Where the Beginner Begins



"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Jesus.' Ephesians 2:13

I have a friend who frequently said, "Remember to begin where the beginner begins." I first thought it was one of the dumbest sayings I ever heard. Yet now I find myself using it! It is a good reminder to try to look through the eyes of one just getting started on the journey you have been on for some time. It certainly applies to our spiritual journey.

According to the Apostle Paul, the place where the beginner begins is quite bleak. He writes, "Remember that at the time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world" (Eph. 2:12).

The "low lights" of this beginning are:

- Separate living outside of Christ
- **Excluded** benefits of citizenship unavailable
- Foreigners strangers to the promises of God
- Without hope despair for the future
- Without God in the world God-less, no eternal reference point

The tendency for those of us who have been Christ followers for some time is to forget the awful reality of the beginner's beginning.

But a significant shift happens for the believer. "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Jesus" (Eph. 2:13). The transition from being far away to being near to God was secured for us in Christ. "Brought near" is passive, indicating an action done to us and for us. Being brought near is a gift from God, undeserved but gratefully embraced.

God drew us near "through the blood of Jesus." Paul wrote to the Colossians that it was through Jesus God moved "to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Col. 1:20). When we begin where the beginner begins, we are reminded just how powerful is the blood of Christ. Thank God "the blood will never lose its

"You are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household" (Eph. 2:19). We were isolated and alone, disconnected from God's people. But now we share citizenship with God's household, and rightly claim them as our world-wide family. When we begin where the beginner begins, we can receive the church as the gift it is designed to be.

John Stott writes, "It is hard to exaggerate the grandeur of this transition. The new society God has brought into being is nothing short of a new creation, a new human race, whose characteristic is no longer alienation but reconciliation, no longer division and hostility but unity and peace." As Paul penned, "In him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit" (Eph.

Beginning where the beginner begins, we are reminded what God has done, and how far we have come. This should drive us to worship the One who brought us near and to share him with those still far away. And when you do, "remember to begin where the beginner begins!"





DEVOTION



Read

Revelation 21:1-4 (NLT)

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever."

Reflect

Even though scholars disagree about how to interpret the book of Revelation, what can we be sure of as we read this apocalyptic book?

Many people consider the book of Revelation to be the most intimidating book of the Bible. It is full of symbolism, complicated imagery, strange visions, and prophecy. Because of this, it is difficult to interpret and scholars differ in their views about this book. So, you may be wondering, should I even bother reading the book of Revelation?

Yes, you should read Revelation, even if you don't understand everything you read. Why? Because Revelation is a part of God's Word. He revealed His Word to John with the intention that believers will read it. John was exiled by Rome to the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. He was an old man by the time he received these visions and wrote them down (about 95 A.D.).

In Revelation 1:1-3, John gave us this introduction: "This is a revelation from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, who faithfully reported everything

he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. God blesses the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who listen to its message and obey what it says, for the time is near."

First, John addressed seven of the churches in Asia. Even in this first chapter, John made the main point of Revelation clear—that Jesus reigns and He will return soon. "Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven. And everyone will see him— even those who pierced him. And all the nations of the world will mourn for him. Yes! Amen!" (Revelation 1:7). God revealed these things to John so that we can be assured that Jesus is coming back, and He will triumph over sin, Satan, and death once and for all. This is an important reminder to have in the face of earthly suffering and persecution!

Then, in chapters 2-3, John received and relayed messages from God to each of seven individual churches. These messages included commendations, rebukes, challenges, commands, and comforting promises for those who endure. While it is important for us to understand this section in its specific historical context, we can learn a lot about what God expects regarding the holiness and faithfulness of His church. His Word to the churches is still relevant to us today.

Chapters 4-22 transition to future prophecy. God revealed to John visions and images of the future judgments that are to come: the seven seals, the seven trumpets, the seven bowl judgments, and the Great White Throne judgment. In these judgments, Christ righteously judges those who have rejected His offer of salvation and pours out His wrath on Satan, his demons, and those who follow Satan.

One of the most fascinating things about the book of Revelation is how it contrasts with the book of Genesis. Genesis is about the beginning of this earth while Revelation is about the end of this earth and the beginning of the new heaven and a new earth. Sin and death appeared on the scene in Genesis and sin and death are conquered in Revelation. Verses 1-4 of Revelation 21 describe the new heaven and the new earth that John saw. The earth that God created in Genesis passes away in Revelation. Just as Adam and Eve had once walked with God in Genesis, so mankind will walk with God and enjoy His presence once again according to Revelation. Everything that went wrong in Genesis gets made right in Revelation.

DEVOTION CONT.

Friends, this is our great hope in Christ! This is what He has promised us! He is coming back and when He does, He will dwell among us! We won't suffer anymore. We won't hurt anymore. We won't cry anymore. We won't die anymore! So read the book of Revelation for yourself. "Everything you have heard and seen is trustworthy and true. The Lord God, who inspires his prophets, has sent his angel to tell his servants what will happen soon. 'Look, I am coming soon! Blessed are those who obey the words of prophecy written in this book"" (Revelation 22:6-7).

Pray

Lord, there is much about You and about the future that we don't understand. But we know that we can trust You and we know Your Word is true. You will come back soon. You will judge righteously. You will deal with sin, and You will punish Satan forever. You will right all the wrongs of this world. Thank You for the promise of Your glorious return! Thank You for the promise of redemption, salvation, and eternal life with You forever in Christ. Come Lord Jesus. Amen.

August Celebrations

August 2 Joyce Clark

August 3

Dennis & Wren Smith Polly Jansen Karter G. (MCS Student)

August 4

Guy & Polly Fishman

August 5

Dick Baker Mark & Marcia Casey Samantha M. (MCS Staff)

August 9

Isabella Lewis

August 10

Linda Vannatta Sylvia Kerns

August 11

Wendy R. (MCS Staff)

August 14

Keith Ludvigson

August 15

Mike & Pam Cronin Brayden S. (MCS Student) August 17 Mike Cronin

August 18

Chris & Karen Weinreich Amy Strahman

August 20

Della Rupp Eden K. (MCS Staff)

August 22

Charlotte Barnes Sidney Luiz

August 24

Nathaniel T. (MCS Student)

August 25

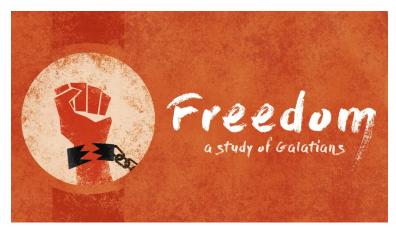
Tom & Shelley Mortenson Izaiah Her

August 27

Jason N. (MCS Student)



Freedom: A Study of Galatians



We often feel exhausted with all that we need to do. We can feel like we don't measure up, and we carry the weight of the world on our shoulders. We cart around expectations for ourselves given by others while being quick to put expectations on other people. Life can feel heavy and burdensome at times.

There is nothing a Christian can do to add to the finished work on the cross. Galatians teaches us to experience freedom in the truth of the Gospel. It shows us how to live a life seasoned with grace for ourselves and for other people. It teaches us to walk daily with the Holy Spirit and live transformed lives. In Christ we find freedom!

06/26/22 — The Gospel of Grace

07/03/22 — Pleasing God or Men?

07/10/22 — The Problem with Legalism

07/17/22 — Justified by Faith

07/24/22 — The Purpose of the Law

07/31/22 — Children of God

08/07/22 — Spirit-Led Freedom

08/14/22 — How to Grow in Grace

Galatians Overview

Galatians 1:20-24

Galatians 2:11-14

Galatians 2:15-21

Galatians 3:15-25

Galatians 3:26 - 4:7

Galatians 5:13-18

Galatians 5:16-25

MISSION UPDATES

Rapha International What are Counter ACEs?

Understanding How to Prevent and Reduce the Impacts of Trauma

(taken from the July 20 blog post at Rapha International)

Last month we shared a blog about ACEs (*What are ACE's? Understanding the Impacts of Trauma*), or adverse childhood experiences, that include abuse, neglect, and a variety of environmental factors that threaten a child's sense of safety and security. ACEs create a higher risk for behavioral, psychological, and even health problems. Because of the negative impacts they have on an individual's future, it's essential for us to advocate for positive childhood experiences (PCEs) that can counter the effects of ACEs. Whether you are a guardian, neighbor, or a community member, you play a vital role in reducing the vulnerability of children.

Social scientists have studied the experiences and circumstances that can counter the impacts of ACE's, or provide resiliency and wellbeing for those who experienced them. Two different studies that were published in 2019 show evidence of circumstances that can fight against the negative effects of ACEs. One study referred to these as counter-ACE's, the other referred to them as Positive Childhood Experiences, or PCE's (Crandall et. al, 2019; Bethell et. al, 2019). Both play the same role in a child's life- building resiliency and healing trauma.

Counter ACEs:

- Liking school
- Teachers who care
- Opportunities to have fun
- A predictable home routine
- Feeling Comfortable with yourself
- A caregiver with whom you feel safe
- Beliefs that provide comfort
- Good friends and neighbors

Positive Childhood Experiences (PCEs):

- Family you can talk to
- Family who is supportive
- Community traditions
- A sense of belonging in school
- Caring relationships with two non-parent adults
- Being protected by an adult in the home

The child's community plays a critical role in providing positive childhood experiences that change the trajectory of a child's life and how they respond to stress as adults.

Childhood is when coping skills are developed and also when a stress threshold is established. "Toxic stress" is extreme, long-lasting stress that exceeds a child's ability to cope, especially when they do not have supportive guardians helping them navigate challenges (Learning Lumen 2022). ACEs cause toxic stress and lead to



excessive activation of the stress-response system which can lead to long-lasting wear and tear on a child's body and brain. Continual exposure to high levels of the stress hormone cortisol can even reduce the size of a child's hippocampus and affect a child's memory and reduce their immunity to disease. This will also cause a child to be hypersensitive to stress in the future (Center on the Developing Child, 2022). On the other hand, PCEs and counter-ACE's reduce stress, promote healthy coping skills, and foster supportive relationships that empower an individual to reach their full developmental potential.

Research demonstrates that ACEs are associated with an increased report of daily stress as an adult, in addition to negative health effects (Mosely-Johnson et.al 2021). There are many adverse childhood experiences that happen every day, such as living in an environment where guardians are divorced, ongoing physical and emotional abuse, family members with mental health problems, and other factors that threaten the safety and security of a child. When a child is a victim of these adverse childhood experiences on a daily basis, it is all the more crucial that they also experience daily PCEs to counter these ACEs. This is why it is vital to establish emotional and physical safety and security in a child's life. Guardians, teachers, social workers, family members, friends, and neighbors play a critical role in providing positive childhood experiences that change the trajectory of a child's life and how they respond to stress as adults. The more counter-ACEs a child has, the less severe the long-term physical and mental consequences.

Together, we can use this information about PCEs to make our communities a safer place for children and decrease ongoing ACEs, as well as reduce the impact of past adverse experiences. It is never too late to begin

creating positive childhood experiences and provide an atmosphere of safety and security for a child. The more PCEs a child has, the more empowered they will be to have a future of mental and physical health. Offering support to children and their families, including resources to help with sources of stress at home, is an optimal way to help prevent or stop ongoing ACEs.

If a child has already experienced multiple ACEs or a family is in need of mental health resources, working with a therapist is another great way to process trauma and reduce the risk of negative outcomes from ACEs. Rapha's Hope and Healing Center partners with local foster care agencies and other child serving organizations in an effort to reach clients with the greatest needs and address the negative impacts ACEs have on a child's life. Find out more about the Hope and Healing Center here: https://www.rapha.center/



MINISTRY UPDATES

Bible Buddies Volunteer Staff Meeting

August 8 @ 7:00 p.m. Chapel / Conference Room

Christian Homemakers Meeting

August 11 @ 9:30 a.m. TBD, Hostess TBD, Devotions

Esther Circle

August 17 @1:30 p.m.
Nancy Nelson, Devotions & Missions
Ruth Dean, Hostess

Bible Buddies Registration Night Family Meal

September 7 @ 6:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Bible Buddies

September 14 @ 6:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Loving God, watch over our children as they begin their new school year. Bless them with joy at seeing friends, excitement at new experiences, and a love of learning.

Guide and protect all who learn, replacing fear with joy, anxiety with peace, and tiredness with energy. Give wisdom, patience, and joy to

teachers as they serve their students.



In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

A Back-to-School Prayer

ATTENDANCE

June 26		July 3		July 10		July 17	
On Campus	71	On Campus	67	On Campus	90	On Campus	75
Online	25	Online	23	Online	29	Online	23
TOTAL	96	TOTAL	90	TOTAL	119	TOTAL	98

OFFERING

June 26		July 3		July 10		July 17	
On Campus	1766.10	On Campus	2261.00	On Campus	2586.00	On Campus	1747.00
Online	397.10	Online	60.00	Online	-0-	Online	970.65
Designated	50.00	Designated	-0-	Designated	-0-	Designated	-0-
TOTAL	\$ 2213.20	TOTAL	\$2321.00	TOTAL	\$2586.00	TOTAL	\$2717.65

NO FEAR

Bible Reading Plan

Choosing Faith When I Am Afraid

	71
1. John 14:23	51

- 2. Isaiah 41:9-14
- 3. 1 John 4:13:21
- 4. Psalm 56:1-13
- 5. Isaiah 43:1-7
- 6. Psalm 34:1-7
- 7. Deuteronomy 31:1-8
- 8. 1 Chronicles 28:11-20
- 9. Hebrews 13:1-8
- 10. Psalm 112:1-10
- 11. Isaiah 12:1-6
- 12. Zephaniah 3:14-20
- 13. 2 Chronicles 20:14-21
- 14. Psalm 27:1-8
- 15. Joshua 1-:1-14
- 16. Isaiah 44:1-8

- 17. Isaiah 46:1-11
- 18. Psalm 91:1-8
- 19. Psalm 91:9-16
- 20. Isaiah 35:1-10
- 21. Isaiah 54:1-8
- 22. Romans 8:9-17
- 23. Hebrews 12:18-29
- 24. Psalm 3:1-8
- 25. Psalm 27:1-5
- 26. Psalm 143:1-6
- 27. Psalm 143:7-12
- 28. Psalm 23:1-6
- 29. Isaiah 8:11-18
- 30. Jeremiah 17:5-10
- 31. Psalm 118:1-9

WORSHIP TEAM SCHEDULE

7-Aug	14-Aug	21-Aug	28-Aug
Children's Church	Children's Church	Children's Church	Children's Church
Polly Fishman	Sholeen Sparks	Dixie Draper	Angela Hall
Children's Sunday School	Children's Sunday School	Children's Sunday School	Children's Sunday School
Polly Fishman	Sholeen Sparks	Dixie Draper	Angela Hall
Communion Message	Communion Message	Communion Message	Communion Message
Dennis Smith	Guy Fishman	Mike Sparks	Kirk Nelson
Worship Leader	Worship Leader	Worship Leader	Worship Leader
Wren Smith	David Hall	Wren Smith	Sharon Henkel
Keyboard	Keyboard	Keyboard	Keyboard
Eleanor Johnston		Wren Smith	Wren Smith
Piano	Piano	Piano	Piano
Wren Smith			Eleanor Johnston
Singers	Singers	Singers	Singers
Nancy Nelson	Larry Heschke	Dennis Smith	Dennis Smith
Sharon Henkel	Angela Hall	Sharon Henkel	Nancy Nelson
PowerPoint	PowerPoint	PowerPoint	PowerPoint
Braella Inman	Nancy Nelson	Braella Inman	Braella Inman
Sound	Sound	Sound	Sound
Larry Heschke	Mike Sparks	Larry Heschke	Mike Sparks
Janitors	Janitors	Janitors	Janitors
Polly Fishman	Polly Fishman	Polly Fishman	Polly Fishman
Guy Fishman	Guy Fishman	Guy Fishman	Guy Fishman

Do Not Worry

Luke 12:29-34

"And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you."

Luke 12:29-31

DO NOT SEEK

EAT

DRINK

ANXIOUS

MIND

THESE THINGS

NATIONS SEEK

FATHER KNOWS

YOU NEED

DO NOT FEAR

LITTLE FLOCK

PLEASURE

TO GIVE

KINGDOM

SELL

GIVE ALMS

PROVIDE

MONEY BAGS

NOT GROW OLD

NO THIEF

APPROACHES

NOR MOTH

DESTROYS

WHERE

TREASURE IS

HEART WILL BE



VYCGIVEALMSDXCIJULFXRDLTMUMW EAIIMVXOXJKPROVIDEMJKZRWETNO MFVSFOKSQDESEHCAORPPAWMSKXOH V Q R H H A D E N K B J X V M S G A B Y E N O M Q L K E NPASNWJGEYEINCCKTQXTXMKFGWEA LNEBCDLTNSJFEAQGSLNNPRBRLWER CPFRKEEXPITUFQHSGSVHVRTFWXST TDTGEHVLJZKOUDEWHEQSUOIXNASW XLOZUPEILDTZNXAIENAZQRGSYGNI MHNXIAMIGHNGVONCKRMTCNXCWDOL UHOQSETREONISTDRQOERQBDSLWIL RADUZQYSGTTQMWCNNFYHNJWOULTB LIRCXOEXPRPRGVKIOFVXWOWJDGAE BVJTVBMQNSDYWFPZTSNOYEKTNA G P F M H B R E J A C P G N P K L R I K R V E Y S K Q E WLHIYERNKWMPGJKNQERGWNUEWHSM P M N S L P F K Y C Q I P C O S R E T A U O L C M M Q P FGDPKHAANUACGTJUHOQOGLXOPZMF SVTNBGQMQVRSHKSTNUYJWKZCBOFM GBIIFFLZUPLIXAAHKDESTROYSGKC J R Q N R X C H Q H E A E F S V P M N Y H R B I R A K B DEBCGMVXPFNRGKCOLFELTTILRKBV NDTQXKRPFDTWXRSFRJJFMDWAAELC VITNORMOTHDWKEXXABFIOVXINDE

BIBLE BUDDIES BEGINS SOON!

Registration Night / Family Meal Wednesday - September 7, 2022 Fellowship Hall @ 6:30 p.m.

Ages 4 years old through 5th grade



Notes of Thanks

Dear Church Family,

My 80th birthday celebration was filled with fun, happiness and love. God's goodness brought my family together on July 2nd. We enjoyed BBQ and other foods at my duplex.

My heart is thankful for every card and kind words received from many of you.

My move was nearly a year ago. Being close to family is a blessing! The neighbors are friendly and kind.

You are missed!

Love,

Betty

Dear Church Family,

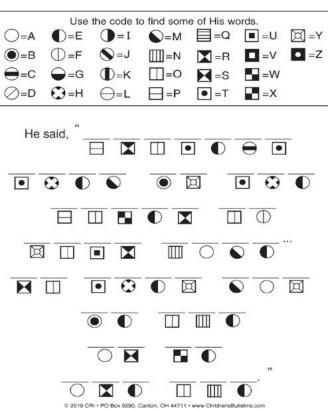
Special thanks to all who have sent cards, texts, phone calls, food and most importantly prayed for myself and Denny. God's presence has been present through this journey.

Thank you for your friendship and support.

Dennis and Wren



Jesus prayed for His friends.

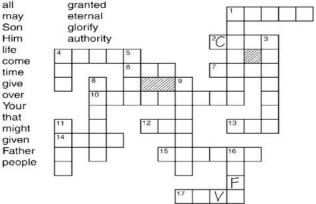


Jesus prayed to God.

To find His prayer, fit the words from the list into the crossword puzzle.

Then transfer them to the numbered lines.

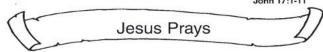
all granted may eternal



'(8)	, the (7)		has (2)		
(1D)		(11)	(12)	
(5)	Your	Son (4D)	glo	rify Yo	u.
For	You (9)		(6)		
(10)		(14)		(13)	
(15)		_ that He (4A)		_
(17)	(3)		_ (16)		to all
thos	se You have	e (1A)	н	lim."	



John 17:1-11



Jesus prayed to His Father in heaven.

Find 10 things that are different in the second picture.





Jesus prayed for His

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Find the letters to fill in the blanks.

Write the letter that's missing from the second word of the pair.

- 1) DESERT TREES _____
- 2) FRUIT TURF ___
- 3) SMILE LIME ____
- 4) CAMEL LAME ____
- 5) RADIO ROAD ____
- 6) SPIDER RIDES ____
- 7) LEARN NEAR _____
- 8) ELBOW BOWL ____
- 9) PEAS APE ____



BIBLE CLASSES

10:00 a.m.

Christian Standard Curriculum

Chapel

Ladies Class

Room 7 - Downstairs

Men's Class

Room 8 - Downstairs

Children's Class

Downstairs

MISSIONS WE SUPPORT

Nebowa Christian Camp Midwest Christian Services **Deaf Missions** International Disaster Emergency Services Rapha International Voice of the Martyrs

CHURCH INFO

Worship

Sunday Mornings 9:00 a.m.

Office Hours

Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Leadership

Pastor David Hall (641) 638-4762 Mike Sparks, Elder (712) 261-4730 Kirk Nelson, Elder (712) 540-9591 Larry Heschke, Elder (712) 221-7592 Mark Patten, Deacon Barry Nelson, Deacon Tom Mortenson, Deacon

Website

www.cherokeefcc.com FB: @firstchurchcherokee

Phone: (712) 225-2667 **Email:** office@cherokeefcc.com Office Secretary: Nancy Nelson







«City», «State» «Lip» «Street Address» «First Name» «Last Name»

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Cherokee, lowa 51012 772 N. 2nd Street