorngate (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2017). In addition to a history of the church in its historical context, the book includes the previously unpublished church records and the collected writings of Samuel Hubbard pertinent to the church’s history. The book may be ordered from the publisher for \$60: www.mupress.org or Mercer University Press, 501 Mercer Univ. Dr., Macon GA 31207.



Map of Colonial Southern New England showing towns where the Hubbards lived or visited other contacts and church members.

After nine years, however, Massachusetts Bay Colony passed a law against Baptists (anyone opposed to infant baptism) and Springfield was now on the contested border between Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut colonies. The Hubbards suddenly moved down the full navigable length of the Connecticut River to Long Island Sound and west to the far edge of the colony near the New York border. It was not far enough. When Tacy zealously made known that she believed in baptism only of people who had clearly expressed their own adult belief, and Samuel “was also said to be as bad as she,” they were given the option of prison or banishment. Thus, after only five months in Fairfield, Connecticut, they “went for Rhode Island.” It took them twelve days to go the 125 miles to Newport where they were immediately baptized by John Clarke and joined the Baptist Church. Ruth was eight, Rachel six, and Bethia two, their parents not yet forty.

For the next twenty-four years Hubbard was an active layman in the Newport Baptist Church. His “gift of prophesying publicly in the church” was encouraged, and he was often sent to represent the church among new contacts or persecuted Baptists in neighboring colonies. The daughters, baptized as young women, married and began families. The Hubbard farm (Maidford), where he also conducted his carpentry trade, was near that of John Clarke and other members on the northern edge of Newport near the center of the island.

Then, as all good American Seventh Day Baptists know, came Ann and Stephen Mumford to Newport calling attention to the seventh-day Sabbath of Scripture. They had been two of several Sabbathkeeping members of the Baptist

congregation in Tewkesbury, England. First Tacy Hubbard, and within two years eleven other members of the Baptist church, began observing the seventh-day Sabbath. These included daughters Ruth and Bethiah and Bethiah’s husband Joseph Clarke (nephew of John Clarke) who were already among the first settlers on the Rhode Island frontier in Westerly (now Hopkinton). Thus, keeping the seventh-day Sabbath began almost simultaneously in two Rhode Island locations, a day-long trip apart by boat and footpath or horse trail.

During the seven years after the Mumfords’ arrival in 1664, while the Baptist church struggled to accommodate differences in practice, the young William Hiscox emerged as the capable leader and spokesman for the Sabbatarians. Hubbard, recording the controversy in his “Register” and copying the voluminous correspondence between Sabbatarians in Old and New England, rejoiced in the Biblical preaching and debating of “brother Hiscox.” He would become the son the Hubbards lost. Their first son, Samuel, was born and died as a child in Springfield; the second Samuel, born in Newport, died of smallpox at age 21, one year before the Seventh Day Baptist Church was organized. In reflecting on progress of the church thirteen years later, Hubbard declared, “Jehovah hath made this bud or branch to grow to a tree by adding Brother Hiscox: wonderful grace.”

The family tree and the extending church family tree grew from a firmly rooted covenant. Through it they were “seeking God’s face among ourselves for the Lord to direct us in a right way for us and our children.” They “entered into covenant with ye Lord and with one another and gave up
continued on next page...



Samuel Hubbard's gravestone is currently in Paradise School, museum of the Middletown Historical Society, about five miles north of downtown Newport. It was found 30 years ago in a flower bed a little further up the Maidford River at Whitehall Museum House, the 1729 home of Anglican Bishop George Berkeley, maintained since 1899 by the Society of Colonial Dames. Berkeley's 96-acre farm, now a residential area, apparently included what had been Samuel Hubbard's 25-acre farm where the Sabbatarians met for worship at least as early as 1669. There, about 100 years later, in 1763, Congregational minister Ezra Stiles found the Hubbard's Ebenezer stone and transcribed it.

ourselves to God and one to another" with a "sense upon our hearts of great need to be watchful over one other...edifying and building up one another in our most holy faith." The strong arms of the covenant embraced those first baptized—a full day's boat trip west in New London, Connecticut—and called far-flung members back for yearly meeting from even further east in Plymouth Colony and Martha's Vinyard. For thirty-seven years the covenant nurtured the first daughter church not set off until 1708 (I Hopkinton) but still considered "a sister church in covenant relation with us."

Samuel and Tacy's journey was a shared one. In a 1688 letter he wrote:

Thro' God's great mercy the Lord have given me in this wilderness a good, diligent, careful, painful [painstaking] & very loving wife: we thro' mercy live comfortably, praised be God, as coheirs together, of one mind in the Lord, travelling thro' this wilderness to our heavenly Sion, knowing we are pilgrims as our fathers were; & good portion being content therewith.

He was quick to acknowledge his wife's leadership at crucial points in the family pilgrimage: first to proclaim Baptist views, first to begin keeping the seventh-day Sabbath, first to proclaim to the Baptist church the "grounds" on which the five based their decision to withdraw.

In 1686 when they had been married fifty years, Samuel 76 and Tacy 78, they "counted up" how long each had

been "a convert, an independent [Congregational] and joined to a church, a Baptist, and a Sabbathkeeper," concluding, "We are by rich grace born up & adorned with rich mercies above many, as to have all my three daughters in the same faith & order, & 2 of their husbands, and 2 of my grand daughters and their husbands also with us. O Praise the Lord, for his goodness endures for ever!" The Hubbards' joy seemed rooted in their concern that the faith of the next generation have the vitality to continue "the same faith and order." In this same letter he wrote, "This church in general is reasonable well, & of late, in great unity, praise be to God."

Two years later, in 1688, they erected their Ebenezer (a stone commemorating God's presence and help—I Samuel 7:12-14) in a family burial place on the farm. It listed their names and those of the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Samuel apparently died later that year although when his gravestone was found in a nearby flower bed 300 years later, the death date was unreadable. Tacy lived at least another nine years to age 88 when the church minutes record that she and one other member voted against a specific disciplinary action and the church suspended the matter.

Generations of Hubbard spiritual descendants, not to mention the large percentage of their biological ones, continue "coheirs together, of one mind in the Lord" three hundred and fifty years later. We do well to be "knowing we are pilgrims as our fathers were." ^[SR]

Deadly Doctrine

by Tim Challies

I have asked Tim Challies about sharing his blog from February 2017. I have found it very profound and needed in today's "touchy/feely" "say-whatever-you-want" society. His article is too long for one of our SR articles so I have done my best to condense it. For the full blog go to <https://www.challies.com/articles/test-every-doctrine-test-every-teacher/>

T.D. Jakes says that God eternally exists in three manifestations, not three persons. Greg Boyd says God knows some aspects of the future, but that other future events are outside of His knowledge. Creflo Dollar says because we are created in the image of God, we are little gods. Mormonism says God revealed new scripture to Joseph Smith that supersedes the Bible. This world is a murky madness of true and false. For every doctrine we know to be true, there seems to be a hundred pretenders.

No wonder, then, that John tells us to "test the spirits" and Paul says, "test everything" (1 John 4:1). It is our sacred responsibility to examine every doctrine to determine if it is true or false. But how can we distinguish sound doctrine from false? How can we distinguish teachers of truth from teachers of error? Here are some tests that are useful for testing any doctrine.

Test 1: The Test of Origin

Sound doctrine originates with God; false doctrine originates with someone or something created by God. Just as true doctrine is marked by its divine origin, false doctrine is marked by its worldly origin. Paul warned the Colossian church to avoid doctrine that is "according to human precepts and teachings" and told Timothy that some would "depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons" (Colossians 2:22, 1 Timothy 4:1).

The test: Does this doctrine originate with God or has it been fabricated by someone or something else?

Test 2: The Test of Authority

Sound doctrine grounds its authority within the Bible; false doctrine grounds its authority outside the Bible. The Bible is God's inerrant, infallible, sufficient, complete, and authoritative revelation of himself to humanity. Doctrines that originate in the mind of God are recorded in the Word of God. There is a clear and necessary correlation between origin and authority, between God and His Word.

The test: Does this doctrine appeal to the Bible for its authority? Or does it appeal to another scripture or another mind?

But a concern remains, because two teachers may both claim the authority of the Bible while teaching very different things. How can we know whose interpretation is correct? This is where we turn to the third test.

Test 3: The Test of Consistency

Sound doctrine is consistent with the whole of Scripture; false doctrine is inconsistent with some parts of Scripture. There is a sameness or familiarity to true doctrine and a strangeness or unfamiliarity to false doctrine. The man who wrote the letter to the Hebrews warned his congregation about "diverse and strange teachings," while Paul warned Timothy about accepting "different doctrine" (Hebrews 13:9; 1 Timothy 1:3, 6:3). Both meant to emphasize that doctrine must always be compared to the established, accepted body of truth.

The test: Is this doctrine established or refuted by the entirety of Scripture?

Once we have tested doctrine and found it to be true, according to these three criteria, we can also see its soundness by its effects on us and those around us. That requires two more tests.

Test 4: The Test of Spiritual Growth

Sound doctrine is beneficial for spiritual health; false doctrine leads to spiritual weakness. After instructing Timothy, Paul told him, "If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained ["nourished"] in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed" (1 Timothy 4:6). Sound doctrine makes spiritually healthy, mature, knowledgeable Christians. False doctrine makes spiritually unhealthy, immature, ignorant Christians who may be no Christians at all.

Test 5: The Test of Godly Living

Sound doctrine has value for godly living; false doctrine leads to ungodly living. Truth never stands on its own, but always has implications in life. Doctrine is always meant to lead to doxology, worship, and purposeful living. "All Scripture is breathed out by God," says Paul, "and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Conclusion

True doctrine (content) originates with God (origin), is grounded in the Bible (authority), and agrees with the whole of Scripture (consistency). Because such doctrine is sound (quality), it is healthy (benefit), and profitable (value) for us, and we are responsible for holding it (responsibility).

False doctrine (content) originates with man (origin), is not grounded in the Bible (authority), and contradicts portions of Scripture (consistency). Because such doctrine is unsound (quality), it is unhealthy (benefit) and unprofitable (value) for us, and we are responsible for rejecting it (responsibility). SR

Rob Appel
Executive Director



Mission Kenya 2017 — To God Be The Glory

A team of four—Garfield Miller (SDB Missionary Society), Nathan Crowder (Boulder SDB, CO), Sydney Looper (North Loup SDB, NE) and Elisabeth Lawson (Colton SDB, CA)—were in Kenya December 19-24, 2017. Every dollar and every prayer, in support, was worth it! God’s presence was experienced through preaching, singing, counselling, and teaching under the theme “Prison Shaking Faith.” The team was greatly impacted and from expressions, the lives of many in Kenya were also impacted for God. There were challenges, including arriving in Kisii a day and a half late, but the Holy Spirit acted on the hearts of many and seventeen (17) persons received Christ and were baptized on the Sabbath. Below are some testimonials:

BENARD NYAKEBERE MOSE (Pastor, Kenya SDB Conference President): “On behalf of my wife, family and the entire Kenyan Church family of SDB, I am sending special greetings and thanks towards those who all gave support in monies, and also prayers, and at the same time encouragement, too. I am also thanking your families for support and permission to travel overseas for the mission trip and their support they gave you all when you planned to come over and also when you were here, too.”

DORCAS (Pastor Benard’s wife): “I am also thanking you (Team) and church family to could have given you some clothing gift and also showing us such great wonderful love and kind heart. This has shown me a big love. The clothes already have been sent to several orphans and the poor, and others are remaining with me for use. Sydney, your ministry to the Kids was a blessing; Elisabeth, you touched my heart when you speak; Brother Nathan, your singing voice was truly a blessing, and we were really moved by your preaching and teaching, Pastor Miller. I can’t have words to say and share—please do not forget us in your prayer time.”

NATHAN: “I felt truly blessed to serve in Kenya this Christmas. I spent most of the time teaching high school and college students with Elisabeth. We could feel the Spirit at work and together our team helped to baptize 17 new believers on Sabbath day. Our ages for baptism ranged from 10 to the elderly. There is nothing more exciting than seeing more people welcomed into God’s Kingdom. I look forward to serving on more missions soon.”

SYDNEY: “Serving in Kenya was an amazing opportunity. God did amazing things and used the trip to





stretch each of us in different ways. I was blessed to be able to work with the young children. We sang songs, played games, and got closer to God together. Even though we didn't speak the same language, I still felt an immense connection to all of the people there. They were welcoming and considerate, always giving us what we needed and more. I felt very blessed by the trip and can't wait to see what God has in store for me and the team."



ELISABETH: "Ministering in Kenya this December was truly a blessing. Although it was different than expected, we went in with a flexible mindset allowing the Holy Spirit to work within us. While in charge of the youth, Nathan and I were able to talk with them about important subjects such as: baptism, accepting Christ, importance of faith in trying times, and God's provision. It was a short trip, but great things were still accomplished through God. It is amazing to watch what happens when you take yourself out of it and let the Holy Spirit take over. Overall, great trip, great team, and cannot wait for what God has in store for future mission work for me personally, as well as the others."



The Team thanks God for making this trip possible and for allowing His Love and Word to be shared — To God be the glory, great things he has done!

Acts 16:26 *"And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened."* [SR](#)

— Garfield Miller
Missions coordinator

Clinton R. Brown
Executive Director

FOCUS on Missions



New Role for an Old Friend

An Update from our Church Planting
Co-worker, Patty Petersen:



What's next for me? I will continue helping Seventh Day Baptists in church planting. Based in Colorado, I'll be working as a self-funded ministry volunteer under John Pethtel, Director of Church Development and Pastoral Services. I'll respond to the many new inquiries we receive and follow up with those showing interest, assessing their compatibility with SDBs. I'll also assist new groups to get started, pointing them to resources and helping find partners for the new work. I will support Pastor John with administrative tasks and we'll evaluate after the first year to see what God might have me do next.

Your financial gifts will continue to be matched through the Church Planting Co-worker Program. If you have been contributing monthly, I hope you will continue, and if you have been thinking about joining my support team, **please join for 2018!** One-time gifts are also an important part of my support base and much appreciated. Starting January 1, gifts designated for me can be payable to my sponsor,

Boulder Seventh Day Baptist Church
6710 Arapahoe Rd
Boulder CO 80303.

Please consider supporting the important work that Patty will be doing for Seventh Day Baptists as a next step to planting churches. If you would like to follow Patty's story as a Church Planting Co-worker, you can follow her blog at <http://hosannacompany.blogspot.com>. If you would like to know how you or your church can come alongside SDBs in the work of church planting, please contact the Director of Church Development. jpethtel@seventhdaybaptist.org SR

LESS TALK MORE ACTION

Our **2018 SDB Pastors Conference** will take place from April 27 to 29 in Ashaway, RI. April 26 and April 30 will be travel days. Please make plans to fly into the Providence, RI airport (PVD). Accommodations will be in camp style lodging or you are welcome to make your own. The registration fee will be \$100. Our theme will be "Less Talk, More Action" based on the 2018 General Conference theme.

More details and registration are coming to seventhdaybaptist.org/pastorsconference.

We are urging all SDB churches to ensure that their pastors will be able to go by allowing them the Sabbath off and by supporting their travel and registration.

If you have any further questions or need some help in trying to attend, please contact the Director of Pastoral Services at jpethtel@seventhdaybaptist.org or 608-752-5055 ext. 1009. SR



Church Development & Pastoral Services

by John J. Pethtel
Director

Proverbs 31...Worthy or Not?

She is everywhere, seemingly a part of every Christian conversation about dating and marriage. She is the Christian version of a supermodel: women want to be her and men want to marry her. The “Proverbs 31 woman.”

To be clear there is absolutely nothing amiss with utilizing Proverbs 31 to teach and learn about what being a godly woman means and how it looks. It uses some very practical examples and, putting cultural context aside, we can even apply what it means in the 21st century. That passage is an amazing tool for guidance—but I think we misuse it.

I remember the first time I heard about the “Proverbs 31 woman.” It was from an older boy who mentioned searching for a “Proverbs 31 (P31) woman” because that’s how he’d find a wife. Since then I’ve been indoctrinated into the “P31 Woman Club.” I’ve been in all-women Bible studies that poured over the meaning of this passage and how to be more like this beloved woman. I’ve been getting to know new people and been asked if I would consider myself a “P31” woman—and if I wasn’t, would I be willing to embrace that lifestyle?

Here’s the thing: These incidents are all seemingly innocent things that seem good. A man looking for a godly wife, a Bible study for women looking to become more godly women, people getting to know each other on a spiritual level. However, that’s not the sum total of what is occurring in situations like these nor is the attitude expressed. We’re using this passage as a way to measure self-worth and what it means to be a woman—an obsession born of an unhealthy chauvinistic culture placing the responsibility of perfection on the wife—*i.e.* she must be all these things or she is not a woman worthy of a godly man. Ouch!

Wives look at this passage and see a checklist they need to tick off in order to own the perfect godly life. If the list isn’t checked off that must be why your relationship with your husband and/or house isn’t perfect. Single ladies look at this and think if I can only be P31 I’ll finally find “the one.”

Proverbs 31 was never meant to be a checklist for either party of a relationship to tick boxes off to know when a woman is worthy of being a beloved wife—but that’s how we tend to use it. It’s a love poem highlighting the importance of finding a woman who pursues a godly lifestyle. It isn’t another bar of perfection for women to measure up to. Asking a woman if she’s P31 usually isn’t a question dealing with her godliness— but rather, if she is “good enough” to be in my life, to be a wife, to be loved.

This poem was written by a man who was in love with his wife and saw the good that her pursuit of godliness brought him, not by a man searching for the perfect woman. He recognizes her godly attributes, but I doubt he would characterize their relationship as perfection. And that woman he’s talking about, if she’s anything like most women today, wouldn’t recognize herself in this passage because she isn’t checking boxes off a “perfect wife list.” She is a woman in pursuit of a godly life despite imperfections and flaws, and her husband recognizes and celebrates her worth as a woman of God.

So please don’t ask me if I’m P31 as if it’s some sort of seal of approval or qualification. If you really want to know if a person is in pursuit of a godly life, observation can tell you a lot—particularly if you are striving for a godly life as well. Ask if I’m a follower of Jesus and take it from there. SR





The Church's Response to Mental Illness

Our health focus for 2017 has been on mental illness. In Milton this has been done through newsletter articles, bulletin board items, and Back Door posters. In September, we started a Grow Group discussion class titled "Mental Illness is Not a Choice." We viewed videos, heard guest speakers and are working through a Bible study. Response has been so great that the class is continuing for another quarter.

After learning about the various forms of mental illness, the question becomes "what should be the church's response to those who suffer from these brain disorders?" One of the first things we learned is that 1 in 4 people struggle with a mental health issue. This may include relatives, those you share the pew with at worship, fellow workers or yourself. Many times we have no idea who they are since people tend to be ashamed of their condition. Much stigma is attached. When symptoms flare up people often drop out of activities until things are under control again. This makes us oblivious to their illness. When someone has a physical illness such as cancer or a broken leg, we help out by taking meals, visiting, sending cards, giving them rides, etc. Mental illness is called a "no casserole" disease because it is usually excluded from this type of help.

So what can your church congregation do to support the mentally ill?

1. Become educated about the disease. There are many resources on the internet, excellent books such as "The Troubled Mind" by Amy Simpson or NAMI, the National Alliance for Mental Illness, which has literature, classes and support groups. Learning helps remove the stigma associated with mental illness.

2. Get the support of your pastor in the education process. Help them become educated.

3. Talk about the illness. Tell your own story.

4. Start a support group.

5. Rid the church of stigma and shame. Do not gossip about those who are struggling or avoid them.

6. Delight in broken people. Make them feel welcome. Be present, become a friend, radiate acceptance. The mentally ill are often lonely.

7. Be patient. Mental illness does not resolve overnight; some is never resolved but can be managed with medication and therapy. It is a chronic illness with relapses. People don't "just get over it."

8. Never suggest that having more faith is the answer or that mental illness is due to sin.

9. Draw boundaries for yourself and stick to them. Being a healthy mentor includes taking care of yourself.

10. Know when you are in over your head and ask for help.

11. Treat people as you would like to be treated.

The church cannot afford to ignore mental illness – too many people are affected. We are called to spread love and hope. This means stepping out and offering only what the people of God can offer – spiritual support and loving community. When the church is silent to a person in crisis, it can sound remarkably like silence from God. How we behave toward the mentally ill communicates truth or falsehood about God's love for them. Be in prayer about your church's response to those who have mental health issues. SR

KING – Kathi Sue King, age 67. After a four-year battle with cancer, Kathi peacefully went to be with her Lord and Savior on November 22, 2017, at the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor, MI, with her husband at her bedside.

Kathi was born April 26, 1950, in Wellsville, NY, the daughter of Archie and Vivian (Morris) Traver.

After graduating from Bolivar High School in 1968 she married the love of her life, Harold King, on August 3 at the 1st Genesee Seventh Day Baptist Church in Little Genesee, NY.

She loved Jesus, serving with her husband at Seventh Day Baptist churches in Little Genesee, NY; Hebron, PA; Kansas City, MO; North Loup, NE (Summer Intern); Nortonville, KS; Ashaway, RI; Rockville, RI (Pulpit Supply); Battle Creek, MI; and Colorado Springs, CO. She served on the SDB Board of Christian Education in Alfred, NY, and later on the SDB Missionary Society in Westerly, RI, where she was employed as office secretary.

Kathi taught children's Sabbath School classes at several churches, was an elected deaconess and church clerk at the 1st Hopkinton SDB church in Ashaway, RI, and was church clerk and treasurer at the Battle Creek, MI, SDB church for several years.

She was a good listener, helping others in her gentle way. Kathi was a loving wife and wonderful helpmate to her husband of 49 years. She enjoyed word search puzzles, singing, reading, and taking care of her cats, and was an avid baseball fan.

Kathi enjoyed working and had many different jobs throughout her life. She worked at newspaper offices; did secretarial jobs at several places; and worked at retail jobs, in motion picture theatres, and at a Christian camp.

She was preceded in death by her parents and two brothers, Skip and Garry. Kathi is survived by her husband Harold; three sisters: Nina Creel, Linda Traver, Jeanne Irby; and three brothers: Doug, Philip, and Danny; plus a host of other family members and friends.

A celebration of life service was held on Sabbath, December 16, 2017, at the Battle Creek Seventh Day Baptist Church with Rev. Tom Smothers presiding. Memorials may be made to the Battle Creek SDB Church, 200 Washington Ave. North, Battle Creek, MI 49037.

PETTIT – George C. Pettit, Jr., 83, passed away December 22, 2017, at Cooper Hospital/University Center in Camden.

George was born in Shiloh, NJ, on October 16, 1934. He was the son of the late George C. and Dorothy Stratton Pettit.

He attended Shiloh Elementary School and Bridgeton High School and graduated with the class of 1953. He began his working career as a salesman for Sack's Shoe Store and after approximately one year went to work for Springer and Thomas, Inc. He worked first in the kitchen, making scrapple and sausage. He was then promoted and used a truck and worked as a salesman for ten years. For the last five years of his career at Springer and Thomas he was one of the top salesmen. George then moved on to Prudential Insurance in July 1962 and after just three years became the top insurance salesman in South Jersey.

George won many awards: the President's Merit Award, National Quality Award, and Leader's Club and he became a Life Member of the Million Dollar Round Table. Not too many insurance sales people achieve this high honor. He retired from Prudential in 1992 after 30 years and after approximately three months decided retirement was not for him. He went back into sales as a private insurance broker where he remained until his death.

George was a member of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh, NJ, and worked on many committees and did a lot of fund raising for the church.

He was always known for his jokes and his laughter. He is deeply loved by all his family and friends and will be missed so very much. There is no other big brother that could compare to him and no one to fill his shoes. He will also be remembered for his love of opera.

George is survived by four daughters: Susan Edelstein (Larry) of Vineland, NJ; Doreen Kaschak of Terryville, CT; Melicia Parker of Bridgeton, NJ; and Tracy Freeman. He is also survived by seven grandchildren, five great-grandchildren and two sisters: Donna Lee Bertucci (Vincent Sr.) of Cedarville, NJ, and Nancy Richards of Hopewell Twp., NJ. He was predeceased by two sisters: Sandee Reichle in 2005 and Tammy Tisa in 2010. He is also survived by Raymond Lee Brooks, Jr., his partner and business associate for 28 years.

George's funeral service was on Sabbath, December 30, at the Seventh Day Baptist Church, East Avenue in Shiloh with the church's pastor, Rev. Donald Chroniger, officiating. Interment immediately followed in the church cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in George's name may be made to the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Shiloh, PO Box 145, Shiloh, NJ 08353.

NEW MEMBERS

NEW YORK CITY SDB CHURCH:

On December 9, 2017, we had a baptismal service. Officiating were Rev. Ericessen A. Cooper assisted by members of the Diaconate Board. Originally there were four candidates scheduled to be baptized; however, God spoke to the heart of another young person. We were rejoicing with the angels in heaven. They are **Jada Green, Cailin Bell, Tiana Brown, Kalia Cooper, and Malk Francis**. These young people are very active in our church. Following the baptism, these new converts requested membership and they were accepted on the motion of several members and everyone present voted to accept and welcome them in our membership.

We give God thanks for all that He is doing in our church and pray that He will help us to guide, nourish and encourage these young members in the way of the Lord.

BIRTH

SCHOEN – A son, Zachary Ian, was born to Steven and Michele (Sheppard) Schoen, of the Marlboro, NJ, SDB church, on September 14, 2017.



For access to the library of current and past issues of the *Sabbath Recorder*, go to your App Store and download the **FREE SDB LINK** app.

SDB GENERAL CONFERENCE USA & CANADA CONFERENCE SESSIONS DISPLAYS POLICY

Displays are an extension of the ministries of the SDB General Conference USA & Canada. The displays are used to inform, celebrate, and support the Conference and its mission.

Display space is limited at every conference session based upon size and location of the venue used. Therefore, priority will be given based upon the following categories of display, with Category 1 being the highest priority:

- **Category 1:** This category includes displays related to the councils, allied societies, or other ministries of the SDB General Conference USA & Canada. There will be no charge for these displays.
- **Category 2:** This category includes member churches of the SDB General Conference USA & Canada. There will be a fee of \$50 for a display in this category.
- **Category 3:** This category includes churches and groups identifying as Seventh Day Baptist. There will be a fee of \$100 for a display in this category.
- **Category 4:** This category includes vendors or other ministries that support or encourage the mission of the SDB General Conference USA & Canada. There will be a fee of \$150 for a display in this category.

Additional Charges: If the display is selling products, there shall be an extra \$25 charge. If the display needs electricity, there shall be an extra \$25 charge. Displays in Category 1 are exempt from these charges.

There shall be no guaranteed location for any display.

Internet and electricity may or may not be available for displays and availability shall be on a priority and then first come, first served basis.


1. Application for a display must be submitted no later than May 15 of each year, or the Monday following the 15th if it falls on a weekend. Acceptance of your display will not be confirmed until after May 15.
2. A separate request must be submitted for each display table.
3. Tables will be at least six feet long. You will be responsible for providing a tablecloth and skirt for your display. (These are required.) One chair can be provided per display upon request.
4. Nothing may be attached permanently to any walls or to the display table. Storage may only be provided underneath the display table.
5. No audio equipment or sound amplification of any kind is permitted. Videos without sound may be shown as long as the monitor/television rests on the display table.
6. We prefer and recommend electronic distribution of information instead of printed matter. Use of QR codes, web addresses, or SDB LINK is recommended.

If you must ship materials for your display, you must contact the Executive Director to obtain the proper address. You will be responsible for the costs of shipping your display.

No display may be set up at the venue prior to the opening Sunday of the conference sessions. All displays must be removed from the venue by 10 am on the closing Sunday of the conference sessions.

All displays that have items for purchase shall remove or cover the items from 6 pm Friday until 6 pm Saturday.

All displays must be approved by the General Council and/or Executive Director.

Waivers to this policy may be requested from the General Council and/or Executive Director. 

Team Members Requested

Would you like to be part of a team that has a lasting impact on the future of Seventh Day Baptists?

We are currently seeking enthusiastic, nurturing and loving brothers and sisters to support Children's Conference for 2018 in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

Please consider joining this teaching, singing, dancing, loving and laughing group by spending your mornings making a difference in the lives of the children (ages 4 – middle school) in our denomination.

Please contact Emily Watt at 301-393-6294 or ewg@hood.edu if you are interested in working with this amazing program.



It's time to wreck some teeth.

Make a video in which you give testimony about how you took action for Jesus. Then, creatively wreck some chattering teeth.

Send that video to President Dave Stall. Need teeth? Check out the Oriental Trading website or email the president!

pastordavestall@gmail.com

LESS TALK MORE ACTION

Rev. David Stall, Conference President

pastordavestall@gmail.com

A Visit to Boulder, Colorado



Jennifer and I always enjoy a chance to visit the SDB Church where we were married in May of 2000. Hard to believe it was so long ago! We were warmly welcomed by a small gathering of committed Christians there on the Sabbath just before Christmas. I was excited to hear their discussions about how to be an effective church, and whether that means relocating to a nearby community. In their church history, we see how that church has adapted and moved in the past to stay in step with God. Let's all pray for them as they consider the next steps and take action!

—Pastor David Stall

North Loup, Nebraska



When 2018 Conference President David Stall presented his conference session theme, "Less Talk, More Action" to the North Loup, NE, SDB congregation, he may not have expected their immediate response. On the evening after the Sabbath, December 30, 2017, the congregation moved from their church pews, put on roller skates and threw a pizza and skating party. With the community Lion's Club providing the skates, kids, grandkids, even grandparents (note Phil Van Horn in the photograph) took to the community center's wide floor for hours of "more action."

—D. Scott Smith

(photo by Pastor Scott Hausrath)



9/30 All. Assoc. Toronto	10/6 Berlin NY	10/7 C.NY Assoc. Verona, NY	11/11 S.A. Assoc. Atlanta, GA	12/23 Boulder CO	12/30 North Loup NE		2/24 Edgewater FL	3/3 Daytona Beach, FL	5/4 E. Assoc. Shiloh, NJ	7/29 Conference Kenosha, WI
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Periodicals postage paid
at Janesville, WI
and additional offices



LESS TALK MORE ACTION

Seventh Day Baptist General Conference
July 29 — August 4, 2018
Carthage College in Kenosha, WI