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A few weeks ago Pastor Jimmy and I had the privilege of attending the Southern Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in Dallas, TX. Thank you for sending us, and Bobbi Ashford, as messengers! (And yes, we did have some Pappasito's Tex-Mex for all you Texas affiliates out there) This month's newsletter is a guest post from one of my heroes in the faith, Dr. Chuck Lawless of Southeastern Seminary. He serves as Dean of Doctoral Studies and Vice-President of Spiritual Formation and Ministry Centers as well as Professor of Evangelism and Missions. Dr. Lawless spoke at Coats Baptist Church during Dr. Keith Whitfield's interim pastorate. We'd love to have him join us again!

Dr. Lawless writes a daily blog to help Christians think, lead and minister more faithfully. Sign up at chucklawless.com. Below is a post from June 15 - "**Ten Reflections on the 2018 Southern Baptist Convention**".

- 1. We're a hurting but hopeful denomination.** We have painfully dealt with a lot of stuff over the past several months, and this SBC reflected that reality. Yet, I still see life in those who love this denomination. I see hope in older folks who want to leave a positive legacy and younger folks who want to make a genuine difference.
- 2. We're a denomination that needs to grieve sin more.** We must deal with the realities of sin among us, but nobody has reason to celebrate when sin is confronted and addressed. Sin and fallenness—evident within each of us—should make us weep more than it seemingly does.
- 3. We may not always like our system, but it somehow keeps us moving.** I've always been amazed that thousands of people can gather once a year, vote on things, elect a president, elect trustees, pass resolutions, etc.—and somehow get stuff done. The system can always be improved but it still works.
- 4. We're Baptists—and Baptists express their opinions.** That heritage almost automatically means that we'll have disagreements. In fact, sometimes we will strongly disagree, and we have to work continually to treat each other as brothers and sisters in disagreement.
- 5. We cannot respond to the few who act sinfully with our own sinful anger.** Frankly, I speak to myself here. In a crowd of 9,000+ dealing with issues wrapped up in emotion and personalities, it's not surprising that some would react to issues and votes in sinful ways. I must remember, that the few don't represent the many.
- 6. We can still rally around missions.** The IMB commissioning service on Tuesday night (June 12) reminded us of who we are. In our mutual work, local churches of all sizes will now send 79 new missionaries to the ends of the earth—and people who will never hear about our Convention votes will hear about Jesus.
- 7. We need to take seriously the evangelism and discipleship task force reports.** I fear we increasingly equate everything with evangelism, and thus never really address our lack of evangelistic fire and corresponding declines in baptisms. We risk doing discipleship that leads only to a passion for knowledge – not a passion for Jesus.
- 8. We must pledge our prayerful support to J.D. Greear.** J.D. is a friend, and I have great respect for him but my point here is as much about his position as it is the person. We have elected him to lead for the next year. If we elect him but don't pray for him, we will be irresponsible Southern Baptists.
- 9. We must continue to work at facilitating conversations between generations.** Conversations are happening, but I'm not convinced they're always strategic and intentional. J.D. and others from all generations have an opportunity to lead us in this direction.
- 10. We must pray regularly for our Convention.** Many of us have been praying as we've faced difficult, public issues, but we would be wrong to stop praying now. We're a denomination of fallen people who make up fallen churches, and that simple fact means we need to pray for each other. Join me in prayer for the SBC.

God bless you church!
Pastor Neal

PS: For more information on the inner workings of the Southern Baptist Convention, let me recommend a new resource by Keith Harper and Amy Whitfield, *SBC FAQ's: A Ready Reference*, B&H, 2018.

MUSIC • NOTES

This summer, the choir and praise team have been reading and discussing a book together called *Sing! How Worship Transforms Your Life, Family, and Church*. Keith and Kristyn Getty, who have written modern hymns such as "In Christ Alone", "The Power of the Cross", "For the Cause" and MANY more, wrote this book with the desire for all of God's people to respond to God's goodness by singing. Worship certainly is more than a musical response, but our worship must include singing. We know from God's Word that we are created to sing, commanded to sing, and compelled to sing. That's the 'why' of singing. Their answer to how we sing comes in the chapters to follow. Sing with your heart and mind, sing with your family, and sing with your local church as a radical witness to the world.

During our Sunday evening worship service on August 5, we will dive into the heart of this book together. I agree with the Gettys and strongly believe that "congregational singing is one of the greatest and most beautiful tools we have been given to declare God's 'excellences,' strengthening His Church and sharing His glory with the world." Notice the phrase *congregational singing* - not choir singing or praise team singing - the CHURCH singing. I highly recommend reading this book regardless of where you find yourself on the singing spectrum. If you want a copy, let me know! Also, if you're not familiar with the music of the Gettys, look them up! They write theologically rich modern hymns with depth and beautiful melody. Here are a few titles for you to listen to: "The Lord is My Salvation", "He Will Hold Me Fast", "My Worth is Not in What I Own", "May the Peoples Praise You".

In Christ,
Jonathan

LIFE • ON • MISSION: DISCIPLESHIP!

As a matter of perspective, a friend recently lamented, "I don't mind old age; it's the side effects I don't like". I can relate more and more each day. It seems the writing is on the wall: I'm not as strong or as fast as I used to be. Reading glasses are standard, and comfortable shoes are a must. And things just don't work (or recover) like they used to.

Though not synonymous with age, and I certainly haven't "arrived", maturity has been a blessing. I don't feel the need for beatnik speed anymore. I enjoy sitting around the table to talk and tell stories. I relish hugs and smiles from family and friends. But most of all, I enjoy a better perspective on life.

First, I can see more clearly the depravity of sin and the wickedness of my own rebellion against our Holy Creator. I need to grieve sin more. Second, I can see a little more clearly the cost of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. I need to praise Him more. Third, oh, do I take joy and comfort in being in the presence of the Lord. I need to know Him and be in His presence more. Fourth, I see my own tendency to be content rather than grow in Christ. I need to devote myself to spiritual growth and disciplines.

But perspective does not only give insight to my own relationship with the Lord. I am also deeply burdened to know that the vast majority of people in this world, indeed most of those with whom I come in contact, will never experience the love and peace of eternal salvation. Rather, they will spend eternity separated from God, without any hope. As horrible as this is for them, greater still is the reality that these lost souls will not give God the glory He deserves. I need to be much bolder in sharing.

How about you? What do you see better as you mature in Christ? Do you see yourself becoming more Christ-like or more set in your ways? Do you seek to honor Jesus more or become more comfortable? And, when you see others, do you see them as Christ sees them? Pray that God would open the eyes of your heart to see as He sees.

Pastor Jimmy
Phil. 3:10

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WORSHIP SCHEDULE
 8:30 am Worship Service
 9:45 am Sunday School
 11:00 am Worship Service
 Children's Church 8:30 am & 11:00 am
 6:00 pm Evening Worship Service

STUDENT • HAPPENINGS

Summer is upon us. It has rolled in full steam, and you know what that means? Well, it means it's hot! It also means our youth are headed to Caswell! I have no idea how long our church has attended the youth weeks at Fort Caswell, but I believe it can be measured in decades. In some circles going to Caswell almost seems akin to a visit to the Holy Land.

Our week at Caswell is a special time, and the fort itself is a wonderful place. It offers us a break from the norm, to enjoy fellowship with one another, to have fun, and to devote ourselves to God as we study His word. But there is a challenge in Caswell. God's Spirit is no different on the grounds of the fort than it is here. We cannot experience Him anymore at Caswell than we can in Coats. So why does it seem so different? I believe it has more to do with our own hearts.

When we go to Caswell there are 2 large worship services each day, and age specific sessions as well. There are also several hours of free-time, and church specific time of devotion and reflection. If we are honest, there are those who attend Caswell for the hours of free time. They enjoy the beach, the pool, the gym, and many other activities offered. They are there to have fun.

But some, and I believe among our youth I can say many, who enjoy all the above without missing the opportunity to focus on God without the normal, everyday, distractions of life. For these, Caswell becomes a time of personal growth and development as a Christian young man or woman.

So, here is my challenge to you. Pray that our youth will enjoy this week! Pray that the fellowship of our young people grows so that they are a support for each other. But most of all, pray their hearts are open to the truth of God's word. Pray the proclaimer (preacher) brings the message God has for us, and that we receive it well. Pray also that we cling to the truth of who God is when we return home as much as we do while at Caswell. And pray that we live lives understanding that our God lives in our hearts, not in a fort on our coast.

Anthony

JULY

- 4th Church Office Closed
- 9th-14th Youth at Caswell
- 11th Grocery Assist (5:30)
- 14th-22nd Mission Team—Guatemala
- 15th Deacons Meeting (7:00)
- 19th Men's Ministry Meeting (7:00)
- 21st Church Work Day (6:00 am)
- 22nd Quarterly Business Meeting
- 29th Together Sunday
Missions Luncheon
- 30th-Aug 6 Mission Team—Honduras



Join us on Saturday, July 21st at 6am for a Church Work Day. All are welcome and breakfast is included!

TOGETHER SUNDAY

Sunday, July 29

9:45 Sunday School
 11:00 Worship Service

There will not be an 8:30 worship service.

A missions fundraiser luncheon will follow the service to support our Honduras mission team.



VBS

The last week in June, over 90 kids & adults in our community had the opportunity to join us for VBS. We dove into learning that Jesus Cares About Us, Jesus Gives Us Hope, Jesus Helps Us Believe, that Jesus Loves Us and that Jesus Gives Us Joy! We focused on the theme verse 2 Peter 1:3, "His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness." We have learned music, played games, created art projects and studied God's Word together. Thank you to everyone that volunteered. We had people doing everything from teaching Bible Studies, prepping snacks, driving the bus to pick up kids, teaching about missionaries and much, much more. This week would not have been possible without you all. Thank you!

The Children & Families Committee

SENIOR • ADULTS

On Thursday, July 19, Senior Adults will travel to Wytheville, Virginia to see "One Nation Under God" which is a celebration of God and country at the Wohlfahrt Haus Dinner Theatre. Cost is \$25.00 per person. We will leave CBC at 7:30am. Please contact Gail (910-591-9847), Kathy (910-891-8326), Bonnie (919-820-2332), or Sherry to sign up ASAP.