



Missionary Messenger

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Toxic Compassion

My son, if you have put up security for your neighbor, if you have struck hands in pledge with a stranger, 2if you have been trapped by the words of your lips, ensnared by the words of your mouth, 3then do this, my son, to free yourself, for you have fallen into your neighbor's hands: Go, humble yourself, and press your plea with your neighbor. 4Allow no sleep to your eyes or slumber to your eyelids. 5Free yourself, like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter, like a bird from the snare of the fowler. ~ Proverbs 6:1-5 (BSB)

I am currently preaching through a series on the book of Proverbs. In my sermon a few weeks ago I mentioned a term called Toxic Compassion. This is when our good intentions of helping others out with their daily load actually ends up hurting them or even us in the process. In Proverbs 6 the writer warns against taking on the responsibility of paying off another person's debt. This passage pleads with the reader to get out of such obligations and even not to ever get into this commitment.

I have a book in my library that deals with this very subject. The title of the book is *When Helping Hurts*. It is written by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert. Here are a couple of wise quotes from the book:

"Until we embrace our mutual brokenness, our work with low-income people is likely to do more harm than good. I sometimes unintentionally reduce poor people to objects that I use to fulfill my own need to accomplish something. I am not okay, and you are not okay. But Jesus can fix us both."

"If we treat only the symptoms or if we misdiagnose the underlying problem, we will not improve their situation, and we might actually make their lives worse."

I will be continuing our series in Proverbs during our Sunday morning service. This topic of helping the poor will be revisited in future sermons. May we learn to have wisdom in helping the poor. It is not helpful to be taking on the responsibilities that they need to be doing themselves. Please join me on Sunday mornings as we seek God's wisdom in this area.

In Christ, Pastor Ken





CONNECTION NOTES:

"Wear Your Finest!"

Growing up, my sisters, Mom and I would usually go to church on Easter. I remember it was a time we might get a new dress to wear. Once our family was saved, we regularly attended church including Easter. As such, we then normally got new dresses for Easter. Dad would get a corsage for Mom, usually a carnation, but sometimes an orchid. Dad would even get us older girls a carnation corsage sometimes. I always felt "special" on Easter as I was dressed in my finest. The new clothing, and the "dressed up" attitudes seemed to add to the importance of the day. The custom of new Easter clothing and dressed in our finest as we headed to church is a special memory.

Did you know the Bible encourages us to wear our finest clothing? It does!!! Colossians 3:12,14. "Therefore, as God's chosen people, CLOTHE yourself with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them together in perfect unity." (Emphasis added)

In considering the scripture something screamed out at me. It screamed: You make the choice, choose the right outfit!!! If I choose to wear rags, and not His finest clothing, people will see rags. I don't know about you, but rags don't impress me. Yet, clothed in compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, and love, I am dressed "to impress ". The impression I am leaving is that of a loving Christ. One that redeemed me and wants to do the same for them.

I am certain that Christ can use a few well dressed followers this month! How about you joining me in "dressing to impress"? Let's pray that the Holy Spirit might lead us to one special person who would also like a new set of clothing?

Trusting Christ, *Sue*

CONNECTION ACTIVITIES:

**Ladies Spring with Friends Luncheon
Saturday, March 2, Noon**

Bring a friend and join us.

Carry-in:

- Salad - bring your best to share
- Bread, crackers and cheese provided
- Desserts provided also

Craft:

Painted wood plaque featuring a cross with flowers and chosen scripture reference. All needed supplies will be provided.



**Easter Breakfast:
March 31, 9:00 to 9:45a**

Join us for a time of refreshment and connection prior to our Easter service. Please consider bringing a guest with you.

Memory Verse of the Month!

John 14:27 (BSB)

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled; do not be afraid.



Who Are We?

Pastor: Ken Sistrunk 260-229-5949 (cell)

PastorKenNMMC@gmail.com

Elders: Dave Jackson (vice-chairman),

Tim Baker, Jon Gnagy

Directors:

Christian Ed: Amanda Burns

Outreach: Sue Howard

Stewardship: Tim Baker

Worship: Jon Gnagy

Secretary: Joanne Sistrunk

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PRAYER

FOCUS



We are in the season of Lent when many Christians focus on Christ by either giving up or adding something to their schedule.

During this time I would ask people to commit to praying daily for revival in the church, especially our little church. Pray specifically for vision, encouragement, and direction for our church leaders. Pray for wisdom on how to best reach out to families, youth, and young adults. Pray specifically for the people you sit near on Sunday mornings, for your neighbors, co-workers, etc.

I want to encourage you to pray with someone every day or at least partner with someone to commit to pray every day for our church.

There are times I will go through the sanctuary and pray for each person. Since we tend to sit in the same spot every week, it makes it easy to do. I confess I don't do this as often as I want. My desire is to do it every day I am at the church. I will make that my commitment for Lent (and beyond). Anyone is welcome to come in and join me or just go through the directory. It is challenging to actually pray for each person and not just say a general prayer for them.

If you aren't already doing so, put on your spiritual armor every day. It does make a difference! It is part of renewing your mind as it says in Romans 12:2 *"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."*

Mighty things have happened when a group of people even a small group commits to praying.

I would love to hear your stories.

~Joanne



Easter Sunday
after the 10a
Worship Service.
Candy and prizes
for all the kids
participating.
Invite your
neighbor kids,
nieces, nephews,
grandkids, etc.



Whatcha Reading?
Check out our library!



A Voice in The Wind
By Francine Rivers

This is the first book in the Mark of the Lion Series. It is based in first century Rome where the wealthy Roman citizens did as they pleased while Jews and other outsiders became slaves and gladiators. In this book we are introduced to Hadassah, a Jewish Christian slave girl, who clings to her faith in this godless society. We are also introduced to Marcus and Julia who are siblings in the household she serves.

A favorite past-time of many of the Romans is to go to the arena where gladiators are forced to fight to the death and Christians are fed to the lions. This is where we meet one of these gladiators, Atretes.

Rivers does a skillful job of weaving these lives together and transporting the reader into the past and seeing what life was like for the rich, the poor, the slaves, the free, and the early church.

