

Pastor Vern's Messae For April

When I began my transition from following the ways of the world to following the person Jesus Christ, I found some of the things blatant and dramatic. Now, remember, that was 35 plus years ago. That was when I was a fairly new dad and I was brushing the edge of the drug culture.

Stepping away from those things that were so obviously opposed to what Christ would have for me, wasn't easy. But it was obvious. And obvious was what I needed. I had such a need for the power of Christ to say "no" to certain things. And, on equal terms, I needed the power of the Spirit to say "yes" to certain other things.

Now, let me fast forward to the present day. But before I do, I want to consider some things from the scriptures and some things that God's people throughout the ages have faced.

(excerpt from Exodus) The people of God, while they were in Egypt as slaves, began to groan under their condition and cry out for help. And so God heard their cries for help and stirred the heart of Moses and he became their deliverer. He led them out of Egypt through a series of dramatic events. They were freed from enslavement and then they spent quite a bit of time (40 years) in the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula.

Because the people of God complained and desired to return to their previous enslavement by the Egyptians, God made a determination. Their complaining about Moses and their disobedience to God meant that the generation who were adults when leaving Egypt were not allowed to enter the Promised Land. It was the next generation who entered the Promised Land and not those who had fully experienced enslavement and deliverance from oppressive Egypt.

If you want to read about this, read the Old Testament book of Exodus. It's an exciting story and one which I think each of us can relate to.

So now, moving back to my present situation as compared with my 35 years ago experience. In more ways than I care to admit, I have experienced similarities to what God's people experienced during their

wilderness wandering time. When leaving my own Egypt it was obvious what I needed to discharge myself from. However, as time has gone on I realize that some things I need to turn away from aren't so obvious. As well, some of those things I need to embrace aren't obvious either. They're not as dramatic. They are more subtle.

Either I've gotten better at hiding my sins or my sins are deeper and they aren't so public to people as my initial ones were. The things I am dealing with now have more to do with attitude, control of my tongue, inner feelings and thoughts, and other things along these lines. Publicly I can appear to look pretty good and maybe even have people say of me "Isn't he a good Christian."

Being a Christian (a Christ-follower) is not a done deal until the deal is done. Or stated another way, "it ain't over till you're in the grave."

I know we Christians throw a phrase around stating "I am saved". Well I am not totally saved until I'm out of this life. Being saved means total deliverance. I am still facing some very real and nagging issues that eventually I will be completely free of. I will be completely saved from their pull on me when either I go up and meet Jesus face to face or He comes down and scoops me up to Him. Some of those things might include jealousy, lust, anger, insecurities, etc. etc.

One thing has not changed from then until now. It is a fact that it takes the active work of the Holy Spirit to turn me away from some things and to turn me toward some other things. And I am completely aware that God is the one who changes me. And I am equally as aware that God is the one who changes you. So, if we can do nothing else for each other, we can pray that God will get a hold of us in those areas that may not be so obvious to us.

Maybe, just maybe, they are obvious to God and we are just blind to them. God bless you all in the days and months ahead. And, to God be all the glory for the victories we are given.

Your Friend in Christ,

Pastor Vern



The United Church of DeRuyter Newsletter ~ April 2017



March 6th meeting of the Official Board:

Financial Secretary (Margaret Wiltsey) reported that \$4514.78 was received in offerings for the month of February. Treasurer (Teri Burdick) stated that expenses totaled \$7781.27.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

MISSIONS: Maurine Brown reported that revenue is down due to the 5% decrease in Missions allotment. There is \$6,414.88 on hand at present CHRISTIAN ED. Maurine and the staff are busily preparing for the Easter Egg Hunt, to be held on April 15th at the Parish House at 9:30 a.m They are in need of individually wrapped candy for this event.

SPIRITUAL BOARD: There will be a SOUP & BREAD supper on Maundy Thursday (April 13th) at 6:00 p.m. at the Parish House. There will be a sign up sheet at the Church and also one at the Catholic Church. For those wishing to participate, there will also be a FOOT WASHING. Please bring your own basin and towel.

On Good Friday, April 14th, there will be a "CARRYING OF THE CROSS" around the village at noon, departing from the church. The church will be open for those wishing to enter for prayer and reflection.

PASTOR'S REPORT: Kyle and Mike Harris are hosting a prayer meeting each Saturday evening at 7 o'clock at their home on Seminary Street, (the former Dave & Joan Ball residence). All are welcome. Vern has made several hospital and home visits this past month. The After-School program is going well. Vern handed the Board members a report on a seminar he took, (Barna's research-The State of Our Culture) regarding the Millennial generation and how to reach out to them. It was interesting to read this information and see the differences and similarities in the generations. There were some good Bible references included. Tom & Linda Springer renewed their wedding vows in our church on February 11th.

OLD BUSINESS: Due to a conflict on dates, the Pork Dinner for the congregation has been tabled for now. The Women's Fellowship CHICKEN AND BISCUIT DINNER is April 22nd at

4:30 until all are served. (This is the dinner to raise funds for outreach to persons who might need assistance to meet expenses connected to hospitalization parking & meals, etc.) The Fellowship will meet on APRIL 18th to finish plans for this. Watch for posters and sign up sheets.

NEW BUSINESS: Janet Furlough presented plans for the bulletin board at church. This will include ideas for people to use to continue our theme of UP-IN-Out. Watch the bulletin board for further information., Next meeting will be April 3rd at 7 p.m.

Bonnie Ziegler, Secretary

Pastor Vern's Challenge

Pastor Vern gave the church a challenge to find ways to reach out to the community. The theme for the month is "Hospitality" and the Bible verse is 1Peter 4:7-10.

Up Pray 1Peter 4:7 Pray

In Love 1Peter 4:8 Love

Out Serve 1Peter 4:9 Serve

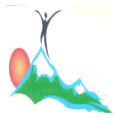
Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, 1Peter 4:10.

M&M's

The Bible study on Prayer will be meeting on April 5th and April 19th at the home of Joan Ball. The meetings begin at 10:00 am. We will be working on lesson 3 "Keeping Company With God"

A Thank You Note

Fran Selover returned home this week after being hospitalized for a stroke earlier this month. She is doing well and wants to thank everyone, especially her church family, for their prayers, cards, calls & visits. Your support means so much! God's blessings on all of you!



Christian Education

What a way to start your Sunday, kids coming to Sunday School with a smile on their face and a spring to their step. We are blessed.

The PK-6th grade continues to open with songs, prayer and praises, offering and games.

We have received and sent letters to DeCarlos Rio the child we are sponsoring from Bolivia. The kids enjoy hearing from him and are curious about his life.

PK-2nd grade has been studying "Obedience to GOD."

3rd to 6th grade is focusing on Easter and what it means to a Christian.

7th to 12th grade has a memory verse and lesson each week. They also do an offering, which they donated to

Clear Path for Veterans the first half of the year.

Pastor Vern has been visiting the 7th – 12th grade at Lindas' the last few weeks. The PK-6th grade misses hanging with him and playing games, but we know he will be back.

Don't forget our Annual Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, April 15th at 9:30 at the Parish House. ALL KIDS ARE WELCOME!!!

In His Service, Maurine



Happy Easter

Calendar of Events for April 2017

Sun worship

— April 2 - Communion @ our 11 am worship

April 9 - Palm Sunday

April 16 - Easter Sunday

6 am Sunrise Service @ Highland

Forest

11 am Regular Church Service

April 23

April 30

Holy Week April 10-15th

Thur. April 13 - Maundy Thurs.

Service @ 6 pm Bread & Soup / foot washing

Fri. April 14 - Good Friday

12 noon carrying of the cross

7 pm Admin. Bd. meeting - Mon. Apr. 3

7 pm Spiritual Bd meeting - Thurs. Apr 6

7 am Prayer @ Pastor Vern's office
each Tues.

6:30 pm book study "By Signs & Wonders / Prayer meeting each Wed.

Men's Group

Sat. 8 am - April 8

Sat. 8 am - April 22

April 29th - Sat @ 4:30 - ? Chicken & Biscuit Dinner to raise funds for Medical emergencies in the community (sponsored by the Women's Fellowship)