



TENAHA WESLEYAN



A Publication of the Tenaha Charge of the United Methodist Church
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From the Pastor's Desk

April 2010

t I was in a conversation with someone the other day and I got one of those “preacher questions”. The individual asked me “What is the Book of Revelation all about?” So I guess if one person is asking others might have the same question. This is my feeble attempt to answer that question.

Our spiritual journey is a lot like a child on a long trip. When I was little and the family would travel to Alabama to visit my father’s family, my little sister would always ask “Are we there yet, how much longer?” Today I fear many of us have stopped thinking or asking about the future. We live day to day in the “right now”. I am not exactly sure why that is but I think is because we as a people have become possessed by instant gratification. That type of mind set wears away at our ability to plan and build for the future and paralyzes us from living faithful lives in the present.

New Testament Christians were not at all like the people of today. New testament Christians looked forward to the future. They enthusiastically waited for and hoped for the future. They believed the complete reign of Christ on this earth was more certain a reality than the apparent defeat of evil. John received this beautiful vision of hope from Jesus Christ that we call The Book of Revelation. Out of the three Christian virtues—faith, hope and love – the one that I feel is the most important today is hope. Revelation touches us at the point of our deepest despair. For that reason alone I feel that Revelation is the most relevant book of the Bible for us in this moment in history.

So how then do we go about trying to understand this book that is full of symbolism. First of all Revelation was meant to be read in one sitting. It would do all of us good to throughout all the sermons , charts and films on the History or Discovery Channel that claim to have unraveled the mysteries of Revelation. It is a much better plan to simply sit down and read it. If we would approach Revelation as a child, without any preconceived ideas, we would stand a much better chance. If a child were to hear this a story and were to conclude, “I am so glad the Lamb beat that awful beast,” then he or she would have truly heard and understood what is written in this book.

Two Common Misconceptions

“It is too had to understand”

The Book of Revelation is not hard to understand. It is a book full of symbolism and imagery. It is not a lock whose key has been lost. The biggest reason we have a hard but time unraveling the symbolism of this book is because we

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Knock, knock
Who’s there?

Lot.

Lot who?

Lot if promises in the Bible!

My child's feelings are hurt. I tell her she's special.

My child is injured. I do whatever it takes to make her feel better.

My child is afraid. I won't go to sleep until she is secure.

I'm not s hero....I'm a parent. When a child hurts, a parent does what comes naturally. He helps....

Why don't I let my Father do for me what I am more than willing to do for my own children?

I am learning.... Being a better father is teaching me that when I am criticized, injured, or afraid, there is a Father who is ready to comfort me. There is a Father who will hold me until I'm better, help me until I can live with the hurt, and who won't go to sleep when I'm afraid of waking up and seeing the dark.

The Applause of Heaven



Order Date

Thursday April 8 11am– 1 pm & 4pm-6pm

Distribution

Saturday April 24 10am –11:30 am

From the Preachers Desk

-cont-

have become Biblically illiterate. -cont– pg 2

Did you know that there are 404 verses in Revelation and of those 404 verses 278 refer back to the Old Testament. None of them are direct quotes but the book is an implosion of Old Testament symbolism. Old testament ideas, names, symbols and themes have been pulled together, with the power of the Holy Spirit, to form a collection of those in the message which John brings to the readers.

“It is a book of predictions”

We totally misunderstand Revelation if we look on it simply as a book of predictions of the future. It is not the writings of Nostradamus. The book of Revelation is not nearly as much of a book about the future as it is a book about the spiritual realities that affect us now and will bring the events of history to a worthy end.

John wrote Revelation somewhere between A.D. 90 and 95 while he was in exile on the Island of Patmos. Prior to his exile John had left Israel to live in Ephesus. The seven churches that the book is addressed to were visited by a courier traveling the circular road through modern Turkey. His letter described John’s vision of Christ as Lord of the churches(1:12-3:22), as the Lamb on the throne(5:1-14), as the liberating Word of God(19:11-16) and as the Leader in the new creation(21-22). This book is truly a Revelation of Jesus Chirst(1:1).

John says “Blessed is the one who reads the words of

The Son of Encouragement

Bright eyes cheer the heart; good news strengthens the bones. Proverbs 15:30

Barnabas, a man whose name meant “Son of Encouragement,” was a leader in the early Christian church. He was known for his kindness and for his ability to encourage others. -cont- →

Church Happenings

Tuesday, April 6

UMW 10:00 am

Wednesday, April 7

Admin Board 6: 30 pm

Wednesday, April 14

Fellowship Dinner 6: 30 pm

Tuesday, April 20

UMW Visitation

No Merf s Breakfast in April

April Song

Sing praise to God for April,
For bliss of apple bloom,
For honeysuckle’s fragrance,
For lilac’s cool perfume,
For Dogwood white and holy
Upon a moonlit hill
Where mockingbirds, enchanted,
Glad psalms of rapture spill.

Sing praise to God for April,
For green and silver days
Of shy and tender glories-
Oh, ever sing his praise.
Praise him till praises echo
To the tall blue above
Who clothed the earth with April
And blessed it with his love.

Because of Barnabas, many people were introduced to Christ. And today, we as believers living in difficult times, we must seek to imitate the “Son of Encouragement.”

We imitate Barnabas when we speak kind words to our families and to our friends. We imitate Barnabas when our actions give credence to our beliefs. We imitate Barnabas when we are generous with our possessions and with our praise. We imitate Barnabas when we give hope to the hopeless and encouragement to the downtrodden.

This month, be like Barnabas: become a source of encouragement to those who cross your path. When you so so, you will quite literally change the world, one person– and one moment-at a time.