

# Let's Visit

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## The Storm of Discouragement

Don't let your defeats defeat you, don't lose your song. That is something a minister must learn to say to people. He also has to learn to say it in many different ways. You see, there are some things that never happen in the life of a preacher. No one has ever called me to say, "This is such a happy day in my life, I wanted to call and tell you all about it". I have never picked up the phone to hear the voice on the other end say, "My marriage is so perfect, and we are so happy, I just wanted to share it with you".

Then again, I have never had anyone walk in my office to tell me, "God has so abundantly blessed me, I have more money than I can ever spend, so I wanted to know what projects of the church I could go ahead and pay for so that we could get started." Those are just not the kind of things I hear about.

You see, the preacher hears about the heartaches and broken dreams. He hears about the disappointments and the defeats. He hears about those who have lost their song. It seems everybody is in some way defeated in life. As a matter of fact, everyone is. Some have had harder defeats than others. But, along the way, everyone meets defeat.

Life is not a series of unbroken victories. Most of us would confess that if we are honest. Generously mixed in with our triumphs are many defeats. Sometimes we fail when we have done our very best. Sometimes we fail because we didn't do our best. For all of us, there are disappointments and discouragements. There are times when the song is gone from our hearts. The pressures of life snatch our song. Then, some morning we wake up and realize it has been a while since we caught ourselves singing.

I think the Psalmist found himself in that situation in Psalms chapter 40. He has been bogged down by the problems he faced. He has let his defeats defeat him. Apparently he has lost his song.

For him, life was the pits. David tells us in Psalm 40:2 he has been in a horrible pit. It may have been when Saul drove David from the palace and pursued him in jealousy. Or it could have been when David's own son Absalom went against him in battle. Then, possibly his pit was the grief he suffered when Amnon violated his half-sister Tamar.

Whatever the pit may have been, it was uncomfortable. It was dark and wet and slimy. It was impossible for him to get out of it without help. Right now, as you are reading this, you might be in a pit. Remember the humorist Erma Bombeck? She wrote a book, "If life is a bowl of cherries, Why am I always in the pits?" Maybe for you, life seems to be the pits. The pit is the breaking point for the overworked man or woman in business. It is the outer limits of exasperation for the mother of constantly crying children. It is the grinding stress of illness for ourselves or those we love. The pit of our life is anything that causes a sense of helplessness and desperation.

God placed David on the Rock. There is no secure footing in a dark, muddy, slimy pit. If you can't stand up, you can't escape. When you're in the mud, the more you squirm, the deeper you sink. You're stuck! Overwhelmed by his rescue, when David thought of God's deliverance, he thought of a rock. He wouldn't have to sink anymore. He could freely move about, unrestricted on a sure foundation.

Living life inevitably brings pits. Slimy, watery,

**(Continued On Page 2)**

### In Search Of The Lord's Way



Tune in to this Television Ministry  
KSLA 12 – Shreveport -7:30 a.m. Sunday  
DISH channel 239-6:00 a.m. Sunday  
DIRECT TV channel 307 -6:00 a.m. Sunday

# Gathered Here and There



## Today's Sermon

### “Being Passionate About Life ”

Our text comes from Romans 12:11. Paul says to be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

## For The Pantry. . . Dried Beans

### Storm of Discouragement - continued from page 1

sticky pits. We must firmly plant our feet on Jesus, the solid rock. David was not defeated by his defeats. God lifted him out of the pit and put a new song in his heart.

God did not create us to be defeated and silent. He created us to conquer and sing. We sing in the shower, and we whistle while we work. All of us have at some point paused to listen to a bird chirping in the trees. When we sing, we may sound like two cats having a near death experience but by nature we love to sing. No one helps us understand this better than David. As a young shepherd boy, David would play on his harp while he tended sheep. Later in life, he played the harp so well that it quieted the weary soul of Saul. David knew the song and the music, but he had not yet experienced the new song.

We may sing songs when we are in a hole in the ground. The songs we sing then are sad songs. Songs about tragedy, misfortune, sorrow and grief. Songs about anger and bitterness. But when we get out of the pit, we want to sing a new song. It's a song of praise to the living God.

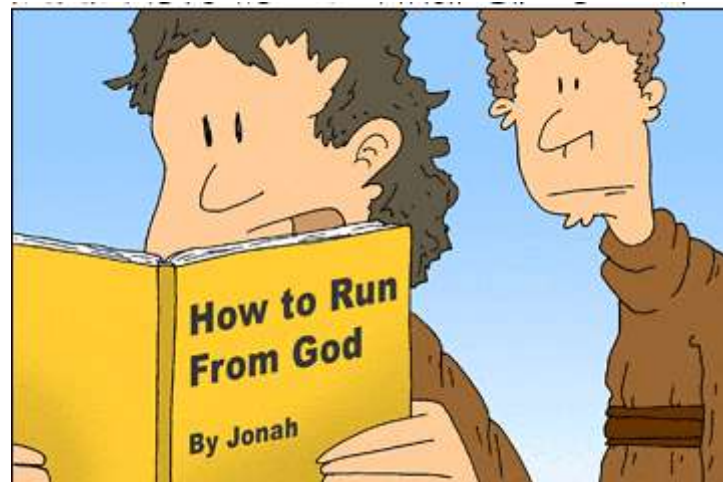
Well, what do we have to do to sing that new song? Have you ever taken a good look at the book

of Hebrews? It was written to a small band of people who were discouraged. People who had lost their song. People who were in the pits of life. They had been converted from Judaism to Christianity. When they left their own group, their old friends and even their own families had turned against them. They found it hard to make a living and they faced bitter opposition.

The book of Hebrews contains the most eloquent statement on faith ever recorded. Chapter 11 begins by telling us that faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. The writer then goes on to tell of the struggles of great people in history and how by faith they won the victory. They were lifted out of the pits and their song was restored. To the Hebrew Christians, the writer is saying hold on to your faith and you will not be finally defeated. As chapter 12 begins, the writer tells them to look to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. When you are discouraged, when life is the pits, look to Jesus.

*tp*

## On The Lighter Side. . .



IT JUST SAYS "DON'T"

**Each One Bring One!**  
**52 in '22**  
**Invite Someone Each Week!**

# Miscellaneous



## Those To Remember In Prayer

Pat Thomason is now at home under hospice care.

### OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Roxie Bostick , Gene Bradshaw, Martha Jean Golden, Geneva Graves, Alice Hall, Thelma Hinton, Tiffanee Klein, Debra Pate, Jerry Pate, Wayne Sims, Betty Willis

### “EXTENDED FAMILY” AND FRIENDS

Mitchell Anthony (LaResa Livingston’s brother) Ana Blair (friend of Debra Pate) Sandra Hogan (friend of Roxie Bostick) Suzie Hogan (Roxie Bostick’s sister) Lamar McCormick (friend of Sarah Fletcher, multiple health issues) Calvin Smith (Debra Pate’s uncle) heart and blood pressure issues; Pat Thomason (friend of Tim & Norma Perkins) Tina Vaughn - cancer

THOSE IN THE MILITARY AND FOREIGN SERVICE  
Leland Bradshaw, Michele Bradshaw Jeremiah Soape, Rosie Tate and Lucas Tate

If you want someone added to the prayer list, please fill out a card and put it in the offering plate.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR** - Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> will be our next covered dish luncheon. We will then celebrate birthdays and anniversaries for December, January and February. Circle the date on your calendar and make your plans to be here!

**WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEAL** - Remember the last Wednesday night of each month beginning September 28<sup>th</sup>, we will be meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall for a meal. This is **NOT** a covered dish or pot luck. There is a sign up sheet in the foyer. **PLEASE** sign up if you plan to be here for the meal so we will know how much food to prepare and also indicate if you plan to bring a guest.

**BIBLE STUDY** – It is still our desire to have as many “Bodies in Benches” as possible for our Sunday Morning Bible Class at 9:45 and our mid-week Bible Study on Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. If you can be here please make your plans to do so.

## How Old Are You?

Nobody grows old merely by living a number of years. People grow old only by deserting their ideals. Years wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, self-distrust, fear and despair – these are the long, long years that bow the head and turn the growing spirit back to dust. Whether seventy or seventeen, there is in every being’s heart the love of wonder, the sweet amazement of the stars and the star-like things and thoughts, the undaunted challenge of events, the unfailing child-like appetite for what is next in the game of life. You are as young as your faith, as old as your doubts; as young as your self-confidence, as old as your fears; as young as your hope, as old as your despair.

--selected

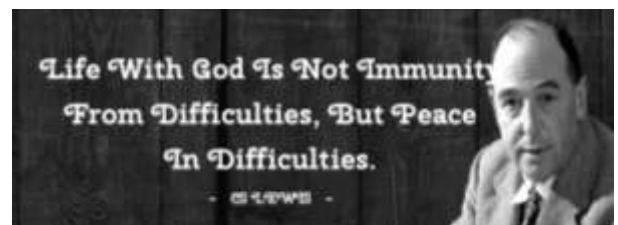
*Why must we have enough memory to recall to the tiniest detail what has happened to us, and not have enough to remember how many times we have told it to the same person!*

## The Parable Of The Blower!

Behold the blower went forth to blow, and as he “blowed” some seeds of gossip fell by the wayside and the foul ear picked it up and devoured the good brother whom it concerned. Some fell to the phony Christian, and having not much worth, straightway he sprang up out of his chair of do nothing and telephoned his neighbor, and when he hung up his friend was scorched and his love withered away.

And his brother who fell among thorns, not knowing how the tale grew up, was choked and lo he perished. But luckily, some fell to the good man and brought forth pity, so he “squashed” it and he continueth to gather of the blessings an hundredfold, sixty fold, and thirty fold. He that hath ears to hear let him hear, but he that hath a tongue, let him keep his mouth shut.

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## Across The Preacher's Desk

Our annual "Friends and Family Day" last Sunday was truly a wonderful day in the life of the Center Church of Christ. We had a good audience assembled for Worship. In fact, this was the largest audience we have had in over 5 years and we are so thankful for that.

We also had a wonderful meal and time of fellowship following the morning service. As always, there was an abundance of food prepared and we are so thankful for all who prepared food and stayed to eat and have fellowship.

I have said this before and I will say it again, the best and brightest days for the Center Church of Christ are still out there in the future and this past Sunday is proof of that.

A great big thank you to all who took part in this great day, you are to be commended for your efforts and commitment and it does not go unnoticed.

Now, we press forward, looking toward our next covered dish luncheon on Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>. Not only that, but planning for our are-wide singing and meeting with Phil Sanders for April 21<sup>st</sup> through 23<sup>rd</sup> 2023!

Remember, our "slogan" for this year was "Each one bring one, 52 in 22, indicating that we wanted every member of this congregation to extend one invitation per week for someone to join us for worship. Well our "slogan" for next year is "53 in 23 – one more than before". Start planning on those you will invite to join us for worship in 2023. Let's accomplish great things for God.

*it's something to think about. . . .tbp*

**The Lord's Plan  
For Evangelism –  
Each one Bring one!  
52 in '22!**