

THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

January 24, 2016

"BE STRONG IN THE LORD AND IN THE POWER OF HIS MIGHT"

PLEASANT PLAINS CHURCH OF CHRIST

JACKSON, TENNESSEE

Preparation: The Key To Success

A friend of mine from Florida, Pat Weinmann, posted the above photo on my facebook page. I clicked and it has been shared 34,000 times and liked by more than 9,000 people. So, it definitely resonated with many viewers. I appreciate Pat sharing it. And the message is accurate. A successful 30 minute sermon is preceded by hours of research, reading, prayer and study. In fact, it is often the cumulation of years of preparation that result in the presentation.

Like most preachers, I have been asked to preach when visiting a congregation on vacation. I vividly recall once being asked right before the worship began. I sat down and said to Norma Jean, "They asked me to preach this morning." Our daughter, Rachél, was sitting between us and asked with some concern, "Dad, what are you going to preach?" As the first song began, I leaned over to her and whispered, "I don't know yet." Her response was a look of amazement and wonderment. Of course, that sermon was the result of prior preparation that could be delivered without notes on a moments notice.

However, in reflecting on the importance of preparation, I'm reminded of a famous quote by Abraham Lincoln, "I will prepare and some day my chance will come." The principle of preparation is witnessed in every successful profession and endeavor in life.

It is true in the world of sports. "Champions do not become champions when they win the events, affirmed Alan Armstrong, "but in the hours, weeks, months and years they spend preparing for it. The victorious performance itself it merely the demonstration of their championship character." Sometimes an athlete or team is called "lucky" when they win. But I prefer the analysis of the legendary former football coach of the Texas Longhorns, Darrell Royal, who once quipped "Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity."

When you see a successful business person, you only see the tip of the iceberg. Their failures, hard work, long hours and investment of effort, energy and resources are often forgotten or overshadowed by their success. My friend, Bob Andrews, always encouraged upcoming entrepreneurs with this advise, "Spectacular achievement is always preceded by less spectacular preparation."

I'm reminded of the story of woman who attended the concert of a famous pianist. Following the show she approached the pianist gushing over his performance and said, "I would give my life to play the piano like you." To which the artist simply replied, "I did."

The importance of preparation is no less important when it comes to Christian living. Faithfulness. Spirituality. And Bible knowledge. The apostle Paul advised his young "son in the faith," Timothy, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). The concept of spiritual preparation is embodied in Jesus' parable of the 10 virgins who went to meet the bridegroom. 5 were wise. And 5 were foolish. The wise were

prepared with extra oil for the their lamps. The unwise were unprepared when the bridegroom came and their lamps went out because they had no oil. Jesus exhortation was "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming" (Matt 25:13). Spiritual preparation is anchored in regular Bible study, persistent prayer and weekly worship. Christian maturity is realized by daily developing the Christian virtues, growing in the fruit of the spirit, and applying the wisdom of God while shunning the wisdom of the world (1 Pet 1:5-10; Gal. 5:22-25; Jas 3:13-18). Benjamin Franklin's sage counsel can be applied to Christian living, "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."

Preparation requires a vision for the future, personal commitment, rigid self-discipline, and a laser-like focus. And it is done daily in seemingly small, yet important actions that produce long-term results. As H. Jackson Brown put it, "The best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today."

Always remember, when you see a life well lived, like a good sermon, it's just the tip of the iceberg.



We are so grateful that you have made the decision to join our family, today, as we worship our Almighty God! If you have any questions or inquiries, please feel free to ask any of our members and we would be more happy to answer as best we can! Please accept our invitation to join us, again, when you have the opportunity.

-Ken Weliever, thepreachersword.com



Speaker:

NICK ANGEL

Sunday AM Notes 1-24-2016

BAPTISM

**It's Not
"Just A Bath"**

I Peter 3:21

Baptism is a _____ of _____.

Baptism gives the _____ a _____
_____.

Baptism is a _____ from the _____.



Speaker:

NICK ANGEL

Sunday PM Notes 1-24-2016

15 Reasons Jesus Came

1) Jesus came into the world to _____ . (1 Tim. 1:15)

2) Jesus came into the world to _____ to
_____ . (Mark 2:17)

3) Jesus came into the world to _____ and _____ the _____ .
(Luke 19:10)

4) Jesus came into the world to _____ the true _____ of
_____ and to give _____ as a _____ . (Matt. 20:28)

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Our Preacher

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Times of Worship & Bible Study

Sunday:

9:30 AM Bible Study

10:30 AM Worship Service: You can expect heart felt singing, reverent prayer, preaching from the Word of God, a focused and reverent observance of the Lord's Supper, and an opportunity for the saints of Pleasant Plains to give back to the Lord.

5:00 PM Worship Service

Wednesday:

7:00 PM Bible Study and Worship

Weekly Attendance

Last Sunday AM Worship.....118

Last Sunday PM Worship.....82

Last Wednesday Bible Study.....82

In Our Prayers

RECENT ADDITIONS/UPDATES:

-Keller Stephens (Kathy Raines' Uncle)
...was baptized into Christ! We rejoice and are so thankful for God's provisions!

-Melanie & Annabelle Siedenstrang...
Annabelle was born January 13th. Momma and baby are both recovering very well and we are so thankful for this! Please continue your prayers for them!

-Maggie Phillips...recovering from surgery. Please remember Maggie and her family during her recovery.

-Roy Lovell...diagnosed with cancer and will be undergoing 6 weeks of radiation. Please keep Roy and Helen (also in poor health) in your prayers.

-Gateley Family...Jonathan's uncle is in the hospital with double blood clots in his lungs.

CONTINUED PRAYERS:

Our expecting mothers: **Melessa Sain, Spring McDonald, & Katie Angel.**

-Christy Bennett's Nephew Logan...young man struggling with his health.

-Barbara Leonard...shut in and struggling with her health.

-Christian Shadburn...20 yr. old Christian battling cancer.

-Stephanie Still (Becky Waddell's cousin)...dealing with numerous health issues.

-Robin Hill..... battling cancer.

-Jamie Neal and family (Nancy Phillips' friend)...Battling Melanoma.

-Ashley Pickens (Brent Holt's cousin)...Battling Cancer and has been readmitted to the hospital with complications.

-Louise Stitt (Amy Gailey's mother)...Battling leukemia..

-Pray for the work of this church. The fields are white & we need to be hard at work to spread the Gospel to as many lost souls as possible.

-Men & women making the sacrifice to protect the freedoms of this country.

If you have any updates or additions to the prayer list, please see Nick (in person, phone call, text, or email) so we can keep the bulletin up to date.

Pleasant Plains News

Upcoming Pleasant Plains' Bible Studies & Events

✓**Song Practice - March 6th** at the Angel's home after evening service. **Song leaders: please be thinking of 4-5 songs that you would like to learn/practice during our time together.**

✓**Men's Bible Class - February 6th** at Panera Bread at 7:30am. Please be on the lookout for next year's book "Tender Warrior" to be handed out.

✓**Ladies Class - February 2nd** at 10:00am here at the church house. Lesson 3 will be covered.

✓**Young People's Gathering - *TONIGHT*** directly after evening service at the Angel's house. Lesson one of "The Big Picture" will be reviewed.

Area Gospel Meetings & Events

◎**"Reaching Muslims with the Gospel of Jesus Christ" Special Study at the Kingston Springs Church of Christ...** Saif Alsafeer will be leading this study January 29-31. Please check the bulletin board for more details.

◎**Singing at Northside in Trenton...**Begins at 2:00pm on January 31.

Daily Bible Reading For This Week: Genesis 25-32

Please make an effort to be in daily reading and meditation of God's Word! This year we will be reading through the first 14 books of the Old Testament in an effort to learn along side our kids classes and to be instructed by those things written in earlier times. **(Romans 15:4)**