

FROM THE PREACHER'S DESK

"Once Things Slow Down..."

I want to pause to help catch up on all my work. Sometimes, I tell myself that once things slow down, it'll be easier, but those downtimes never appear. Last weekend. I spoke at the Graeber Road Church of Christ youth retreat in Round Top, Texas. I always enjoy these weekend retreats because they let me take a break from my day-to-day responsibilities and focus entirely on God. I wish I could stay there, void of the world and its obligations, surround myself with God's creation, sing songs of praise, and only study His truth. But I know that type of life is impossible, nor is it the life I believe God wants me to live. The author of Hebrews wrote, "Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God" (Hebrews 13:15-16). God desires our praise and wants us to do good by keeping His commands, which require us to go out into the world, face daily struggles, and share the story of Christ. Colossians 3:16 says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." Our mission is to spread the word of God, and we cannot accomplish that by isolating ourselves from the world. We must engage with the world to fulfill our purpose, lest we forget "... that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own..." (1 Corinthians 6:19).

I shared these same thoughts with the Graeber Road Youth Group. I wanted to inspire them as I wanted to inspire you. We often convince ourselves that when life becomes more manageable, we will become more active in the church, or when work slows down, we will get more involved. But we must be truthful with ourselves; things never get easier and work never slows down. And while these special moments of solitude, like a youth retreat, are beneficial for the soul, our responsibilities are still waiting for us when we return home. To wait for that perfect moment to make changes, is a gamble, because what happens when that moment never arrives? Felix in Acts 24 was taught by Paul about faith in Christ Jesus. Verse 25 says, "And as he reasoned about righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment, Felix was alarmed and said, "Go away for the present. When I get an opportunity I will summon you." Some translations even say, "at a more convenient time," as if Felix could control his future.

BY: DAVID OLMOS

Remembering that we can't predict what will happen tomorrow is essential. We may face challenges or gain unexpected opportunities. However, what we can control are the things right in front of us. In His sermon on the mount, Christ understood this and advised us not to worry about tomorrow. He said, "...do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble" (Matthew 6:34). This is similar to the message in 2 Corinthians 6:2, which reminds us that today is the best time to take action: "Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation." When we wait until tomorrow to do what needs to be done today, we gamble because tomorrow may never come.

I wrote this article because I know things are about to get busy for this congregation, but life doesn't always slow as things in the church speed up. Our upcoming events include VBS, "Pray for our Country," Graduation Sunday, Water Bottle Ministry events, Summer Series, Camp Bandina, and Camp Awesome. You don't have to look hard to see that there's always work to be done. And when we consider our personal lives, it's easy to say, "I'll help more when things slow down." But when have things ever actually slowed down? If life never becomes easier, but we still need to work for God's Kingdom, then we need to find a way to do both. Dedicate the time that God deserves and manage our personal lives with what we have left. I understand that this is easier said than done, but we are called to make these choices. I don't expect everything to be completed because my to-do list constantly grows. Still, I remind myself that as long as I continue to work and prioritize God, I can be content with my accomplishments. These words are not meant to make you feel guilty, because I understand that not everyone will be able to assist with the events that we have coming up. Instead, they are words meant to inspire vou to evaluate vour life and see how vou can incorporate more of God. Also to caution you when using phrases like, "Once things slow down...," because we don't know what the future holds. And we want to take advantage of opportunities we might've missed had we been waiting for life to slow down. God bless and have a productive week!

YOUH GROUP SIGNUP

THERE IS A SIGN UP SHEET IN THE FOYER IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO HOST A TEEN DEVO!

Youth Minister Search Committee: Please be sure to return your forms to John or Scott ASAP.

Camp Bandina

June 2–8 for 6th-12th graders. Camper fee: \$180 Additional camper (same family): \$160 Pre-camper fee: \$50 If you have any questions contact Curtis or Tammy Sanford. Register at: www.bandina-cecilhutsonsession.com **Camp Awesome** July 31-August 4 for 3rd– 6th graders Camper fee: \$160 Volunteer fee: 125

Ladies Day April 27, 2024 starting at 8:30 a.m. Hosted at the Graeber Road Church of Christ.



Free Goods Giveaway We are collecting for our 2nd Annual Free Goods Giveaway. If you have items you would like to donate, please put them in the cradle-roll room.



There will **not** be a men's Bible study this Thursday. We will resume on Thursday 4/25/2024.



Mary Miller is having eye surgery on both eyes 4/19/24... Cheryl Nowlin, daughter if Mary Nowlin is in Methodist hospital with kidney stones and infection... Sharon Austin's cousin. DeAndrea Barnes had a stroke and is in the hospital. Her aunt, Vivian Allen, also went to the hospital with stroke like symptoms, but all the tests were negative for stroke... Sue Barnes, aunt of Mandie Faycosh, is in ICU for heart failure; she also fell in the hospital and broke her hip... Howard King, father of Jeff King, is in the hospital after a fall, and he also has pneumonia... Patsy Kita, mother of Karen Ratcliff, is having respiratory issues... Jeff Peak, father of Kaylyn Wilkinson is having eye surgery 4/29/24... Justin Ramirez is in a rehab facility.