



Fresh Bread

The Newsletter of
Bread of Heaven Church

November–December 2020

BREAD *of* HEAVEN
C H U R C H

BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY

SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

Praise the Lord!

It is a wonderful blessing to write to you again; it has been quite a while since we last published our “Fresh Bread” newsletter in hard copy. I trust that God, by His grace, has brought you through the storms and trauma of 2020. This letter is titled “A Meditation at Christmastime.”

Jesus, of course, is no longer in the manger. By faith, we see the strong hands of a carpenter, later pierced. For Him, no crown of gold – just a crown of thorns. Despised and rejected of men – a man of sorrows, marred more than any man, yet all real hope and all real joy and all real peace flows from His suffering. He is our Emmanuel, God wrapped in flesh.

Jesus Christ is redemption camouflaged in shame, power clothed in lowliness and meekness. He is healing attended by bloody stripes, and glory revealed in suffering. We can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthens us and, in Him, we can count it all joy through the storms, hurts, uncertainties, disappointments, and fiery tests of life.

There was no room at the inn, but, thankfully, there is room at the cross. Jesus preached liberty to the captives, leading captivity away in handcuffs. Jesus Christ of Nazareth, the once and future King, from before creation, before Abraham was – He was and is and will always be. From everlasting to everlasting, He is the One the heaven of heavens cannot contain.

Jesus Christ is the Light of our dark and un-sacred world. Jesus drank the cup so that cups all over the world – from age to age - could be filled to overflowing. Enduring the contradiction of sinners, despising the shame, joy was set before Him. We have been ransomed, our sins remitted, and our souls set free by His precious blood. We stand, in our frailty and brokenness, as beneficiaries of new and better promises.

Pandemic and pain appeared - 2020 has been for us a year like no other. As pilgrims and strangers, God has been our dwelling place in all generations. We still are blessed to sing the Lord’s song in a strange land and in a strange time. Grace appeared, long before, long after – in the fullness of time. I am so glad that His grace is sufficient for us and His strength is perfected and consummated in our weakness.

Sisters and brothers, I will close with a few questions. When you walk into a room, do you reflect some infinitesimally small measure of the glory of Jesus Christ, the Light of the World? Is there something about you that helps people for whom Jesus died dare to hope that “Joy to the world” is more than a sweet slogan of the season? Can a troubled world look at you, or your local assembly, and tell, in the truest Biblical sense, that it is Christmastime?

Peace and blessings,

Russell T. Perkins, Pastor,
Bread of Heaven Church,
2430 Jefferson Street, Nashville, TN

“Pandemic and pain appeared – **2020 has been for us a year like no other.**”

“**Jesus Christ is redemption camouflaged in shame**, power clothed in lowliness and meekness.”

BREAKING BREAD

Keeping God's Word

By District Elder Edward C. Matheny, Berea Apostolic Faith Church, Stone Mountain, GA

"3 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.4 He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.5 But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." 1 John 2:3-6.

The truth that we know God is not according to our professing but rather our possessing of His commandments. We can believe in God and still do contrary to His will, as is the case of fallen angels. There are many who try to hide behind love rather than walk in love. To hide behind love is to use love as an excuse to cover up our unwillingness to obey God. Our profession of love then becomes a thinly-veiled disguise for sin and puts the burden on God once again to prove that He loves us by continually overlooking our sins and transgression (because we have no desire to change from our ways of living and thinking). By this, the writer of Hebrews says, "we crucify Christ anew in our flesh." Hebrews 6:6. To walk in love means that we are in agreement and the very thought of doing that which is displeasing to the one we love is repulsive. See Amos 3:3. God's commandments were given to show us what He desires and to guide us in loving one another. See John 14:15, 22-23; 15:10-12; 1 John 2:3-5; 3:22; 5:2. If you don't like okra and I know you don't like it and I serve you okra despite anyway, am I really being mindful of your desire or dislikes?

Too many of today's messages have completely taken out the desires of God and replaced it with the desires of men. Given this carnal response, it is almost a shame to think that God "humbled" Himself to become a man to die for man's sin. Romans 5:5-8. He did this to show man His great love for mankind to save them and redeem them back into His kingdom, only to have man to say to God, "it was not enough, that was a long time ago, what are you doing for me now?" The ungrateful attitude of a people whom never seem to appreciate all that God is and all that He is doing can be summed up in a question, "Why won't men keep His commandments?"

Enjoy the Lesson!

Slices

"Getting Past What You Can't Get Past" (Genesis 37:18-25). Although Joseph was betrayed, sold into slavery by his own brothers, imprisoned on a false charge of attempted rape, forgotten by a fellow prisoner who promised to remember him, Joseph was able to get past these setbacks because God honored his faithfulness, giving him favor. Many of us are still trying to get past our pain, disappointments, and our own weaknesses and past mistakes, attempting to overcome them by doing the same old self-directed things over and over again. If we walk in Jesus Christ, if we obey the Word and if we prayerfully cast all

of our cares on the Him, He can help us get past what we can't get past. (*Preached by Russell T. Perkins on 11/15/2020*).

FROM THE BREAD BASKET

The Joy of the Lord is Our Strength

By Sister Karen Brasher

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." James 1:2-4 (NIV).

The Word of God, according to the Book of James, lets us know that there is value associated with going through difficulties. Although the various trials may not be joyful, we can still remain joyful in knowing that God is still good, and is always in the midst of our trials with us. His intent is never to harm us, but to allow for the trial to work for the good. The thought of knowing that He promised never to leave nor forsake us should give us unspeakable joy in any situation. Just as He was with the three Hebrew boys in the fiery furnace, God is present with us still today. During times of trials, we should still strive to grow spiritually and allow the trials to develop the character of Christ in us and bring out of us endurance, steadfastness, and patience, which are all powerful qualities that we should desire. If we trust and wait on God for our breakthrough, our strength will be renewed, and our faith elevated to the next level. James 1:4 (KJV) expresses it like this: "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

Romans 8:28 lets us know that all things work together for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. We may not feel joyous when facing difficulties, but we can consider them to be so if we know what they produce in our lives after they have done their work in us. We must keep our minds on Him and not our situations. Through prayer, studying and meditating on the Word of God, and seeking godly counsel, we can achieve victory over any situation.

Let me encourage you to always focus on the strength you are gaining with the help of God, rather than the opposition you are facing. Allow the trouble you encounter to be an opportunity to increase your faith. The stronger our faith is, the less troubles can hinder us from being who God has called us to be, in order to be used for the furthering of God's kingdom.

WARM VERSES

AND WE FLY AWAY (From Psalm 90)

By Ranetta Perkins Glover

*The untold tale of life unfolds.
The sum of a life in days steadily counting down
Unnoticed,
Years blow by like a gentle breeze,
Memories, like sand through a clenched fist.
This epic drama is a captivating mystery
Lived in three distinct parts
Birth, life, and death.
Sometimes short, tragic, and full of wonder,
Other times long, lacking, and empty of purpose.
The beauty of these breathing fairy tales are that
The significance is left for the hero or heroine to decide.
Read carefully.
These stories are ever-changing,
Yet, the pen scrawls steadily in God's unchanging hand.
If we learn to number the days and
Grab hold of this Book of Life
And apply our lives to its living,
Then we will not find ourselves resting on the last line
Of the final page wishing,
Longing to relive a tale already told
And seemingly too soon, the book ends.
And we fly away.*

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BREAD CRUMBS

"It's one of the greatest gifts you can give yourself, to forgive. **Forgive everybody.**" –Maya Angelou

"How dangerous it is when **our souls are gasping for God** but we're too distracted flirting with the world to notice." – Lysa TerKeurst

BREAD OF heaven

Bread of Heaven is an **outpost for the glory of God.** We don't conform to society standards, but **we operate in love.** We will win the world as we **lift Him up!**

BREAD OF HEAVEN CHURCH • NASHVILLE, TN

PASTOR RUSSELL PERKINS

REFLECTING OVER 2020

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2021

BREAD *of* HEAVEN C H U R C H



SERVICE SCHEDULE

Sunday Morning Worship
9:30am

Wednesday
Prayer – 6:20pm
Bible Study – 7pm

Band of Brothers
Select Thursdays

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