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PERSPECTIVE

THE MONTHLY JOURNAL OF MOUNT VERNON BAPTIST CHURCH

Starting the **Christian Life**
FEEDING YOURSELF





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- June 4** **Will God Fight for Me?**
Joshua 9:1-12:24
- June 13** **Will God Remember Me?**
Joshua 13:1-22:16
- June 20** **Rediscovering the Good News**
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Guest Preacher: Bryan Pillsbury
- June 27** **Will God Challenge Me?**
Joshua 23:1-16

> **FIGHTER VERSE**

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!
 Philippians 2:8

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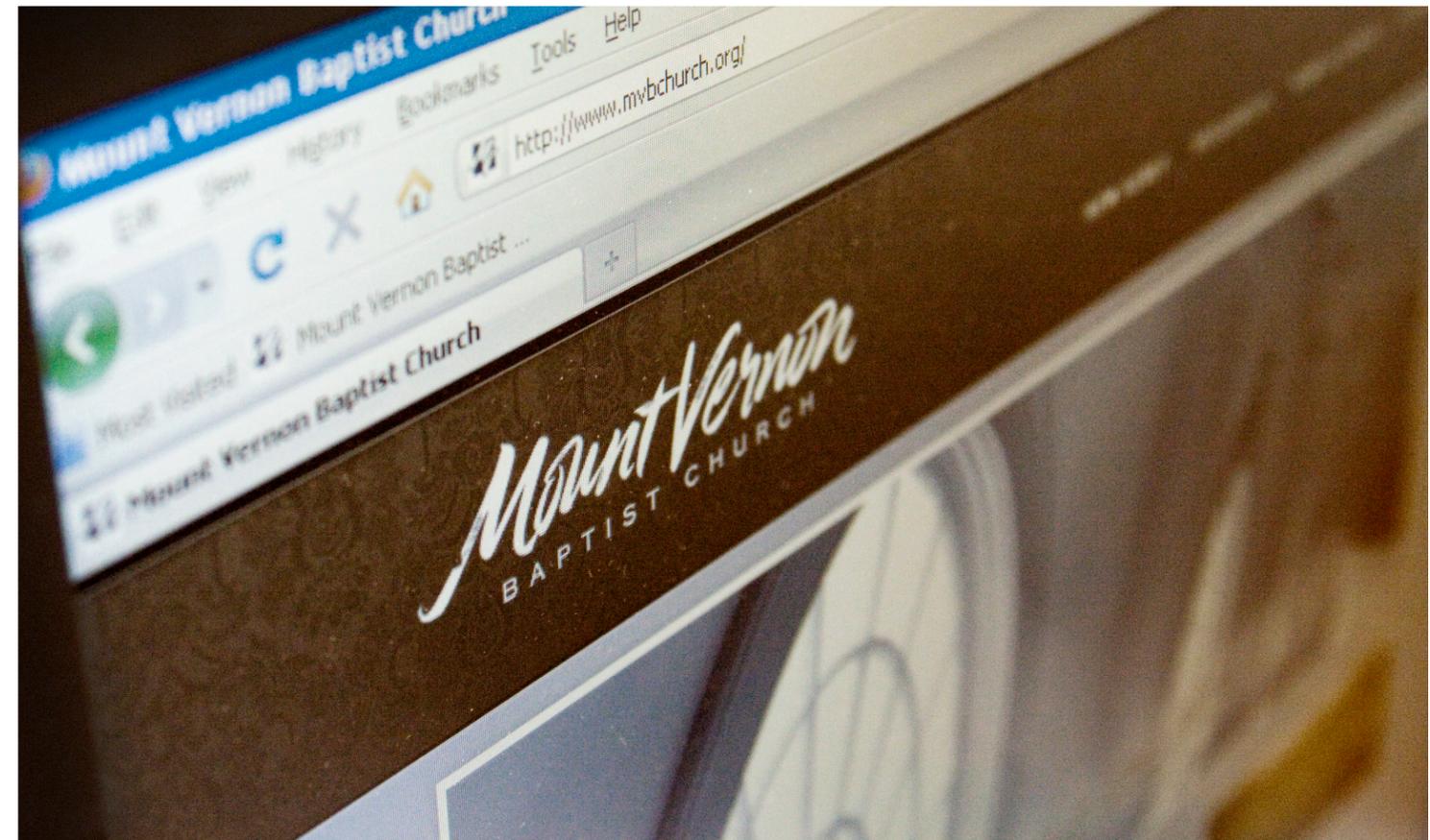
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Knowing, Equipping, and Surfing Website Redesign



“We exist for the worship and glory of God by knowing, equipping, and sending one another.”

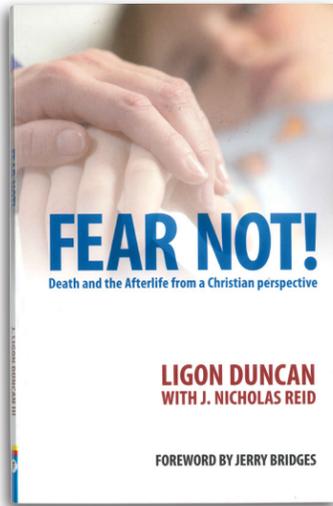
In one sentence that's really what we're about as a church. Whether we are in our Shepherding Groups on Sunday morning or on the softball field on Thursday night, that is our aim as a church. We now get to tell people online with the official launch of our new website.

Did you know that the majority of visitors and new members first learn about Mount Vernon online? Undoubtedly, the internet has changed the face and promotion of local churches. A church's ministry can reach well beyond the four walls of its building and through the audio and printed materials it produces. With a good "web presence" (to use some 21st century, web vernacular) a church's ministry and influence can go well beyond any geographical boundary.

We are excited about the new official website of Mount Vernon Baptist Church. This new site gives us ability to better promote our purpose and ministry, and it provides an important tool for communication for members. Check it out at the current web address (www.mvbchurch.org).

Let us know what you think by emailing mvbc.administration@gmail.com. Put "website feedback" in the subject line of the email.

The Bookshelf



Fear Not!
Death and the Afterlife
from a Christian
Perspective
by Ligon Duncan

Reviewed by Kristine Harris

I did not really know what to expect from a book about death. I have not dealt with death much. At 42, I am fortunate that all of my immediate family is still alive, and honestly, I have not been scared of death for a long time. I know that Jesus paid the penalty for my sin and when I die, my newly perfect body and I will go directly into the presence of my Savior and Lord. I will then join every creature in heaven and on earth singing "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" In my mind, there is nothing better or more exciting.

Fear Not!: Death and the Afterlife from a Christian Perspective by Ligon Duncan is a very short book at only 81 pages. However, if you expect Duncan to spend times describing streets of gold and pearly gates, you will be sorely disappointed. He does not. If you are thinking about buying this book to encourage someone who is currently grieving the loss of a loved one, it would not be my first recommendation.

Fear Not! is in many ways a sobering look at death. Although it is very clear that death for the Christian is the entrance into glory, *Fear Not!* also explores death for the non-Christian. This book has drastically increased the burden I feel for others. It pulls no punches when it talks about the afterlife for people who have not trusted in Jesus. I believe anyone who knows the Lord will be moved by this book and will feel more urgency to reach others with the truth of the Gospel.

Fear Not! is divided into five chapters that answer the following questions: "What is Death?", "What Happens After Death?", "What Happens When Christ Returns?", "What is the Final Judgment?", and "What is Heaven?"

Duncan opens his book with the fact that Christians and non-Christians alike are increasingly curious about death. Our world is confused and many people deal with death by denial or escapism. The Bible, however, prepares us for death by facing the problem head on. It presents death with utter realism but also with complete hope in God.

Sin brought the reality of death into the world. Death, the separation of the body and the soul for a good and loving God, is

the fruit of sin and God's judgment for our rebellion. In Genesis 3:24, Adam and Eve (and all humanity) are driven out of the garden and separated from God; they are separated from life as God intended it to be.

Duncan explains that the Bible talks about death in a paradoxical way. It depicts death as the "last enemy" and the judgment of God against sin, but it also explains how death was transformed for the believer when God sent His Son into this world and placed Him on the cross. Jesus Christ experienced the "second" death on behalf of His people.

Although we have experienced the "first" death—separation from God because of the sin of Adam—believers will not be separated from God for eternity because of the work of Jesus on the cross and His resurrection. Romans 6:22-23 says, "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

In chapter two, "What Happens After Death?", Duncan identifies the definitive differences between death for the believer and death for the unbeliever. A Christian approaching death desires Jesus over all things that are most precious in this world. For the believer, Christ is more precious than husband and wife, parents and children, riches, fame, power, ambition, influence, success, pleasure, and anything else we could name. Therefore, the minute death comes, the believer will be safe at home; safe in the Father's arms and with his older brother, Jesus Christ, who shed His blood so that we could come home.

Although believers are united to Christ and are at rest when they die, *Fear Not!* also explains that unbelievers are eternally separated from Christ. Unbelievers are sealed in their imperfection and are in a state of condemnation, permanently separated from Christ never again to know peace and rest. Dr. Duncan quotes a section of an article entitled, "Between Satan's Spandau and a Hard Place" by John Macleod, journalist for *The Glasgow Herald*. He says that since unbelievers wanted none of God here, God will give them what they want. There will be no one in hell who wants to be in heaven; they will all want to be out of hell, but none will truly want to be with God.

Dr. Duncan also explains that the separation from Christ for the unbeliever will mean no enjoyment, fellowship, or love. He admits that in his *sinful* moments (because he knows that God is good), he wishes that the doctrine of hell was not true. But, he says, hell is the fairest reality in this world.

Unfairness is the doctrine of heaven by grace. Sinners deserving condemnation get heaven forever because the One who was without sin became sin for their reconciliation.

In Chapter three, "What Happens When Christ Returns?", Duncan explains five crucial implications of the resurrection and in the fourth chapter, he explores the final judgment. The Bible says that in the final judgment, the sun and the moon will be darkened; the stars will be falling from the sky, and Jesus will be coming on clouds with glory before the watching world. Everyone will know of His return; it will be impossible to miss. Jesus will separate people one from another into two groups: the righteous and the wicked. All human beings who

have ever lived will together appear before the great white throne of judgment. There will only be two groups and there will not be any possibility of a mistake occurring. God's justice will be openly seen to be absolutely, scrupulously fair, just, right, and righteous so that even those who hate the judgment that He delivers will have to say that the judgment was right.

Chapter five answers the question "What is Heaven?" Duncan explains that heaven is where the One who has saved us and the One in whom we delight dwells. It is the place that Christ has prepared for us. Heaven will also be a place where there will be no forms of pain, evil, conflict, and distress like we experience on earth. The joy of heaven will include beholding our risen Lord, benefiting from the on-going experience of Christ's love as he ministers to his people, fellowship with loved ones, and the whole body of the redeemed.

One last point about the differences between heaven and hell is that *all* people in heaven and in hell will be in the presence of

God. The only difference is that people in hell suffer eternity in the presence of God *without* a mediator. It will be eternity in the presence of God, being fully conscious of the just, holy, righteous, good, kind, and loving Father's disapproval of their rebellion and wickedness.

Heaven, on the other hand, is dwelling in the conscious awareness of your holy and righteous Father but doing so through a mediator who died in your place and who absorbed the fullness of the penalty of your sin.

As I said in the introduction, this book is worth reading. As a Christian it is a sobering motivation both to persevere in placing our faith and hope in God. Those who have repented of their sins and trusted in Christ life for a better day yet to come. Yet, *Fear Not!* does not make us, as the cliché goes, "so heavenly-minded that we're no earthly good." Rather, out of love for non-Christians we are burdened to share the good news of the gospel so they too would come to repent and believe and escape the reality of hell on that last day. ■



Vacation Bible School

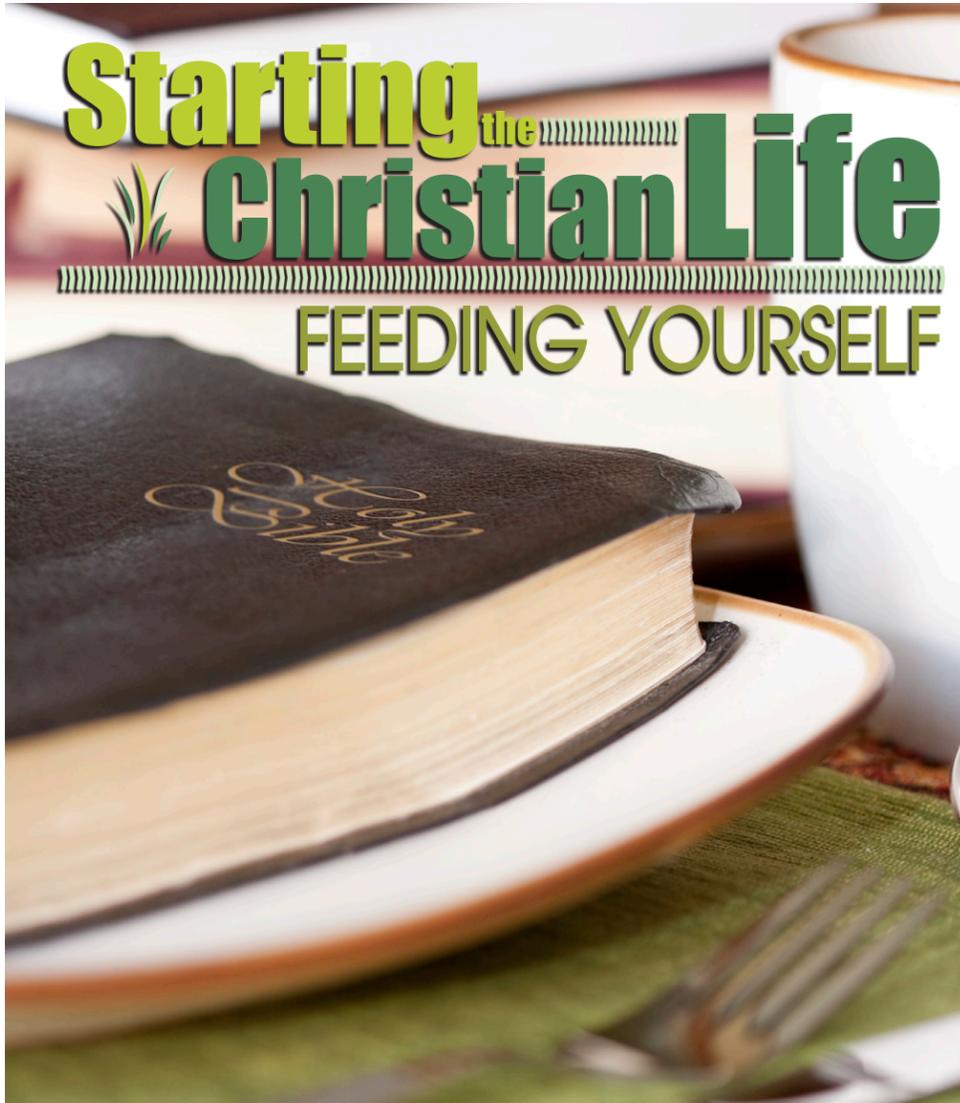
June 7-11

Holy Land Adventure Bethlehem Village

We are still in need of volunteers for VBS,
and child registration (ages 4 through 6th grade) can be found online at
www.mvbchurch.org by clicking on the VBS logo.

Additionally, we need as many able hands and bodies as possible to help set up
on Saturday, June 5 from 10:00 am - 1:00 pm and Sunday, June 6 starting at noon.
Lunch will be provided on Sunday.

For more information or to RSVP for the help day,
contact Terry Earl at terryearl@mvbchurch.org or 404-255-3133.



Starting the Christian Life

FEEDING YOURSELF

Everybody Has a Story

What is the most significant day in your life? Perhaps the day that started it all, the day of your birth. Perhaps it was the day of your graduation. Perhaps it was the day you lost a loved one. Perhaps it was the day you married the love of your life. Perhaps it was the day your first child was born. These days stand in our lives like monuments. We can't forget them because on these days, our lives changed.

And yet the Bible speaks of another day that is more significant than all of these days—the day of your spiritual birth. The day, as Jesus put it, you were born again:

I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised by my saying, "You must be born again." The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit (John 3:5-8).

In other words, Christians are those who experienced a new birth by the power of the Holy Spirit. This was a decisive, powerful, life-changing event. The moment we were born again was the moment we could see clearly for the first time. It was the moment we were no longer slaves to sin. It was the day we found rest.

Many Christians have experienced a dramatic conversion—a moment in their lives when everything immediately changed.

Consider John Newton, an Englishman whose life was once committed to the slave trade. When God saved him, he knew it: "Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see."

For many others the journey into Christianity seemed more gradual. I've spoken to many people who have said they don't know when they were saved. They grew up in a Christian home and, truth be told, they cannot remember a time when Jesus was not their Savior and Lord. We all have a story.

My story falls somewhere in the middle. I didn't grow up in a Christian home. I remember the first time I heard the Gospel. I was in high school and a Christian told me that if I continued to reject Christ, I would go to hell. That was not easy to hear. I respected this person and was, frankly, shocked that she believed in hell at all. This conversation started me on a spiritual journey. I started to read the Bible. I began to attend a local church. I considered whether it could be true that Jesus is God and has the right to make demands of me. Eventually, I wanted to become a Christian, but I didn't know how. Somebody said I should pray. So I did. Again and again, I prayed that God would save me. I prayed that I would know He is real. I prayed that He would forgive me. I prayed that He would let me know that I am saved. I did not receive a dramatic answer from on high—but I know that sometime during those months of wrestling with God, the Lord converted me. In May of 1990 I was baptized, and my life has forever changed.

The Conversion of Augustine

The most famous conversion story may still be that of a man named Augustine who lived in the fourth century. Augustine had a Christian mother and a non-Christian father. He grew up in North Africa and took after his father more than his mother. Augustine was very smart and wanted to enjoy all the benefits that his intellect and education could bring him. He wanted sex, fame, and power. He spent thirteen years living with a woman who was not his wife and when that relationship failed, he found another woman to share his bed. He loved women, he loved debates, but he wasn't happy.

His unhappiness drove him partway to Christ. His conversion was not like the crashing of a thunderbolt. It was slow, deliberate, even painful. Augustine wrote it all down. He described how he wanted to believe, but he couldn't, "But in my temporal life everything was in a state of uncertainty, and my heart needed to be purified from the old leaven (1 Cor. 5:7 f.). I was attracted to the way, the Saviour himself, but was still reluctant to along its narrow paths." How many of us can relate to that statement? We were attracted to Jesus, but we were not ready to commit. The price just seemed too high. For Augustine, the price of becoming a Christian was giving up a life devoted to sensual pleasure. He put it simply, "I was still firmly tied by woman."

Augustine felt a battle being waged within his very soul. He fought, but could not break free. He described his journey in the form of prayer, written to God: "The new will, which was

beginning to be within me a will to serve you freely and to enjoy you, God, the only sure source of pleasure, was not yet strong enough to conquer my older will, which had the strength of old habit." He knew he needed to be delivered "from the chain of sexual desire, by which I was tightly bound, and from the slavery of worldly affairs."

For someone reading this who may not, in fact, be a Christian, Augustine is a good model here. He named the particular sin he needed freedom from: sexual desire. This was what he loved and hated, all at the same time. He loved it because it brought gratification. He hated it because it brought regret. He was in a vicious cycle of pleasure and shame. And yet he would not stop. He wasn't even at the point when he could truly pray for salvation. He knew where he ought to be, but he didn't really want to be there. And so he prayed, "Grant me chastity and continence [self-restraint], but not yet." However honest, that is the prayer of a non-Christian, the prayer of man who knows the shame of sin but doesn't yet want to experience the joy of holiness. Augustine put it this way, "Ingrained evil had more hold over me than unaccustomed good." He was learning about Christianity—and the good that it demands, but he was still in the world and used to the pleasures it affords. "My old loves," he wrote, "held me back." All of these thoughts consumed Augustine's mind while he was spending time in the garden of a friend's house in Milan, Italy.

And then something happened. Here is Augustine's account:

As I was saying this and weeping in bitter agony of my heart, suddenly I heard a voice from the nearby house chanting as if it might be a boy or a girl (I know not which), saying and repeating over and over again, 'Pick up and read, pick up and read'...I interpreted it solely as a divine command to me to open the book and read the first chapter I might find...I seized it, opened it and in silence read the first passage on which my eyes lit: "Not in riots and drunken parties, not in eroticism and indecencies, not in strife and rivalry, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in its lusts" (Rom. 13:13-14).

I neither wished nor needed to read further. At once, with the last words of this sentence, it was as if a light of relief from all anxiety flooded my heart. All the shadows of doubt were dispelled.¹

And with that, Augustine became a Christian. The Lord converted him. To use Paul's words, "For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:13-14). The rest of Augustine's story is well known. He was baptized in 387 AD and eight years later, after a period of study and quiet pastoral service, he became the bishop of Hippo. The Lord used Augustine powerfully and he is one of history's greatest Christian thinkers.

The Lord used His Word to save Augustine. God used Scripture to break through to Augustine, to make him realize he was a sinner in need of a Savior. God gave Augustine an image that made sense: instead of putting on all sorts of selfish behaviors, he should "put on the Lord Jesus Christ." By the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, those words changed him. The Word of God was the beginning of his salvation.

Once Converted, Where Do We Begin?

Maybe you have had the experience of planning for a vacation. You wrestle through the question of where to go. You have to

¹ All quotes are taken from Book VIII of Augustine's autobiography, *Confessions*, translated by Henry Chadwick (Oxford, 1992).

check your budget to see how much you can spend. You need to figure out how far you are willing to travel. Once you settle on the destination, the anticipation builds. You ask for time off from work. You make sure everyone's schedule is coordinated. You get everyone's bag packed. Finally, the day has arrived. You get in the car or hop on the plane and now the anticipation has reached its peak—you are ready to relax. You arrive at your destination, unpack your bags and then ask the question "Now what?" You've spent so much time just getting there, you are a bit unsure what to do now that you've arrived.

We can feel the same way about Christianity. For some of us, the trek to actually becoming a Christian was traumatic. We worked through a crisis or wrestled with a sticky theological doctrine—but we finally gave up and submitted our lives to Jesus Christ. Now what? Once someone is converted, once he's been saved, how should he now begin the Christian journey?

There are several important answers to the question, "How do I start the Christian life." The first is the most important: feed yourself with the Word of God! Paul Wegner is right: "The Bible can be read as great literature, as a history of the nation of Israel and the early church, or as a theological treatise, but it is God's revelation, and it is intended to change lives." It is intended to change lives. We are supposed to feed ourselves the Bible by reading it and thinking deeply about it because the Bible is a life-changing book.

A Bible Primer

We call God's revelation the Bible, a word that simply means "book" and is comprised of the Old and New Testaments. The English word, "testament," is a translation of word normally translated "covenant" in our Bibles. The New Covenant or New Testament refers to the new relationship with God that is now available through the God-man, Jesus Christ. The Old Covenant, or Old Testament, describes the necessity of faith in the Living God himself but before Jesus Christ came into the world.

The Old Testament is a collection of thirty-nine books covering over 2000 years of history. Abraham lived around 2000 BC and the last prophet in the Old Testament was preaching about 400 years before the time of Christ. The Old Testament deals mainly with one nation, Israel. When you crack the pages of the Old Testament, you will find lots of different type of writings: there is the genre of history; books like Joshua and Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings and Chronicles. There are books describing the events leading up to Israel's acceptance of God's Law, and describing what that Law is: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. There are books of poetry that are not simply intended to make us sing, but to make us wise. These books are, therefore, called wisdom literature: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. Finally, there is prophecy—all those names at the end of the Old Testament, from Isaiah to Malachi—these individuals were called by God to speak a word of judgment and hope to Israel and, ultimately, to show how both judgment and hope can be found in Jesus Christ.

We are supposed to feed ourselves the Bible by reading it and thinking deeply about it because the Bible is a life-changing book.

The New Testament is a collection of twenty-seven books written between approximately 50 and 95 AD. These books describe the life and ministry of Jesus, they give us the history of the early church. They explain what Christianity is and how history will eventually come to an end. Like the Old Testament, there are four types of writings in the New. First, the gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John describe the events surrounding Jesus' birth, ministry, death, and resurrection. Second, history. This is the book of Acts, written by a historian named Luke. Third, the letters or epistles. These are written by various authors but Paul wrote the majority. Most of these are letters to be read in local churches. Finally, there is prophetic or apocalyptic literature: the book of Revelation.

As Christians, we are called upon to trust that when we read the Bible, we are reading the very words of God. The authors themselves claim to be speaking for God. So Paul wrote to Timothy, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for training, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Paul is clear: if you want to be ready to live for Christ, you need to digest the Word of God: read it, work hard to understand it, pray that your life would come to reflect it.

Don Whitney offers three suggestions on how to read the Bible well. First, he writes, find the time. "Discipline yourself to find the time. Try to make it the same time every day. Try to make it a time other than just before you go to sleep."² Second, use a Bible-reading plan. I like to use the M'Cheyne Bible Reading Plan. It takes me through the Old Testament once in a year and the New Testament and Psalms twice. Do I ever miss a day? Sure. But I read a lot more Bible than I would otherwise without it! Third, Whitney encourages us to dig in: "Find at least one word, phrase, or verse to *meditate* on each time you read. . . . Take at least one thing you've read and think deeply about it for a few moments. Your insight into Scripture will deepen and you'll better understand how it applies to your life. And the more you apply the truth of Scripture, the more you'll become like Jesus."³

Thankfully, we can read the Bible with confidence because it is authoritative. What God says is true. Again, this is the Bible's judgment about itself (see 2 Peter 1:21; Matthew 4:4; 2 Peter 3:16; John 14:26). But how can we trust this to be the case? An excellent resource that addresses this question is F. F. Bruce's book, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?* Bruce writes:

The historic Christian belief is that the Holy Spirit, who controlled the writing of the individual books, also controlled their selection and collection, thus continuing

to fulfil our Lord's promise that He would guide His disciples into all the truth.⁴

Early Christians gravitated to these letters for good reasons. They were included in the "canon" of Scripture. Canon simply means "rule" or "standard." These are the books that believers agreed contained the standard or rule of Christian truth and, thus, they saw them as authoritative. But why *these* books? Bruce explains:

The New Testament books did not become authoritative for the Church because they were formally included in a canonical list; on the contrary, the Church included them in her canon because she already regarded them as divinely inspired, recognized their innate worth and generally apostolic authority, direct or indirect.⁵

Thankfully, we can read the Bible with understanding because it is clear. The Hebrews knew that the Old Testament scriptures could and should be taught to children: "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up" (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). Wherever you are, whatever you are doing, the Bible is a book that can be picked up and easily discussed. Though there are some passages that are hard to understand—those are a rarity! The problem isn't usually that we cannot understand what a passage means—though that happens. The problem is that too often we would prefer it mean something else.

Thankfully, we can read the Bible with passion because we know it is necessary for our growth. When tempted by Satan, Jesus' displayed complete dependence upon God's Word, citing Deuteronomy 8:3, "It is written, 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'" (Matthew 4:4).

Pick Up and Read!

I don't know whose voice Augustine heard when those words came upon him in the garden at Milan, "Pick up and read." But I know that I will not grow as a Christian unless I feed myself the Word of God. Life is so full. It is full of television and sports. It is full of food and friends. It is full of work and leisure. But in the midst of all of this, we must not neglect the regular reading and meditation on the Word of God. A runner preparing for a race would not stop loading up on carbs. A body builder preparing for a lift would not fail to eat protein. The Christian preparing for the return of Christ will not fail to live on every word that comes from the mouth of God. New Christian, old Christian, "pick up and read!" ■

~ Aaron Menikoff

² Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (NavPress, 1991), 33.

³ *Ibid.*, 34-35.

⁴ F. F. Bruce, *The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable* (InterVarsity, 1960), 21.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.



On May 2, 2010, the Mount Vernon church family and many friends gathered to participate in "Heroes Among Us: The Greatest Generation, a Salute to our World War II Veterans." Below is a transcription of Wayne Elliott's introduction to this event.

I grew up, as many of you did, surrounded by heroes. My father was in the Air Corps in World War II, and I had uncles who were in the service. They typified the men who were around me as I was growing up. I have come to realize in recent years that not every generation behind mine has had that experience. There was something unique about that generation, the one sometimes called the Greatest Generation. We are going to pause today to honor them.

We all need heroes. We all have heroes. It is tragic that many young people today have as their heroes movie stars or sports figures—those whose lives are often built on sand and whose lives thus collapse leaving fans wondering what happened to their heroes. I would suggest to you that the real heroes among us are quiet men and women, those who are not self-promoters but who lead quiet lives of service to the Lord and to others and who have service above self as their ideal.

I am going to set a scene now, so let's go back almost 70 years to the year 1941. In some ways, America was a different country from what it is now, and yet in other ways there are similarities. In 1941, America was struggling to come out of a 12-year-long depression. Unemployment had been as high as 25% a few years earlier, and it was still around 10% in 1941. We were somewhat isolated from the rest of the world, dealing with our own problems and our own economic woes. Most Americans lived on farms and in small towns.

Look at Thanksgiving 1941: Americans were going about their everyday lives. Jim Windham was a 14-year-old boy growing up in Texas. Henry Dolive was 26, married, and beginning a career in the moving business. Jim Fleming was a 19-year-old newspaper reporter in Cordele, Georgia. Wiley Hosmer was enjoying life as a 15-year-old in Florida. John McCoy was 18 and in his second year at North Georgia College.

Their lives were about to change dramatically because there was a war raging in Europe. Germany—the land of a proud people, a people who had produced Bach, Beethoven, and Martin Luther—was following a charismatic national political leader who thought that God was irrelevant and that national government would solve all problems. Adolph Hitler was leading Germany down a fanatical and, ultimately, suicidal and murderous path.

Poland, France, and other countries of Western Europe quickly fell to Nazi Germany. England was subjected to regular air raids and was under immediate threat of collapse. Americans were watching but determined to stay out of Europe's problem.

Only the politically astute were paying attention to a growing threat across the Pacific. But, in fact, much was going on there as Imperial Japan had already captured Manchuria and was plotting to seize the resources of the entire Pacific basin.

America—Sunday morning, December 7, 1941—the faithful went to church, just as they did in America this morning. They prepared family dinner. Those on the farm rested from a long week's work.

Suddenly there was an alarming announcement on the radio: The United States' naval base at Honolulu, Hawaii had been attacked by Japanese warplanes. Thousands of Americans had been killed or wounded.

The next day, a state of war with Japan was recognized, and war was declared on Nazi Germany and its axis partner, Mussolini's Italy.

Within months this country was transformed. Eventually over 16 million Americans, out of a population of 131 million, were in uniform in the armed forces. Some 350,000 American women were in the armed forces.

In a short period of time, young men like Ken Henson had gone from college studies to piloting a bomber. Hank Sturgess and Howard Kauffmann were serving on warships in the Pacific Ocean. Jim Fleming and Glenn Allen, each barely 20 years old, were navigators on B-24s flying bombing missions out of England and Italy. Melvin Mooney and Pat Terry, who were still teenagers, were now Marines fighting on Pacific islands with strange names.

Many Americans did not serve in uniform but served by working in essential war-related industries such as transportation, manufacturing, and food supply. Suddenly women and minorities had opportunities never seen before as doors opened for them to contribute to the war effort.

Almost overnight our civilian industries became war industries. General Motors and Ford no longer produced civilian cars and trucks but made tanks and military vehicles. Existing shipyards quickly expanded, and new shipyards were built. Within the next three years, starting from a standstill, with a minuscule military and an economy unprepared for war, America produced almost 300,000 military airplanes and many thousands of warships.

All sacrificed. Young wives saw their husbands go off to war, serving an average of 33 months away from home. Children did not see their fathers for years. Mothers and fathers anxiously prayed for sons and daughters who were away in service and feared the arrival of a telegram with bad news. Rationing was necessary and impacted everyone. The human cost of the war was severe.

America suffered over 900,000 battlefield casualties, including some 318,000 American GIs who did not come home but gave the ultimate sacrifice—their lives—for their country.

This country, this exceptional country, had awakened and responded sacrificially to a threat to freedom.

The elderly men and women we acknowledge today were once teenagers and young men and women—youngsters who put aside their dreams, plans, and aspirations to do what was necessary to preserve freedom. Young people, I would encourage you to realize how dramatically and quickly your lives may change. Opportunities may come your way to serve your country, your fellow man, and your Lord.

The generation of youngsters in the Second World War had to put aside their dreams, plans and aspirations in order to do what was necessary to preserve freedom. We live our lives freely and we are able to gather together today to worship God and to express our beliefs because of what these men and women and their brothers and sisters did for us.

We do not intend to glorify war on this Sunday. These men would be the first to tell us that war is a terrible thing and that war should be avoided if possible—but not at all costs. Avoid war if possible—but not at all costs. Those who were in combat were terrified. Those who left their families were lonely. Yet they did the necessary thing.

The Bible tells us in Ecclesiastes 3 "There is a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build...a time for war and a time for peace." Today we gather to express our gratitude for a generation of Americans who did their duty in a time of war. We are going to do that by acknowledging 17 men who are veterans of the Second World War and who are members of this church. Let us now meet these quiet heroes among us. ■

QUESTIONS FROM WEARY SAINTS

Eight sermons through the book of Joshua

Sermons are available online at www.mvbchurch.org, on iTunes, or on CD for just \$5.

June 2010

1	2	3	4	5 10:00 am VBS Setup Day
7	8	9 Vacation Bible School 5:00 pm VBS Family Night	11	12
13	14	15	16 Rockbridge Day Camp	17
19	20 10:30 am Guest Preacher: Bryan Pillsbury	21	22	23 Rockbridge Day Camp
26	27 7:00 pm Watermelon Social	28	29 Rockbridge Day Camp	30

EVENTS

Churchwide

June 6 6:00 pm Lord's Supper
We will celebrate the Lord's Supper during the evening service. We encourage members to examine their hearts and relationships with one another in preparation for this celebration of Christ's death and resurrection.

New Members

June 13 9:15 am Knowing MVBC: Our Commitments
(See ad to the right.)

Elementary

June 5 10:00 am VBS Setup Day
(See ad at the bottom of pg. 3)

June 6 12:00 pm VBS Setup Day
(See ad at the bottom of pg. 3)

June 7-11 9:30 am Vacation Bible School
(See ad at the bottom of pg. 3)

June 9 5:00 pm VBS Family Night
(See ad to the bottom right.)

Recreation

June 14-18 Rockbridge Day Camp

June 21-25

June 28- July 2

Rockbridge is a summer program designed for boys and girls ages 7-12. Campers choose from a variety of activities including Bible study, team sports, arts and crafts, water sports, fishing, canoeing, challenge course, and nature study.

BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Ann Barnes | 17 Corb Hankey |
| 2 Wanda Patterson | Ben Hudson |
| 3 Elinor Siefert | Julia Johnston |
| 4 Clayton Wood | 18 Kris McNeese |
| 5 Pat Knowles | Jeffrey Timmons |
| 6 Judy Kuhlman | 19 Linda Sproull |
| 7 Matt McCurdy | 20 Carolyn Chatham |
| 8 Antoinette Garrison | 21 Carrie Rochester |
| 9 Jonathan Mosby | 22 Michelle Hoover |
| 10 William Long | Holly Reeves |
| 11 Claudia Payne | Rosie Reeves |
| 12 Stan Thompson | 23 Paula Costello |
| 13 Chris Spruill | Ethan Meadows |
| 14 Abigail Higgins | Benjamin Tingle |
| 15 Conrad Whitfield | 24 Cameron Davis |
| 16 Chris Williams | Bill Frantz |
| 17 Rebecca Cox | Matthew Reid |
| 18 Brittany Nash | 25 Tom Pamplin |
| 19 Emma Briley | 27 Joy Hudson |
| 20 Gayle Hynds | Hubert McDonald |
| 21 Helen Carter | 28 Kelly Dudley |
| 22 Kris McCleskey | Barbara Hodge |
| | 30 Joel Andrews |



Knowing MVBC: The Membership Class is a four session course that introduces you to life at Mount Vernon, covering the following topics:

- Knowing Our Commitments: Church Covenant
- Knowing Our Beliefs: Statement of Faith
- Knowing Our Disciplines: Personal Discipleship
- Knowing Our Structure: Nuts & Bolts

Anyone interested in membership or knowing more about life at Mount Vernon is invited to *Knowing MVBC: The Membership Class*. The first session will be held on June 13, at 9:15 am, in the Mount Vernon room. You may sign up on the edge of the bulletin or by contacting the church office at 404-255-3133.



VBS Family Night

Wednesday, June 9

We welcome all families of our VBS children and all church members to join us for dinner at 5:00 pm with a short program beginning at 6:30 pm. Come hear what the children have learned and done so far in Bethlehem Village! Since this is a family event, there will be no childcare, and the program will be in lieu of our regular Bible studies.



Mount Vernon

BAPTIST CHURCH

850 Mount Vernon Highway NW

Sandy Springs, GA 30327