

Senior Adults Newsletter

Christ Covenant Church



May 2023

BETWEEN SEEDTIME AND HARVEST

A Prayer That God Would Save Our Children



Every Christian parent prays that God would extend his saving grace from one generation to the next (and, of course, to the ones after that). Every Christian prays, then, that they would see the Lord save their precious children. This was on George Swinnock's mind when he prayed this lovely prayer many centuries ago. May it give you words to pray to the Lord as you consider God's mercy toward the children the Lord has given you.

Father of spirits, I pray for my children.

Manifest your grace and goodness and wash them in the fountain opened for sin.

As they bear the image of the first Adam, cause them to bear the image of the second Adam.

Let your grace be their beauty and the eternal weight of glory their portion.

Cause them to hear your voice and live.

Dear Redeemer, you said, "Let the little children come to me." I bring them now to you; do not reject them. I present them to you in the trembling arms of my weak faith. Oh, lay your hands on them and bless them.

Blessed Jesus, you know the pollution of their natures, the difficulty of their conversions, and the boundless wrath to which they are liable. Let your compassion yearn towards them, and your Spirit so accompany their instruction that in them you may see the suffering of your soul and be satisfied.

And I pray that I may walk in the path of your precepts for the sake of those that follow me. May I be so pious in my words and works, so gracious in all my dealings and duties, that religion may be written fair through my conduct, and my children may with comfort follow my example.

Lord, while others turn off the highway of holiness, let me, like the pillar of fire, go before my family to the land of promise, and shine as a true light to direct them in the way to everlasting life.

I pray that as a parent of my children I may conduct myself as a child of my God. Lord, my sons are your sons, and my daughters are your daughters.

Let your power prosper my labors while they are young, so that they may be prepared for that noble work which you plan for them in the other world. And when you send your servants to fetch them home, may they be conveyed by holy angels to your side, where I and the children whom you have given me shall love, and live, and rejoice with you forever.

Bruce Creswell – Pastor

Pastor, Church Father, Conference Speaker, Professor, & Friend

By Bruce Creswell

I heard of him way before I met him!

My admin at my former church, had told me of her home pastor in Roanoke and another pastor who helped to provide oversight and care for two single retired missionaries who had given their lives to missions in Africa. It was impressive to think of these men who pastored large congregations, would take on this responsibility which some would pass off as trivial and bothersome.

This pastor that I heard of, had pastored the same church for 29 years, the First Presbyterian Church of Augusta. When he first came to this downtown church, it was in bad shape, with a declining membership, financial challenges, and neglected repairs. With his work cut out for him, he went forward by the grace of God, and with the enablement of God's Spirit, new life began to emerge. It was slow but consistent growth in this old historic church. The expounding of Holy Scripture faithfully preached, the shepherding care of the flock, the warm outreach to visitors and neighbors, the conversion of sinners, brought forth fruit all to the praise of the glory of God! As the

attendance increased (over 1200) the need for more facilities was added.

The vision of missions both foreign and home became a priority, eventually becoming a million-dollar budget. Their yearly mission's conference was one of the highlights on the church calendar! A Christian school soon was birthed becoming a premier education center in the state.

The time came for his church to sever ties with the mainline Presbyterian denomination (The Southern Presbyterian) because of its drifting away from Holy Scriptures. Joining a group of like-minded church, a new denomination was born The Presbyterian Church in America. Helping to provide leadership and direction in the early days of this new denomination a firm foundation was established which has endured today, fifty years later. As pastor, who shepherded his flock, he also helped to father this new denomination into existence and through ongoing years.

As his church was growing so did the number of requests from pastors of other churches to speak at their mission's conferences, requests from Christian colleges to speak at their chapels, requests to teach/preach at different Bible conferences and retreats and to serve on various missions' boards, and Christian colleges. But there was one request

that would involve leaving the pastorate, moving to another state, and investing the next 14 years of his retirement in the lives of hundreds of young men preparing for the Gospel ministry, here in Charlotte, at Reformed Theological Seminary.

This pastor would now be professor, “Pastor-Theologian” to these young seminarians. A capable teacher whose experience and ability would be invaluable to those who would learn under him. With his passion for Christ and His Church, for the preached Word, and his heart for missions, he exemplified the seminary’s motto, “A heart for God and a mind for truth.” Those young seminarians who are now seasoned pastors, were taught, and mentored by this seasoned pastor who had proven himself an instrument fit for the Master’s use.

By now some of you know who this “other Pastor” is, Dr. John Oliver, the Pastor, the Church Father, the Conference Speaker, and the Professor. But he is also my Friend, John.

I was his student at Reformed Theological Seminary and as my professor he instructed me in Church Polity, Missions, Homiletics, Principles of Sanctification, and Classic and Personal Devotions. As a “seasoned” pastor returning to the classroom as a student (after 20 years in the pulpit) and as “seasoned” pastor returning to the classroom as a professor, we had a mutual relationship, howbeit, I was a student first! Professor Oliver’s lectures were more than mere book knowledge; they were laced with personal illustrations and lifted from many years of faithful ministry and delivered with a fervency born out of his own devotion for God. His heart for holiness and his burden for missions was genuine.

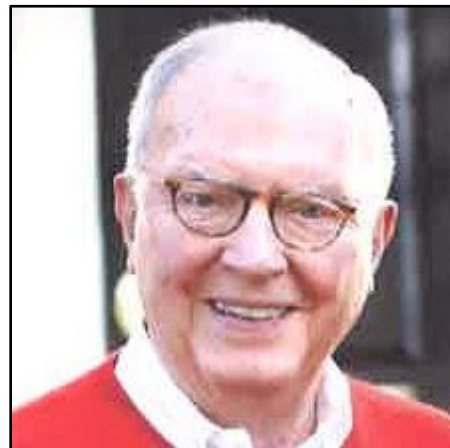
You might say Professor Oliver was a factor in bringing me to Christ Covenant Church today. While in class listening to his lecture on “Tending Our Baptism,” the Lord opened my understanding

to covenantal baptism, you might say it was an epiphany! Years later, Dr. Oliver taught that same lecture in our Senior Adult Sunday School class.

In his Charge to the Pastor, at my installation service, he opened and closed with this sentence, “The people have a right to ask, ‘Have you a word from the Lord?’” I am reminded of that every time I open my Bible and see those words on the flyleaf. Our Senior Adult community has been blessed by John’s ministry at our Fall Retreats (spoken twice), our annual Christmas Dinner (spoken twice), and those occasions that he has preached from our pulpit. John and his wife Cris have been a regular part of our monthly luncheons and class.

Now a new chapter begins for John and Cris, as they move to Atlanta in May! They will be close to their son and his family and to Cris’ family who live there. Though I knew that this day would come, it was still a shock! I will miss our one-on-one lunches that have been a part of my calendar and our times of fellowship. I will miss his ministry of presence that has encouraged me to press on to the prize of the high calling of God.

Thank You Lord for John Oliver, for bringing our paths together, for showing me the reality of finishing well, and to be ready to “have a word from the Lord!”



Hymn History by Peggy Dear

Arise, My Soul, Arise

One minister said he knew of more than two hundred people who had come to Christ through singing this hymn. The story of one young boy is typical of many. He had gone to a revival meeting, and when the sermon was over, he dropped to his knees. "I knew I was sorry for my sins," he said later, "and I wanted Jesus to forgive me." The congregation sang this hymn of Charles Wesley, and the boy listened carefully. Some of the stanzas he did not understand very well, but when they came to the last stanza, joy exploded inside him.

The words "with confidence I now draw nigh" changed his life. "It was just like being introduced to someone," he said. "From a penitent, weeping boy, I arose happy and smiling." And that's what Jesus does. He brings us to the point of denouncing our sinful lives but then gives us confidence to enter into a relationship with him.

*Arise, my soul, arise; shake off thy guilty fears; The Father hears Him pray, His dear anointed One;
The bleeding sacrifice in my behalf appears: He cannot turn away the presence of His Son:
Before the throne my surety stands, His spirit answers to the blood,
Before the throne my surety stands, His spirit answers to the blood,
My name is written on His hands. And tells me I am born of God.*

*He ever lives above, for me to intercede; My God is reconciled; His pardoning voice I hear;
His all-redeeming love, His precious blood to plead: He owns me for His child; I can no longer fear:
His blood atoned for all our race, With confidence I now draw nigh,
His blood atoned for all our race, With confidence I now draw nigh.
And sprinkles now the throne of grace. And, "Father, Abba, Father," cry.*

*Five bleeding wounds He bears, received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers; they strongly plead for me:
Forgive him, O forgive," they cry,
Forgive him, O forgive, "they cry,
"Nor let the ransomed sinner die!"*

CHARLES WESLEY (1707-1788)

TLIG Monday- July 31, 2017

When I awoke that morning, I never dreamed I'd be giving the day a name. As believers do, I'd learned to believe, love, and honor the glorious truths that, The Lord Is Gracious; The Lord Is Great; The Lord Is Good. And on my faith journey, I'd come to associate these truths with Psalm 145. To me these were TLIG's.

Marg had been battling chest lymphoma for several months, with "up" days and "down" days. Lots of hospitalizations and chemotherapy. July 31 was another day in the doctor's office. There my heart almost burst with joy when the doctor uttered his own TLIG. Looking at both of us, he quietly but earnestly declared, "***The Lymphoma Is Gone!***"

Even if he hadn't said it, the truth of Psalm 145 would remain unmarred. But he did say it and our joy is unabated. July 31, 2017 is still "**TLIG Monday**", in my book!

By Richard C. Davis

Book Review

Respectable Sins Confronting the Sins We Tolerate

Respectable Sins is authored by highly acclaimed author, Jerry Bridges, and the target audience is believers. While we are primarily focused on the gross sins of our culture (adultery, homosexuality, etc.), we must focus on our own “subtle sins of the saints”. A saint is one who is undergoing sanctification and is in the process of being transformed into the likeness of God’s Son. Galatians 5:17 points out the daily battle of flesh and spirit and that we should live our lives in glory to God. Sin is a missing of the mark and there are countless sins which we **tolerate** every day. This toleration of subtle sins grieves the Holy Spirit as found in Ephesians 4:30-32.

This classic book, published in 2007, has 20 chapters on various tolerated sins such as ungodliness, anxiety and frustration, pride, lack of self- control, envy, jealousy, etc., plus a chapter on the power of Holy Spirit and one on the remedy for sin. All comments in each chapter are reinforced by scripture.

The purpose of this review is to highlight useful points, reinforced by scripture, of three of the chapters that I perceive to be the most pertinent to our daily lives. These 3 chapters are Ungodliness, Unthankfulness and Sins of the Tongue.

UNGODLINESS is a forgetful attitude toward God, giving little thought of Him or His glory in our daily lives. There’s no thought of God, no dependence on Him and no reliance on His will. Ungodliness is the most basic sin according to Bridges and is all encompassing as it relates to the root cause of other sins. Do we consider God’s will in everything? Do we pray “constantly”? Was today pleasing to Him? Did we call on Him like a bellhop or a fire engine? Are our prayers human centered? As in I Corinthians 10:31, did we do all to the glory of God? Did our activities during the day honor Him? Is our relationship with Him growing? Do we have a zeal for Him? Is God our focal point for the day? Is there a daily difference in our life from that of a non-believer? Does our light shine? Can the world distinguish between the non-believer and the believer?

UNTHANKFULNESS chapter begins with the healing of the 10 lepers with only one saying thanks to Jesus. Bridges emphasizes that our lives should be filled with continual thanksgiving because everything we have is a gift from God. He provides temporal provisions and spiritual blessings. Our thanks should be heart-felt and not just lip service. Failure to thank and honor God is so prevalent in our culture and we should adhere to I Thessalonians 5:18, giving thanks for all circumstances. The word “good” in Romans 8:29, (all things work for good) means circumstances are an instrument of our sanctification, and results in a good conformance to the image of God.

SINS OF THE TONGUE present a significant challenge to the new self-believer. Proverbs offers 60 verses dealing with our misuse of the tongue. This includes lying, slander, critical speech, harsh words, insults, sarcasm, ridicule of anything that tears down another person. Two verses contain God’s instructions: Ephesians 4:29, “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear” and Psalm 19:14, “Let the words of my mouth and meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer”. These unkind words that we often speak are subtle sins and they do not meet God’s standard.

Bridges’ last chapter is “Where do we go from here?” First, be honest and humble enough to admit the presence of some of these sins in our lives. Then, pray over each one. Involve the power of the Holy Spirit. The

world watches the actions and words of the believer so be true. Bridges concludes with this verse: I Peter 5:5, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble”.

Joni Eareckson Tada said this, “For the believer seriously considering the lordship of Christ in his life, Respectable Sins is must reading”.

Additional thought: Statement from the 8/22 Morning and Evening daily devotional readings by C. H. Spurgeon: “What the sun is to the day, what the moon is to the night, what the dew is to the flower, such is Jesus Christ to you”.

Submitted by Hugh Wise, April 16, 2023

Book Review

The Evolution Delusion

How to Recognize the Unsupported Claims of Darwin’s Theory

By Bart Rask, MD. Universal Publishers Inc. 2021

This is yet another recent book challenging the claims of Darwinian evolution. The approach is to question the integrity of the scientific processes used to support the theory. Other writers I have reviewed used different approaches. For example Michael Behe discusses the impossibility of evolution because of irreducible complexity displayed in organisms. John Lennox and John Denton discuss the nature of science and the mathematical unlikelyhood of evolution. John C. Collins puts science in its legitimate place in relation to Christian faith. There are others as well. We have been blessed in this early 21st century with excellent scholarship and writing on this important topic that gave the Church such a hard time in the 19th and early 20th century.

This book is a very direct look at the specific studies that have been done attempting to verify the process of evolution scientifically. Broadly he divides the discussion into micro and macro evolution. “Microevolution,” refers to minor changes in animals over time such as coloration or size, but “macroevolution” refers to major changes to animal species such as the evolution of dogs and cats. It is the “macroevolution” that is the central issue in the discussion.

Macroevolution is another name for Darwinian Evolution; the evolution of species. Dr. Rask demonstrates clearly that such evolution has never been shown to occur in any laboratory experimentation, nor has it ever been observed in nature. This is a technical discussion leading the reader through the complexities of actual scientific studies. There are many claims in the scientific literature that support the possibility of macroevolution but they are dissected and destroyed by the author’s clear logic.

Macroevolution science seeks to address the origin of many highly complex mechanisms of life and since there is no physical evidence of actual evolution they instead come up with explanation as to how such complexity might have developed. A recurring phrase in Dr. Rask’s analysis is that these explanations are, “...speculative, contrived, and untestable.”

Dr. Rask summarizes: “The lack of experience-based, empirical evidence disqualifies macroevolution from being classified as scientific knowledge or as a scientific theory. Instead, it is closer to a metaphysical theory.”

P.185. And: “Unlike the other biological investigations, speculation as to how species began based upon un-experienced, untestable forces involving millions or billions of years serves no useful function, other than academic interest.” P. 189.

This is a very stimulating and interesting book and yet another encouragement in confirming to us the Biblical account of God’s creation of this wonderful and complex world of living things.

Submitted by Chris Williams

We thought that the following article from the Mayo Clinic would be beneficial to us all.

Fall prevention: Simple tips to prevent falls

Falls put you at risk of serious injury. Prevent falls with these simple fall prevention measures, from reviewing your medications to hazard-proofing your home.

[By Mayo Clinic Staff](#)

Fall prevention is an important topic to consider as you get older. Physical changes and health conditions — and sometimes the medications used to treat those conditions — make falls more likely as you age. In fact, falls are a leading cause of injury among older adults. Still, fear of falling doesn't need to rule your life. Instead, consider six simple fall prevention strategies.

1. Make an appointment with your health care provider

Start by making an appointment with your health care provider. To assess your risk and discuss fall prevention strategies, your health care provider may want to talk about the following:

- **Your medications.** Make a list of your prescription and nonprescription medications and supplements, or bring them with you to the appointment. Your health care provider can review your medications for side effects and interactions that may increase your risk of falling. To help with fall prevention, your health care provider may consider weaning you off medications that make you tired or affect your thinking, such as sedatives, antihistamines and some types of antidepressants.
- **Any previous falls.** Write down the details, including when, where and how you fell. Be prepared to discuss instances when you almost fell but were caught by someone or managed to grab hold of something just in time. Details such as these may help your health care provider identify specific fall prevention strategies.
- **Your health conditions.** Certain eye and ear disorders may increase your risk of falls. Be prepared to discuss your health conditions and how comfortable you are when you walk — for example, do you feel any dizziness, joint pain, shortness of breath, or numbness in your feet and legs when you walk? Your health care provider may evaluate your muscle strength, balance and walking style (gait) as well.

2. Keep moving

Physical activity can go a long way toward fall prevention. With your health care provider's OK, consider activities such as walking, water workouts or tai chi — a gentle exercise that involves slow and graceful dance-like movements. These activities reduce the risk of falls by improving strength, balance, coordination and flexibility.

If you avoid physical activity because you're afraid it will make a fall more likely, tell your health care provider. Your provider may recommend carefully monitored exercise programs or refer you to a physical therapist. The physical therapist can create a custom exercise program aimed at improving your balance, flexibility and muscle strength.

3. Wear sensible shoes

Consider changing your footwear as part of your fall prevention plan. High heels, floppy slippers and shoes with slick soles can make you slip, stumble and fall. So can walking in your stocking feet. Instead, wear properly fitting, sturdy, flat shoes with nonskid soles. Sensible shoes may also reduce joint pain.

4. Remove home hazards

Take a look around your home for potential fall hazards. To make your home safer:

- Remove boxes, newspapers, electrical cords and phone cords from walkways.
- Move coffee tables, magazine racks and plant stands from high-traffic areas.
- Secure loose rugs with double-faced tape, tacks or a slip-resistant backing — or remove loose rugs from your home.
- Repair loose, wooden floorboards and carpeting right away.
- Store clothing, dishes, food and other necessities within easy reach.
- Immediately clean spilled liquids, grease or food.
- Use nonslip mats in your bathtub or shower. Use a bath seat, which allows you to sit while showering.

5. Light up your living space

Keep your home brightly lit to avoid tripping on objects that are hard to see. Also:

- Place night lights in your bedroom, bathroom and hallways.
- Place a lamp within reach of your bed in case you need to get up in the middle of the night.
- Make clear paths to light switches that aren't near room entrances. Consider trading traditional switches for glow-in-the-dark or illuminated switches.
- Turn on the lights before going up or down stairs.
- Store flashlights in easy-to-find places in case of power outages.

6. Use assistive devices

Your health care provider might recommend using a cane or walker to keep you steady. Other assistive devices can help, too. For example:

- Handrails for both sides of stairways
- Nonslip treads for bare-wood steps
- A raised toilet seat or one with armrests
- Grab bars for the shower or tub
- A sturdy plastic seat for the shower or tub — plus a hand-held shower nozzle for bathing while sitting down

If necessary, ask your health care provider for a referral to an occupational therapist. An occupational therapist can help you brainstorm other fall prevention strategies. Some solutions are easily installed and relatively inexpensive. Others may require professional help or a larger investment. If you're concerned about the cost, remember that an investment in fall prevention is an investment in your independence.

WOMEN'S SUMMER MORNING BIBLE STUDY

God Provided Priests

Teacher: Carolyn Carpenter

Dates: 10am-11:30am Tuesday mornings – June 6,13, 20, 27, July 11, 18 (CLC Building)

To Register: No Fee, but **important** to register

<https://christcovenant.org/womensbiblestudies> (scroll down to Summer Bible Studies)

In order for sinful people to live before a Holy God, He graciously provided Priests as mediators. This 6-week study will explore the priesthood in the Old Testament and how it anticipated the ultimate

High Priest, Jesus Christ.

It will focus on the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods.

May Seniors Luncheon

Friday, May 5, 2023

Social time: 11:45 am / Lunch 12:00 pm / CLC 5&6

Speakers: HYMN SING!

Menu*: Taco Bar, Pinto Beans, Rice

**Menu ingredients available upon request.*

To reserve your spot, please RSVP by Friday, April 28 on this SignUp Genius, <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0444AAAF2EA2FC1-mayluncheon1> or by phone to Jenny Blackmon, ministry admin. at 704-708-6104.

A \$7 donation per person, to cover food costs, is appreciated.

Please wear your nametags so we can put names with faces.

See you there!

May Senior Ladies Luncheon

The Ladies' Luncheon will be on **Friday, May 12th, at 11:30 at Trio's Restaurant.**

The address is

10709 McMullen Creek Pkwy (off Hwy. 51)

We look forward to seeing you there for great food and fellowship.

May Seniors Mens Luncheon

The Senior Men's Monthly Lunch will be **Friday May 19 @ 11:30 (arrive ~11:15), at Park Place Restaurant 10517 Park Rd.**

Join your brothers, "old & new", for a good time gathered for great food, fellowship, and teaching of the Word applied, by ("retired/re-fired")

Pastor friend **Mo Up De Graff.**



Candy Thompson	May 01
Sandra Hayes	May 03
Ann Mudge	May 03
Angela Pacey	May 05
Janet Aldridge	May 07
Lyndon Kelly	May 07
Hutch Hutchinson	May 08
Susan Randolph	May 09
Carson Weaver	May 09
Kass Goebel	May 18
Rosalie Kirkley	May 18
Judy Massengill	May 18
Mike Robbins	May 18
Miriam Jones	May 19
Dayid Cayer	May 21
Diane Dworek	May 22
Biff Bracy	May 23
Nina Hurvitz	May 23
Finn Solheim	May 24
Fran Wise	May 24
Jenny Blackmon	May 25
Matthew Kirk	May 25
Liz West	May 25
Barbara Church	May 26
Angela Parlante	May 26
Hudson Barton	May 27
Henry Mills	May 29
Gordon Jacobs	May 30
Dee Lamb	May 31



Carmen & Janet Firth	May 03
Ron & Anne Melton	May 03
Mitch & Leslie Allison	May 09
Stu & Marge Carroll	May 13
Rob & Carolyn Cousar	May 23

EVENTS

Sunday School, Sundays, 9:00 am,
WC201/Choir Room

Senior Adult Monthly Luncheon
11:45 am, Friday, May 5th, CLC 5&6

Ladies Luncheon, -- May 12th, 11:30am
Trio Restaurant, McMullen Creek

Men's Luncheon, Friday, May 19th,
11:30 am, Park Place Restaurant

Prayer Meetings, Tuesdays,
7:00 – 8:30 pm, WC105

Joy Singers, Mondays, 1:30 – 2:30 pm, WC211

From the Editor:

I hope everyone is enjoying this beautiful spring that the Lord had brought us. For all this glorious weather that God has provided, it's hard for me to appreciate it sometimes with the concerns and woes I have in my personal life with relatives and friends ill, injured, dying or suffering great difficulties in their lives. That's why I feel it is such a great blessing to be a member of a faith filled community like Christ Covenant Church and this group of seniors who are such models of Christ-like life. I want you all to know I and Becky thank God for you every day. – Darrell Hargett

Pastor of Senior Adults and Visitation

N. Bruce Creswell

bcreswell@christcovenant.org

Study (704) 708-6106

Jenny Blackmon, Assist. to Pastor Bruce

jblackmon@christcovenant.org

(704) 708-6104

Newsletter Editor

Darrell Hargett

dhargett47@gmail.com

Christ Covenant Church

800 Fullwood Land
Matthews, NC 28105

April 14th Luncheon



Guest speakers: Maxine Pangle & Sabra Romeo

