

Central Gwinnett Gazette

CENTRAL GWINNETT MINISTRY

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sat., May 5th 10am-3pm
Marriage & Parenting
Workshop (Harvest
Community Church)

Sun., May 20th
Special Missions
Contribution; Guest
Speaker: Cesar Lopez,
Manila Philippines
(Meadowcreek H.S.)

Sat., June 9th
Financial Workshop
(Harvest Community
Church)

Elders

Steve Galbreath
Alan Rouse

Evangelist

Richard Alawaye

Women's Ministry & Welfare

Sarah Alawaye
Roxanne Galbreath
Sherry Rouse

Teens

Todd and Tracy Reynolds

Deacons

Birt Anglin
Peter Berry
Steve Collier
Danny Emmett
Bill Francis
Patrick Freeman
Joe Hartline
Glenn Hayes
Kendall Knight
Karl Lynn
Russ McGarr
Jeff Mueller
Todd Shultz
Dan Stehr
Ken Watson

NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

By Bill Francis

In recent years a phrase has been coined concerning the need to have all children receive a quality education. Thus the term, "No Child Left Behind" was born. In the church, we subscribe to a similar notion. It's God's will and desire that all Christians be endowed with every spiritual blessing in Christ and that we have all we need for a fulfilling spiritual walk with God.

There are, however, a unique set of Christians who struggle to enjoy all God's blessings because of physical ailments. More specifically, I'm referring to those disciples who are challenged with chronic physical ailments, such as migraine headaches, fibromialgia, multiple sclerosis, cancer, arthritis and others. So often, these brave individuals struggle to read their bibles, attend every worship service, or spend time with other disciples because they are too tired or weak to do so. I think that for many of the rest of us these individuals simply become "out of sight, out of mind." These disciples had been active in the ministry for a number of years studying the bible with the lost, counseling, teaching, raising children and more. Unfortunately, when we don't see them as often, we sometimes equate that with them being less committed. We need to change that perception. I have two suggestions:

First, take a look around our ministry and think of anyone you don't see that you used to regularly see in the fellowship. Ask around; try to get a telephone number or address. Give this person a call or send a note of encouragement. Hebrews 3:13, calls us to "encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today". We should encourage regularly. Don't let this simply be a one-time thing. No one needs this more than those who are physically or emotionally challenged.

Secondly, form a prayer list and pray daily for these individuals. You will be surprised as to how important specific prayer is for these Christians. Things we take for granted such as getting out of bed, praying to simply be happy and content, having the energy to read the bible or pray, to attend a child's school presentation or be able to cook dinner. James 5:16 says the prayers of a righteous man are powerful and effective.

In certain situations, all you can do to help someone is pray for them. Your prayers are vitally important. They're important because we know God answers prayers (I John 5:14). Additionally, prayer bonds you in fellowship with individuals who often feel isolated or "left out of the loop."

Paul, in I Corinthians 12, speaks of how we all are baptized by one Spirit into one body, and that God has arranged all the parts of the body as he wanted them. Thus the parts that seem to be weaker are indispensable. Simply stated, we are connected together and need one another. So let's not forget about those disciples who are physically or emotionally challenged. Let's help one another through meeting physical needs and through prayer so that no one will be left behind and together we can receive the eternal blessings promised to us all.

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Peace for Our Time

By Peter Berry

On September 30, 1938, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain famously and mistakenly returned to No. 10 Downing Street from his diplomatic visit to Nazi Germany with the promise of honorable "...peace for our time. Go home and get a nice quiet sleep." On March 13, 1939, Hitler's armies violated the Munich agreement and invaded Czechoslovakia, and later that year World War II began in earnest with the German invasion of Poland.

No, there won't be a quiz.... However, the promise of peace, among the other fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22, can sometimes feel just as empty as Chamberlain's. How can we find peace in a modern world of stress, chaos, and sin? How are we to "get a nice quiet sleep" when our children are threatened, our finances are in jeopardy, the job is not going well, the car needs repair, and Georgia Tech lost in the first round???

My quiet times and personal study have been centered this year on peace, grace, and faith; after a very challenging 2006, I realized I needed to put more in God's hands, let go of my "ownership" of everything, and grow my faith. I'm in search of Paul's "secret" in Philippians 4:12-13:

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

For some of us, this speaks directly to our physical situation; "hungry or well fed ... living in plenty or in want." However, in my current case, the "want" in my life has not really been material; although I have certainly had challenging financial times through the years, money is not my primary worry at this stage of my life. However, I still have "wants" that create worry and stress in my life. I worry for my children's faith and safety; I worry for my friends and neighbors who don't know God and apparently aren't concerned about it; I worry for my career and my retirement; and I worry for a world that seems bent on self destruction in many ways. And, control-freak that I am, I worry that I can't find the universal "clicker" to hit pause, rewind, or otherwise fix all problems.

So, Paul's "secret" would certainly be valuable to me, and likely to each of us. What is Paul's secret? He seems to expect us to understand it, so let's see if we do.

- ✦ Paul is not denying the reality of pain, suffering, or issues in life; he experienced more of these himself than most of us ever will.
- ✦ Paul is not advocating a denial or pretense that the sorrows, worries, and pain don't affect us; Paul himself wrote in Romans 7:24 "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" And he wrote to the Corinthians (II Corinthians 2:4) "For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart..." Paul is not above feeling pain, and is not faking tranquility.
- ✦ Nor is Paul resigned to whatever happens, in some Zen-like state of acceptance. He works hard to change things in others (witness his confrontation with Peter over treatment of Gentile Christians) and in himself: "I beat my body and make it my slave..." (I Corinthians 9:27). Paul's contentment doesn't preclude his dissatisfaction with sin, compromise, or complacency.

So what, then, is Paul's secret of contentment? Paul says he "learned" it, which does not imply a sudden, divine manifestation or insight. I believe this contentment was very real, and derived from a very rational and real growth in his understanding of God's love and God's complete dominion over all things. It's a secret not because it derives from a mystical insight revelation, but because it requires greater faith to put into practice. I believe Paul's contentment and peace came from:

- ✦ An eternal source. The world continues to change, so I will not find true contentment if it is based on a condition that may change tomorrow.
- ✦ A relationship. I Corinthians 2:12 tells us "We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us."
- ✦ A priority. God's plan and eternal life with Him is what matters; if we set God first, the rest falls into place. In Philippians 1:21, Paul writes "For me to live is Christ, to die is gain."
- ✦ A perspective. "Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel." In Philippians 1:12 here, Paul considers his prison time is just part of God's plan to advance the gospel.
- ✦ All encompassing love. Understanding that Jesus willingly served us by making himself nothing and dying on the cross for our sins. If we can truly grasp that kind of love, we will perhaps begin to embrace the peace God promises. Philippians 2:5-11

(Cont'd on pg. 4)



Women's Corner

Guilt and Fear

By Charlotte Robinson

I looked up the words “guilt” and “fear” in a *Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition*, and there were several definitions for each. These words are well known for such things like Sabotage, Crippling, Manipulation, Controlling and Haunting, to mention a few.

Guilt - 1. The state of having done a wrong or committed an offense; 2. A painful feeling of self reproach resulting from a belief that one has done something wrong or immoral; 3. Conduct that involves guilt; crime; sin.

In John 9:1-41, we have an example of parents who are controlled by their guilt and fear. They are the parents of the blind man who was healed by Jesus. The story tells us Jesus met a man who was blind from birth. In verses 2 & 3 Jesus' disciples ask, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus replies, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life.”

It is clear that the disciples felt someone was to blame for this tragedy. I am sure there were others in this town who felt the same way. Imagine how his parents felt carrying this guilt all those years. There are situations in our lives that cause us to feel guilty for things we have done and things for which we are not responsible. Sometimes we think our trials are occurring because of something we did, and although this may be true at times, it's not the case all the time.

We allow ourselves to be driven by our guilt and manipulated by our memories. Our past eventually controls our present and our future. We punish ourselves and sabotage our success and our blessings. When we HAVE done something to cause our guilt we must remember that repentance brings times of refreshing.

2 Corinthians 7:10 “*Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.*”

Psalm 32:1-5 clearly tells us, “*Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, ‘I confess my transgressions to the lord’ and you forgave the guilt of my sin.*”

Hebrews 10: 22-23 “*Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.*”

Fear - 1. A feeling of anxiety and agitation caused by the presence or nearness of danger, evil, pain, etc.; 2. Respectful dread, awe, reverence; 3. A feeling of uneasiness or apprehension, concern. (Cont'd on pg. 4)

Secure in Heart

By Dian Knight.

The call for the weekend women's retreat sponsored by the North River Church of Christ was to become “Secure in Heart.”

Friday evening was about opening wide our hearts. 2 Corinthians 6:11-13 challenges us to imitate Paul's heart and open our hearts. Many of us acknowledged over the weekend that we have pulled back our hearts over the past 3-4 years. We have allowed a lack of trust to rule in our hearts because of sin. The sin of others and our own sin.

The opening lesson challenged us to have the radical, persevering faith of Rahab. Rahab's life was one of choices: sinful and faithful. God worked in her life to build her faith, even during the years she made sinful choices. Rahab's faith grew to the point of allowing her to make decisions that have placed her in the Heroes of Faith listed in Hebrews 11 and in the lineage of Christ in Matthew 1:5. God can use us no matter where we come from – pagan, religious, poor, rich, uneducated or educated. It was not about who we were but about who God is.

The main speaker was author Robin Weidner. She wrote the book “Secure in Heart” that was featured during the retreat. Her message to us was to embrace the gift of relationship given especially to women from God. This gift was what Satan came after in Genesis with Eve. He attacked the gift of Eve's relationship with God and her spouse Adam.

It was sobering and enlightening to see the root of our insecurity as women. It was inspiring to understand more deeply that the path to security was to use our gift of relationship with God and each other.

I gained so much from the weekend. I made the decision to become a better friend by applying Ecclesiastes 7:16 -18. I want to be a friend who challenges but is not judgmental. I am also more convinced than ever that the primary role of the women's ministry is to help each other use the gift of relationship given to us by God; growing daily in our relationship with God, each other, and the lost world. Without a focus on daily time with God, daily encouragement in our relationships with each other, and daily sharing our faith with the lost as we share the gospel as well as our lives (1 Thessalonians 2:8), we will remain insecure and miss out on God's great plan for us as women.

Peace for Our Time

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My own study over the past three months has not yet worked magic; I still wrestle with doubt, fear and worry. But my peace is growing, and the result is a growing confidence that I am part of God's eternal plan, with nothing to prove and everything to celebrate. Should I work less? Certainly not. However, I can certainly worry less, and surrender the "universal clicker" to God's capable hands.

Indeed, there can be a personal peace for our time, if we can learn the lesson Paul teaches.

Go home, and get a nice quiet sleep. God is in His heaven.

Family Group Leaders

Peter & Nancy Berry	Suwanee	678-376-1878
Steve & Barbara Collier	Lilburn	770-717-5784
Jim & Chandra Dew	Lilburn	770-330-3479
Danny & Cynthia Doble	Lilburn	770-931-0601
Audie & Jackie Flowers	Snellville	770-277-5749
Karl & Donna Lynn	Snellville	404-934-0157
Russ & Sue McGarr	Lilburn	770-381-5045
Alvin & Beatrice Modest	L'ville	770-814-9073
Jeff & Jessica Mueller	Tucker	770-492-0544
Joseph & Lisa Washington	L'ville	678-407-0306
Ken & Kat Watson	Suwanee	678-376-2677

Deacons Directory

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

Guilt and Fear

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As the story goes on, Jesus heals the blind man, and his neighbors hear the news. They take him to the Pharisees searching for clarity on this matter, but when the man explains to the Pharisees how he was healed they did not believe him and sent for his parents. They questioned his parents, and although they acknowledge that he was their son, they denied knowing how he was healed. Verses 22 and 23 say, "His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews." The Jews decided that anyone who acknowledged that Jesus was the Christ would be put out of the Synagogue. I believe the Pharisees had a fear of losing their power, among other things. That was why his parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

Fear causes us to miss great opportunities. This would have been a great time for them to share their faith and share what they saw. We like to play it safe. As women we assume control of situations instead of trusting God. This keeps us from growing and becoming what God wants us to be. We become stagnant in our fears. We must counteract our fears with weapons of Faith, Love and Prayer.

1 John 4:16-18 *"And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of Judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."*

This story demonstrates the power that Guilt and Fear can have on our lives and our futures if we let it. We must remind ourselves that we are products of our past, but we don't have to be prisoners of it! God's purpose for our lives is so much bigger than our past, but we are the ones who set limitations because of our mindsets. If we are not careful and thorough in our dealings with these two culprits we will find ourselves in a purposeless and aimless state of mind. We will not be walking and living in God's purpose for our lives; we will be existing in Fear and Guilt!

Are we willing to put our Guilt and Fears aside and put God first? Do we deny God's power in our lives? Are we willing to put everything on the line for Jesus?

Proverbs 19:23 *"The Fear of the Lord leads to life: Then one rests content, untouched by trouble."*

Proverbs 29:25 *"Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is kept safe."*

Proverbs 31:30 *"Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised."*

Date	Attendance	Contribution
4/15	431	\$7,465
4/8	354	\$7,938
4/1	301	\$7,723