

Central Gwinnett Gazette

CENTRAL GWINNETT MINISTRY

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Sun., Mar. 18:
Guest Speaker: Craig Morgan, Atl Church of Christ at Cobb
- Sun., Apr. 1:
Guest Speaker: Scott Kirkpatrick, Stone Mountain, GA
- Sat., May 5:
Parenting & Marriage Workshop: Sam and Geri Laing, Athens, GA
- Sun., May 20:
Guest Speaker: Cesar Lopez, Manila Philippines
- Sat., Jun. 9:
Financial Workshop: Greg Garcia, Athens GA
- Sun., Jul. 1:
Guest Speaker: J.P Tynes, Columbia, SC

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Can You Hear Me Now?	1
Top Ten Things I Learned Teaching The New Testament Survey Class	2
Women's Corner	3
Family Groups	4
Deacon Corner	4
Attendance & Contribution	4

Can You Hear Me Now?

By Todd Shultz

If you haven't heard these words expressed on one of the popular cell phone commercials, you've at least probably found yourself repeating them during conversations on your own cell phone. Besides the new technology-based connotation, this phrase also represents a key principle in human communication. Over a year ago, the elders saw the need to establish a ministry whose goal would be to facilitate better communication throughout our ministry. Through this vision, the Central Gwinnett Communication ministry was born.

The first goal of this ministry has been the creation of our Central Gwinnett website, now more than one year old. The site (www.centralgwinnett.org) provides access to frequently updated announcements, downloadable sermons from our services, a section that features

various disciples in our ministry, a calendar of our ministry events, PDF versions of previous newsletters, and much more. If you haven't had a chance to check it out yet, please do so.



Another means of using modern technology to keep us all "in the loop" has been the establishment of a group email list for the purpose of sending out *urgent* announcements, prayer requests, etc. Keep in mind that the group email is used only for items of a very urgent nature. Refer to the

website for regular announcements. To join this list, send an email to: tshultz_99@yahoo.com.

Other services of the communication ministry include: (1) projecting the words of the songs during Sunday services; (2) PowerPoints with current announcements projected before Sunday services (be sure to get to service early to check out the announcements before service begins); and (3) a monthly newsletter, featuring teaching and "Women's Corner" articles, and updates on our various ministries.

Currently, the communications ministry is working to put together our "Digital Directory." These photo directories will be distributed on CD's and/or hard copies and will allow all of us to more readily put faces to names and phone numbers, addresses, etc. If you have not yet had a chance to have your picture taken or to submit your personal information, see Todd or Karen Shultz as soon as possible.

(Continued on back cover.)

Top Ten Things I Learned Teaching The New Testament Survey Class

By Steve Collier

Teaching the New Testament Survey class with Harold Carmen was a tremendous experience for me. I want to thank Richard and the elders for giving me the opportunity. As often happens when teaching, I may have learned more than those who attended the class. My understanding of the New Testament and how it fits together is far greater now than when I started the class. Harold showed me some powerful insights into the Scriptures and how they apply to the church today. I benefited both from his public teaching and also our private discussions about the class. God surprised me with what I learned preparing for each lesson. I was sometimes uncertain what to emphasize, but when I sat down and reviewed the material, the Spirit would move, and the theme of the class would become clear. Several times it seemed the sermon or worship service also tied wonderfully into what I was teaching. I hope the lessons benefited my hearers as much as they did me. If you did not attend the class or missed some classes, most of them can be found on the website (including the cool slide shows for the *Time Between the Testaments* that my son Art helped me create). Here are the Top Ten Things I Learned from the class:

- 10** My wife has some very good ideas. She was the one who came up with the idea of teaching a New Testament Survey Class with emphasis on providing historical background and context. Alan Rouse liked the idea as a natural follow up from his Old Testament Survey class, and we were off. In the past year, Central Gwinnett has enjoyed the unique opportunity to attend classes surveying the entire Bible from cover to cover.
- 9** My faith was strengthened seeing how specific Old Testament prophecies came true during the period between the Old and New Testaments. Among other specific prophecies, Daniel refers to a Persian emperor stirring everyone up against Greece (which happened 50 years later), but then how, in the distant future, Greece would conquer Persia (which happened 200 years later). Seeing these prophecies come true must have been very exciting to the Jews who lived through these events! These insights aren't found just reading the Bible; we had to dig deeper into the historical events to see how God's Word came true. People told me how valuable this was for them; we appear to have many History Channel® junkies in Central Gwinnett!
- 8** Like never before, I saw how the New Testament fits together. We compared events in the Book of Acts with the letters written by Paul to those churches. Acts helps explain the context of the letters, and the letters provide deeper understanding about Paul's relationship with those churches. For example, Paul only spent 3 weeks in Thessalonica, yet the letters of 1&2 Thessalonians show he formed a deep bond with that church. On the other hand, Philippians was written approximately 10 years after Paul planted that church and the close bond with Paul had not faded.
- 7** Daily contact with disciples is crucial to having New Testament relationships. We saw how strong the Jerusalem Church became as a result of meeting together every day. This was then imitated by the Macedonian churches. We cannot maintain the level of encouragement we need if we only see or talk to each other once or twice a week.
- 6** People can respond to the gospel and learn a great deal of "Bible" in a short period of time if we are willing to teach and are unafraid to cover challenging topics. Paul spent only a few weeks or months planting most of the churches described in the Bible. Nevertheless, from his letters he clearly taught them many things about Jesus and the gospel, about doctrine and what we believe, and about God's commands and how we should live our lives.
- 5** We can continue to preach and teach powerfully even when we get older. Peter and John continued to assert strong convictions later in their lives and were concerned about false doctrine creeping into the church. We have no reason to slack off or mellow out in our convictions. I hope to learn more patience and compassion as I grow older, but I don't want to become more "tolerant" of sin or false teaching.
- 4** Repentance is central to the message of Jesus. The first word Jesus spoke when he began his public ministry is "Repent!" Mark and Luke also mention Jesus' emphasis on repentance. Some of the last words of Jesus recorded in Revelation in the letters to the churches are "Repent!" We must always be willing to deal with sin in our lives and in the lives of other disciples.
- 3** Perseverance is an essential quality if we are to remain faithful to the end. The Bible shows how the church at Ephesus persevered from the time it was planted by Paul around 55AD through the time Jesus sent them a letter in Revelation near the end of the 1st Century. We must learn to endure and rely on God during hard times. In that way we can grow stronger and become better able to help others and face new challenges in the future. Many have started the Christian life, but did not finish. We should never, never, never give up.

2 Paul's relationship with his closest friends, Luke and Timothy, makes me cry. "Only Luke is with me." "I have no one like him." The depth of trust, loyalty and devotion of these men to each other is very inspiring to me personally. I want to be that way with the people I am close to.

1 No matter what happens, no matter how evil the world becomes, no matter how powerful the onslaught against our faith, Jesus Christ will triumph over his enemies in the end. He will utterly vanquish his foes and deliver his Church to her promised reward. We will sit down at the wedding supper of the Lamb. Every tear will be wiped away, all of us will be healed of the curse of sin, we shall look into the face of God and reign with Christ forever and ever. These words are trustworthy and true.



"Learning to Control Your Thoughts and Mind"

By Sarah Hartline

**"Watch your thoughts. They become your words.
Watch your words. They become your actions.
Watch your actions. They become your character.
Watch your character. It becomes your destiny."**

These words are on a poster that I have on the wall in my 5th grade classroom. Indeed, thoughts influence our destiny. But, ***"The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world...we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ."*** (2 Cor. 10:4-5)

Personally, my thoughts have been a struggle for me in every realm: from pride, selfishness and insecurity to ungratefulness, negativism and worry. I am learning to use God's weapons to my capture thoughts. It is important to win these battles quickly and decisively. Here is a scripture that has helped me to know what to think about:

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things... And the God of peace will be with you." (Philippians 4:8)

I made a list of weapons to use. My arsenal includes thoughts of God and His kingdom, along with the teaching and example of people.

1. **True** I can approach God with confidence; He gives me everything I need; He delights in Me; Jesus died for me!
2. **Noble** God's kingdom; The Central Gwinnett International Worship Service; the singing at the Georgia Evangelism conference; conferences that inspire me to dream; singing on Stone Mountain.
3. **Right** Discipling and repentance; Tami's response to the scriptures; resolving a conflict; asking for forgiveness; Anne

informing me I am "nosey"; Christy teaching me to "talk to Joe" first; Karen telling me to "keep it simple"; Lisa helping me to "be myself"; Suzanne warning me to "listen to Joe", watching Rugayya and Kim share their faith; Sarah urging me to "stop trying to control things", Joe's humility and patience.

4. **Lovely** Eva's gratitude as she rejoices over being chosen; a prayer time by the lake; talking with Joe about quiet times; Kathy's words about friendship; Betsy's thoughts about the heart of God; talks with Kaye about Jesus; stargazing with Chelsea; Jan's view on sunrises; Sue's sensitivity; Elaine's passionate prayers; Charlotte's morning encouragement.

5. **Admirable** God's unchanging love; Anne joyfully taking care of Larry; Marietta's faith during her battle with cancer, Agnes' persevering with emphysema and sharing her faith; Myna being faithful in her daily pain; Tally untiringly meeting the needs of her family; Erin's patience; Cynthia's gentleness; Deb's cards; Sherry's servant heart; Ben's love for our family; hearing Chelsea study the bible with her friend; Diane's zeal; Steve and Barb's sacrificial hearts.

6. **Excellent** Forgiveness; the love and generosity of my parents; Liz and Cedric's wedding day; Sonny and Carolyn's wisdom; Todd and Tracey's dedication to the teens; cheering for Ohio State with the Burns'; Roxanne's parties.

7. **Praiseworthy** Heaven; Carol's perseverance; Richard's convictions; Joseph's radical heart; Cathi's humility; Rochelle's smile.

This is my personal list, and many more could be added. As I spend my time "thinking about such," my mind is renewed. (Romans 12:3) Make your own specific list. The result will be thoughts, words, and actions that please God. ***"...And the peace of God will be with you."***

Can You Hear Me Now? (continued from cover)

Participation in the Digital Directory is purely optional, but it would be great to have as many as feel comfortable.

How has all of this been made possible? That question can be answered in one word...servants. *The Message* version of Matthew 23:11 says, "Do you want to stand out? Then step down. Be a servant." We are blessed to have brothers and sisters who have this type of heart. Week after week, they serve without recognition or praise. They are among the many "unsung heroes" in our ministry. Sunny Stovall has been the master mind behind our website, not only in its creation, but also in its day to day maintenance. Larry Cole is the man sitting behind the curtain each week who "magically" advances the song lyric slides at just the right time and place, despite our song leaders occasional creativity in singing the verses out of order. Mark Vogt uses his expertise to manage the sound during our services, including recording all the messages so that the rest of us can have 24/7 access to them on the website. These are just a few of the people whose selfless devotion serves the rest of us so richly. Please thank them for all they do the next time you see them.

Jesus prayed that we'd all be one (John 17:11). Clear, seamless communication can help keep us all on the "same page" and assist in our efforts to achieve Jesus' goal. If you have any questions, comments, or ideas about how we can do that better, please let us know. May God continue to guide and strengthen us as we strive to please Him in every way! Can you hear me now?

Deacon Corner

Karl Lynn	Single Parents	770-978-4747
Ken Watson	Benevolence	678-376-2677
Peter Berry	Benevolence	678-376-1878
Patrick Freeman	Kingdom Kids	770-921-1811
Glenn Hayes	Kingdom Kids	770-985-6921
Dan Stehr	Visitation	770-925-2943
Bill Francis	Visitation	770-806-8645
Todd Reynolds	Middle School	770-682-0027
Russ McGarr	Middle School	770-381-5045
Steve Collier	Teens-Parents	770-717-5784
Joe Hartline	Teens-Parents	770-277-4765
Danny Emmett	Hope, Events	770-985-4542
Todd Shultz	Communications	770-277-4276
Birt Anglin	Ushering	678-849-0180
Jeff Mueller	Order of Worship	770-492-0544
Kendall Knight	Music Service	770-972-6887

Family Groups

If you have not yet joined a family group, we invite you to join any of our ten groups below:

John Yang — Lilburn
Glenn Hayes — Loganville
Phil Dawson — Lawrenceville
Audie Flowers — Lawrenceville
Russ McGarr — Lilburn
Karl Lynn — Snellville
Ward Rutland — Lawrenceville
Barry Jennings — Lilburn
Joe Washington — Lawrenceville
Gary Roberson — Lawrenceville

<u>Date</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Contribution</u>
2/4	340	\$8,034
2/11	435	\$8,689
2/18	GA Evangelism Seminar	
2/25	352	\$8,870