

FBF Newsletter

April 2011



Helping people find and follow Christ

Quick Notes:

- > Make powering the ministry through prayer part of your church involvement. Monthly prayer guides are available the first Sunday of every month.
- > Come together for a time of prayer for ministry-related and personal requests on the first Thursday of every month.

From Pastor Chris:

Tell Me the Old, Old Story

Everybody likes a good story. Movie-makers know it, of course. So do novelists. So do songwriters. So do politicians - spinning their own life stories so that their election and reign make the perfect ending. Even news reporters seek out (or create) the storylines that will capture the interest of the public and give a story "legs."

Have you ever noticed that all good stories are variations of the same story? Something is good, then something awful happens and someone or something evil ruins it. A hero rises up, and at risk or even forfeiture of his or her own life, rescues and restores the victims, destroys the villain, sets all wrongs right, and everyone lives happily ever after.

Think about it - have you seen a good movie that didn't follow that outline? I saw the new True Grit remake recently - the new Rooster Cogburn played the redeemer's role, just like the old one. The Shawshank Redemption is on television all the time - Andy Dufrane is the redeemer, Warden Norton is the bad guy, Morgan



Freeman's Red Redding is the redeemed. Morgan Freeman is usually the redeemer, like in Lean on Me, Driving Miss Daisy, and The Sum of All Fears. Braveheart, Gladiator, Lord of the Rings, Green Mile, Star Wars - it's all the same story with the same themes told with different wrinkles.

Do you prefer the written word? You get the same storyline from everyone from William Shakespeare to Stephen King. Ayn Rand, whose Atlas Shrugged was reviewed in this space last month, flattered herself that she alone among her con-

temporaries was offering original ideas in original storylines. Come on. It's the same old story. Something is good. Something evil ruins it. A redeemer risks all, and sets it right. Who is John Galt? The redeemer who sets it all right.

What is it that makes people across continents and centuries write and read and love that same old story? It's the ultimate redemption story deeply embedded in our spiritual DNA. God has "put eternity into man's heart" (Ecclesiastes 3:11), and he can't stop thinking

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See Old, Old Story*

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Holy Week at FBF

One of Pastor Chris' sermons on Romans recently covered the verse that reads, "One man esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind" (Romans 14:5).

At Faith Bible Fellowship, we "esteem" Palm Sunday, Good Friday, and Resurrection Sunday (Easter), which is to say that we treat them differently than other days of worship.

Palm Sunday is the kick-off to Holy Week, commemorating Jesus' bittersweet "triumphal entry" into Jerusalem, where cross and tomb awaited.

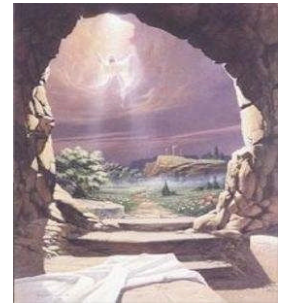
The focus of Good Friday, of

course, is the cross of Christ. We find that giving our full attention to the precious price that was paid for our redemption helps prepare us for the triumph of Resurrection Sunday. The worship is more somber and reflective than the triumphal tone of the Sundays before and after, but it is more than fitting that we gather together on Good Friday to "proclaim the Lord's death" in the Lord's Table before we proclaim his resurrection on Easter Sunday.

Resurrection Sunday is pure triumph over the grave—both Jesus', and those who are his. It is pure joy that death is not the last word for those who are in

Christ. It is the gospel, in all its glory.

Special music is being planned for all three services to honor the Lord on these special days of remembering his works. Why not invite your unsaved and unchurched friends to our worship service on Easter Sunday. There are still many, many people who are more likely to attend church on Easter than on any other Sunday (they apparently esteem one day as better than another). Invite them and bring them—to God's glory and, we pray, to their blessing.



There are still many, many people who are more likely to attend church on Easter than on any other Sunday.

Welcome to Faith Bible Fellowship

How good are we at making guests feel welcome? At least we don't have any signs like the one at right (\$19.95 plus shipping). But it is still easy to forget how stressful it can be to visit a church for the first time. Remember as best you can, and multiply the stress by 10 for those who don't have a church background at all.

That's why we have greeters—to welcome, help put visitors at ease, and offer helpful information. We need to replenish our rotation of assigned greeters, so why not sign up at church to be one? If you can smile, know where the restrooms are and a little more FBF-specific info, it's easy—and an apprehensive visitor you haven't yet met will be glad you did.



"He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming soon.'"

The Old, Old Story (continued from Page One)

about it, talking about it, and dreaming about it.

The father and mother of all mankind were in harmony with God, with their environment, and with one another. Then something awful happened when God's enemy and ours orchestrated the rebellion of men against God, the ruination of their tailor-made environment, and conflict between one another. But God, being rich in mercy, set about to rescue all, the turning point coming in the

sacrificial, redeeming work of his own Son.

It's a story that history itself is telling. Every human being is a part of the story, still under the spell of the story's antagonist or being rescued by the story's Redeemer. There's still time to change sides (all Christians are defectors from the enemy's camp), but as stories go, it's easy to see that we're closer to the end than to the beginning.

Paradise was lost eons ago.

The turning point came two millennia ago. And the world seems ripe for the story's resolution. Check out these lines from the final paragraph: *"The Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.' And let the one who hears say, 'Come.' And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price. . . . He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!"*

