

## The Time for Respectability Is Over

By Brett Wilson

The gospels are an invitation to excellence, a clarion call to sweep away the mediocrity of the Pharisees. Jesus wants us to live our lives with gusto, it seems clear to me.

This was easily the most surprising thing on my first reading of the Bible six months ago. There is nothing prissy about Jesus. As a nonbeliever, although I would never have admitted it, I had believed all the clichés – that Christians were squares. They were fun to be around in their way, and reliably open-minded, but not really my crowd.

I was always drawn to Christians. My best friend growing up was devout, and he and I never had a problem remaining friends throughout my atheist years. So, although I believed the clichés, my interactions with them, as friends and acquaintances, were always refreshing, and I often wondered why I myself wouldn't just become one.

It was only later as I got on in years – I'll be 48 this month – that I looked around at the sea of human misery that surrounded me. We supposedly live in a time of happiness and wealth. At least we're told this constantly on the TV and internet. Then why were I and all my friends so miserable, so hard-hearted?

In the **Screwtape Letters**, C.S. Lewis writes about the ability of demons (those pesky stubborn creatures), to fool us into loving our misery. Let's think about the fact that in 1942 it was perfectly respectable for an Oxford don to talk about demons. Does this have something to do with the way we live today? To mention demons today is not just gauche, it might land you in the psychiatrist's office, or worse. We have abandoned God for the career. For a



**Ron Bystrom, Tom Taylor and Ken Bills were reaffirmed as Elders at the Annual Congregational Meeting. They will serve another year on the Elder Board with Pastor Andy. The budget for 2019 was also approved.**

time, it seemed to fulfill us, to make us happy. Then, things took a turn for the worse. As God receded from our lives, the career took over. And there is nothing wrong with success as a goal, of course. But we turned away from God, and that's when things got a little dicey.

We live in a free-market society, where the individual is king. This is another one of the things that is drummed into us. But is it true? Isn't this just a reassuring myth that we tell ourselves? It seems to me that the individual matters less now than ever. Without God, there is no individual. At least, there's no respect for the individual. I'm convinced that a socialist society that lives under God would be more individualistic than our current capitalist society – and I'm a fan of capitalism. It's the worst type of economy except all the others.

**Continued on page 2...**



## “The Time for...” continued...

When I dedicated my life to Christ, I was overwhelmed by a few things. The first was the absence of love in our society. I'd been thinking about this for years in one way or another. But I never could put my finger on what had changed. As a non-Christian, I could not conceive of the fact that the universe was driven by God's love for us. Jesus's sacrifice on the cross, his suffering, went right over my head. In other words, I was confused by the lack of human warmth that was everywhere apparent.

Of course, the Bible makes it plain in Leviticus:

*"And for those of you who survive, I will demoralize you in the land of your enemies. You will live in such fear that the sound of a leaf driven by the wind will send you fleeing. You will run as though fleeing from a sword, and you will fall even when no one pursues you."*

These are the words of God to those who should turn away from him. I've typed them with some trepidation. You may have read them in the same way. I've tried, but I can't think of a better verse to describe the times we live in. If we turn our face from God, this passage tell us, fear and paranoia reign.

Careers and money are wonderful pleasurable things. At some point – to my mind it was the late 1990s – they became oppressive. Greed was a seed planted in the 1980s that flourished in the 1990s. Its effects have been far reaching. Greed spread in inverse proportion to how respectable it was to mention Jesus Christ.

So what do we do about it? Be confident in our belief. Spread the Gospel whenever we can. Don't be afraid to mention Jesus Christ in hostile territory (I need to work on this). His word has been distorted. It is up to Christians to set the record straight. If people truly

understood Him, his name would be everywhere. To be honest with you, I still don't understand how His message of love and personal fulfillment could have been substituted for the drudgery we live by today. The time for respectability is over.

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***Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.***

**1 Timothy 6:17-19 (NIV)**

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## New 2019 Chapel Directory

We'll be printing a 2019 Chapel Directory with our new chapel family members' info and all the latest updates. Please assist us by printing your name at the top of the chapel card in the Sunday bulletin, and include only new information (changes in email or mailing address, cell or work phone numbers, etc., and complete information for newcomers). Kindly drop it in the offering plate, or email directory updates to [chapel@windsorchapel.org](mailto:chapel@windsorchapel.org), and we'll update our records.

## New Men's Breakfast Study

Join us on Monday mornings, from 7:00 to 8:00, at the McDonald's on Brunswick Circle for our new study. We are discussing the Book of Psalms. This great collection of songs and prayers expresses the heart and soul of humanity. Call Scott Bruno (609-213-9545) for more information. The food, fellowship and study are great!

## Elder's Corner

By Pastor Andy Straubel

### A Towel and a Bowl

When we think the Last Supper (John 13:1-17) we think of Jesus at the table with his disciples, eating the bread, drinking the cup, celebrating the Lord's Passover. But nothing prepared the disciples for what would happen next. Jesus got up from the table, laid aside his outer garments, tied a towel around his waist, and began to wash the disciples feet (v.5). Knowing this to be the act of the lowliest of servants Peter objects. Jesus goes on to say, *"If I then, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you"* (v.14-15). This simple act of humility typifies servant leadership. Jesus' challenge to serve one another is the challenge I would give to Windsor Chapel for 2019. If Jesus has done anything for us, we ought to do something for someone else. No job is too little! No job is too lowly. No job is too dirty. What will happen if we do? Jesus says we will be blessed (v.17). Blessed! Blessed! How and in what form that blessing will take, I do not know. But blessed we will be! A towel and a bowl await.

### Financial Update

(Through December 2018)

*"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want..."*

	Actual	Budget
<b>Income</b>	\$295,276.71	\$309,000.00
<b>Expense</b>	\$307,320.93	\$373,450.00

Windsor Chapel has sent \$50,127.00 to our missionary partners this year. That's 17% of your giving!

December giving was \$70,941, the highest in several years. Praise God for meeting our needs! Thank you for your support of Windsor Chapel.

## Our Thanks to An Eagle Scout



Richard Armstrong, member of local Boy Scout Troop 66 that uses our facilities here at the Chapel, built five benches for our picnic area as his service project towards his Eagle Scout badge. Pictured is Richard next to Pastor Andy, along with Richards proud family.

## Harris Ministry Clothing Giveaway

Set aside clean and gently used clothing (including coats and shoes) for men, women, children and infants for the Harris Ministry President's Day Clothing Giveaway. Clean bedding and towels are also needed, but no furniture, please. Please place your donations in the chapel back hall by Sunday, February 17. The Harris Ministry greatly appreciates your contributions to this important outreach.



## *Answered Prayer*

By Dorothy Soi

Sonny had always been a terrific kid with a big heart, but I was disappointed when our son drifted away from church during his college years. After working for a few years, Sonny considered sharing a place with his friend Jeff who also did not attend church. I began praying that God would send Christian friends into Sonny's life with whom he could grow in his faith and that he would once again attend church regularly.

That summer I was deeply touched by a Young Life prayer request for Rob, an 18-year-old who inexplicably had no place to live and needed to reside in Pennington to complete his senior year of high school. My fervent prayers for Rob were that he would find someone with whom he could safely and happily live until he graduated. Soon after, Sonny gently informed me that he would be moving out. Concerned, I asked if he would be rooming with his friend Jeff. Sonny surprised me when he replied, "No." He explained that *he felt that God was calling him* to provide a home for a student he had recently met. The student needed to live in Pennington until he completed high school. I asked whether the boy's name was Rob. Amazed, Sonny exclaimed, "How did you know?!"

Rob was indeed the same student for whom I had been praying! At the young age of 23, Sonny, who had been involved in Young Life in high school, became a surrogate father to a teenage boy and began mentoring him. They lived in a Pennington apartment for eight months until Rob graduated and joined the Marines. In order to model positive behavior for Rob, Sonny had to practice it himself. To enforce Rob's curfew, Sonny kept a curfew of his own. Since Rob attended church every Sunday, Sonny attended church with him. Sonny began to develop friendships with other Christians in Pennington. Through God's grace and wonderful design, Sonny has continued to attend church regularly and met our lovely daughter-in-law Nicole in a Young Adult Bible Study. God's hand was clearly visible in using Sonny as the answer to my

prayers for Rob and, in turn, by using Rob to lead Sonny back to church!

***If you have experienced answered prayer or been aware of God's encouraging presence during a challenging time in your life, we invite you to share your story in this new CC column. Let your personal 350+ word story inspire and be a blessing to others.***

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## **New 11th Hour Classes Start Soon**

Join us on February 10 for two new wonderful opportunities during the 11th Hour as we seek to discover and apply biblical truths to our lives:

### ***Reading the Bible...for All Its Worth***

Our men's study will enable us to uncover the priceless treasures contained in God's Word. The Bible is meant to be read and comprehended by everyone. As we cover seven principles of biblical interpretation, we will gain essential insights into the Bible that will enable us to better grasp the meaning of Scripture for ancient audiences and its implications for us today.

Teacher: Pastor Andy Straubel

### ***The Epistle of Jude***

The women will be meeting downstairs and will pursue an informal, relaxed, in-depth Bible study of the Epistle of Jude. Please join us as we learn and practice inductive Bible study skills and explore the Old Testament history that forms the basis for much of this letter.

Teachers: Janet Berrill, Cindy Bills.

### ***The Youth 11th Hour***

We will resume our study of the Gospel of Matthew on February 10 in the chapel house.

## Further Up and Further In

*Inviting dialogue to encourage growth in  
and among us*



By Cindy Bills

### **An Extended Fast**

Last month, Windsor Chapel joined churches across the United States in a 10-day fast for spiritual renewal. The Christian Union generated this initiative to encourage believers across the country to seek the Lord and place the church in a position to experience the Lord's power in ministering to a culture that is in desperate need of God's truth and grace.

While the Christian Union emphasized a focus on refraining from eating food, many pastors broadened the fasting concept to include any activity that might interfere with a focus on the Lord. I very much appreciate this concept, and as I've considered how the Lord would call me to participate, it has occurred to me that many of my indulgent non-edible habits that would be good candidates for fasting are in fact not good for me. Ever.

There are good reasons to fast from food. Our Lord did so before He started His public ministry. It is a good way to be reminded that we do not live on bread alone but by the power, Spirit, and Word of God. It is also a way to "reset" our priorities and affections to reflect our faith. And fasting from food encourages us to confront any ways that we express our sin nature by abusing food. But God made us to need food and He created food to sustain us. We cannot refrain from food indefinitely. Food is a good blessing from our heavenly Father.

God gives us other blessings, non-food blessings, that we also distort and pervert to please our sin nature. Whenever we use some thing or some activity to feel good about ourselves apart from God, whenever we depend on this thing or activity to earn or prove our value, that thing or activity becomes an idol. It separates us from God and limits what He can do in us and through us. A fast that encompasses such things and activities is

appropriate. Some of these things and activities are like food: they are necessary and good. For example, we need to shop in order to acquire what we need. But shopping can also be perverted: we can develop a habit of shopping that is more about feeling good than it is about satisfying genuine needs. Exercising can fall into this category, as can ministry that becomes more and more about us and less and less about our Lord. The possibilities are, tragically, limitless. Other things and activities—also limitless—are in a different category: neither necessary nor good. Gambling and gossiping leap to mind as good examples.

A call to prayer and fasting is a powerful invitation to come before the Lord to be known and sanctified, to become equipped and empowered to serve the Lord and advance His kingdom's purposes. We can join King David and come before the Lord, to ask Him to search us and know us, and to reveal our lifestyle patterns that reflect our sin nature rather than our faith relationship with Him. Prayer is a crucial component: our hearts are deceitful, and we are not capable of identifying our "pet" sins. But as our sin is revealed, we must confess and repent. Fasting from ingrained sin patterns may be a good start toward spiritual growth and maturity. Some of our favorite sin patterns may in fact be food-centered, but others may involve behaviors other than eating. A fast from those things and activities that the Lord reveals as problematic is an excellent Biblical prescription for spiritual renewal.

In a typical fast, we eliminate meals or all food for a short period of time. But we appropriately return to eating when the fast ends. However, as prayer and fasting reveal unnecessary things and activities that pull us away from the Lord, we have an opportunity to extend the benefits of a fast, to pursue an extended—indefinite—fast from those activities in order to put aside every encumbrance to a life of faith. We would do well to consider carefully what a time of prayer and fasting reveals to us. It may be that when our time of prayer and fasting has been concluded, extending a fast from idols and sinful habits will enable us to experience a richer relationship with the Lord and exercise a more powerful witness in the world.

***Please feel free to contact Cindy (609-275-8557 or [cbills@verizon.net](mailto:cbills@verizon.net)) to continue the dialogue....***

## Perfectly Designed

By Janet Berrill

A few years ago, I went on a two-day hike with a group of women. Although I had not previously met most of the women in the group, I was able to get to know them as we talked while we tramped through the woods. At one point the conversation turned to our individual appearance. One woman commented that she had ugly knees. Another woman did not like her ankles. Still another woman did not like her hair. It seemed that everyone was unhappy with at least some part of their body.

I am guilty of this myself. On most mornings, I look at myself in the mirror to make sure everything looks right before heading out for the day. I have to admit that along with making sure my hair is neat and my clothes are on straight, I often think about the parts of me that I wish were different. Not being completely satisfied with how I look has been a part of my life since I was a child. The earliest dissatisfaction I can remember is not liking my straight hair; I wanted my hair to be wavy or have gentle curls. I could not understand my friend who had wavy hair and paid to have it straightened!

This past week I was thinking about what I wanted to be different about myself when God spoke to me. I felt Him saying that He gave me the body I have and He did not make a mistake when He did it. When I look at dissatisfaction at my body, I am criticizing God's work and telling Him that He did not do a very good job and that I know how to make it better. This took me aback as I never thought about wanting my body to be different as an affront to God. I resolved right then and there to accept the way I am and no longer complain about the way God made me.

Psalm 139:13-14 says, "*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*" God did not make a mistake when He made you just the way you are. He gave you a body which is perfectly designed to accomplish the purpose for which He created you. Your hair, face, arms, torso, legs, etc., are all exactly as God designed them to be. When we look with dissatisfaction in the mirror, we are saying God did a poor job. I imagine this makes Him sad. I know I would feel terrible if I made something very special for someone I loved and every day, year after year, they complained about how it looked.

Nick Vujicic is a man who was born with no arms and no legs. Although he went through some dark times when he was growing up accepting his situation, he is now a strong Christian and a motivational speaker. God did not make a mistake when he formed Nick in his mother's womb. God created Nick for a purpose and today Nick leads a very full life and has been a help to hundreds of thousands of other people. God chose to use Nick to reach suffering people in the world, and He designed Nick's body so he could do that most effectively.

You, too, have been designed by God to look exactly as He wants you to look. God did not make a mistake when He formed you; He has a plan and a purpose for you, and He uniquely designed you so that purpose can be fulfilled.

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**If you have any items or information you would like to share in the newsletter, please e-mail:**

**Susan Seiboth at**

**[susan@quiltingsquare.com](mailto:susan@quiltingsquare.com)**

**Dorothy Soi at**

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