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Keystone **BAPTIST**

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The Chain of Liberty:

Pastor Tom Harris

Bible Baptist Church, Quakertown, PA



“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” These famous words are found in the second paragraph of the Declaration of Independence.

Thomas Jefferson was articulating for the world what many soon to be called “Americans” already understood from God’s Word.

The line that follows these words is probably more important. “That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.” American society is very quickly moving away from government being controlled by the people to a government that controls the people. Ac-

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How Close Are You to BURN OUT?

Pastor Todd Baker

First Baptist Church of
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Galatians 6:9 says, “*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*” Have you ever found yourself struggling with not fainting while doing good? Maybe it’s the unique circumstances of this past year, maybe it’s caring for a loved one, perhaps it’s the various challenges of doing ministry, parenting, etc. It may be a mix of all the above that is getting you down. Whatever it may be, we as humans are bound to have times where we feel like we have nothing left to give and are ready to quit. We know from the verse above, that God doesn’t want us to give up on doing good, but we feel burnt out. What is the answer? How can we prevent this from happening or recover from it if that is where we find ourselves?

Like all commands in the Bible, there is always more to the story. God doesn’t just

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A Rewarding and Blessed Time

*"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; **that we may present every***

man perfect in Christ Jesus." Colossians 1:28

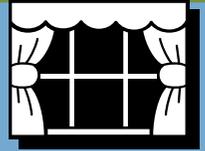
This is the theme verse as stated in the mission statement for the PARBC Youth Retreat and Talents for Christ. We were determined by God's grace, mercy and help to have this very special activity this year. And even with the COVID-19 precautions the Lord blessed with a good attendance. The various categories of competition the teens entered resulted in many awards for achievement.

That is really our goal – in fact our mission statement declares: "It is the mission of the PARBC Talents for Christ Ministry to give young people an opportunity to develop the talents over which the LORD Jesus Christ has made them stewards in the arena of competition. We endeavor to challenge the participants to serve, not themselves, but God and others through their local churches, thus making Talents for Christ a stepping stone in the process of presenting them complete in Christ and a valuable member of the local body of believers."

Every year in the spring the PARBC offers this special opportunity to

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From the
Parsonage Window



VISITORS!

A number of summers ago, a visitor showed up in our church parking lot. She wasn't a human visitor but a visitor nonetheless — she was a mother Killdeer. She thought our parking lot looked inviting enough to consider putting down roots. So, she built a nest at the edge of the macadam in some gravel. Our ushers saw her nest building and thoughtfully surrounded her home site with orange cones. This kept away cars and feet, which might crush her eggs. Many of us saw her, but she was shy and didn't always acknowledge us. She seemed to prefer solitude.

One day I visited the orange cones and peeked into the nest. She had laid one large speckle egg. While she was very proud of it, she thought it best to distract me, thinking I might be dangerous. She put on a fluttering broken wing act to draw my eyes away from her nest. The writer in me saw a story and even mentally wrote the headlines: "Baby Killdeer Born in Church Parking Lot." It would be such fun to watch the baby bird once it hatched. However, I hadn't spent much time with her mother or developed any kind of relationship. I chose rather to keep my distance. But, the next day when I went to check the nest, the egg was gone! Mother was gone! No evidence was even there... nothing, no eggshells, and no feathers. Today, if I hadn't told you, you would never know she had been there.

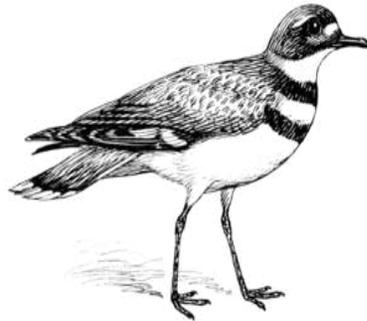
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the teens in our churches. Every year, without exception, all who attend experience a rewarding and blessed time. If the Teens in your church have missed out and not been able to participate, I would urge you to consider this very special activity to help and encourage them with the talents the Lord has blessed them with. You and the church will be tremendously blessed. To help in your considerations please note the wide variety of categories listed on page 11. If you have any questions, please, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Visitors—Continued

Mother Killdeer was like many visitors. She came once, liked what she saw and thought she'd try to put down roots. All too often, though, we stood at a distance thinking that a handshake from an usher or a Sunday Bulletin would keep them coming back. It's a little like putting up the orange cones. However, we didn't even ask their name, their address or offer them fellowship. We assumed someone else would do it, probably the pastor.

Perhaps they would like to stay, but they didn't now how to break into our little circles. They were starved for friendship and caring hearts. Some, we forget were seeking the Lord Jesus, the One who welcomes all. When we finally decided to reach out, it was too late. The nest was gone; the opportunity was gone with no signs of why. In the case of our church visitors, we might be the "why."



The Tree Climber

"It's growing dark; how much longer will he stay out there? He is so determined. I worry each time he falls that he is going to be hurt himself. Please keep him from harm.

"He is so much smaller than his friends, but he tries so hard to keep up with them. Please help him.

"Now I can barely see him, but You can. Please help him with this obsession of being able to climb a tree. Only You know why he acts as if his life depends upon it."

She couldn't watch anymore because the only light left was from the moon and stars. She closed her prayer and walked away from the window to coax him to come in.

Young Zacchaeus had started up the tree once more.

(Nancy Maphis).



According to the Nehemiah Institute 80-85% of Christian youth have a secular or socialist world view. This means that churches are not teaching a Biblical explanation of government. The Bible clearly lays out a pattern of self-government for each individual. Churches within the PARBC need to understand and boldly proclaim that they stand firmly on the side of liberty.

Biblical self-government began in the Garden of Eden. Adam was made in the image of God, therefore he had the ability to choose between right and wrong. In Genesis 1:26-28 God gave Adam a job. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” Adam was given a “Dominion Mandate.”

In Genesis 2:16-17 God shows Adam how he can govern himself. God tells Adam that he can eat of the fruit of all the trees in the Garden except one. Adam is given the opportunity to govern himself. Adam failed the test of self-government and plunged all of mankind into sin. Man’s sinful condition led to the destruction of all of mankind by a world wide flood. Only Noah and his family were spared by the grace of God.

After the flood God gave man the responsibility of governing other men. Genesis 9:5-7 says, “And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man’s brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man. And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.” In these few verses God established human government by instituting capital punishment. Many argue that capital punishment is cruel and in-human, but capital punishment actually shows the value of human life. The only way to atone for killing another life is to give up your life.

By giving man the power to take away life God was instituting civil government. The family, the church and civil government are all institutions created by God. God explain the purpose of civil government in I Peter 2:13,14 “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well.” God’s purpose of civil government is to protect the life, liberty and property of all individuals by punishing evil doers and encouraging righteousness. Simply put the purpose of government is to reward good, and punish evil.

God never intended for a large centralized government to accomplish this purpose. Instead, God told Noah, and his children to spread out throughout the earth. As they went, they

Churches Searching for Pastor

As of May 2021

First Baptist Church – Corry
 Springside Baptist Church – Distant (New Bethlehem)
 Grace Baptist Church – Hazleton
 First Baptist Church – Roulette
 Carmel Baptist Church – Saegertown
 Tidioute Baptist Church – Tidioute
 Faith Baptist Church - Waynesburg
 Calvary Baptist Church – Union City



Next Town Evangelism – Faith Baptist Church, Bradford

Pray for Pastor Gary Smith as he is in need of PARBC Churches supporting him and thus be able to receive matching funds from the PARBC for his support in his effort to rescue/build back up FBC, especially with the difficulties of the pandemic.

2021-22 Activities for Our Fellowship

Coming Activities for Our Fellowship

Fall Conference – September 13-15, 2021

Hope Baptist Church, Hanover

Hosts: Pastor Allen G. Harris & Congregation

Youth Retreat and Talents for Christ

Calvary Baptist Church, Bloomsburg

Date: To be announced 2022

See www.parbc.org (Teen Activities)

Spring Conference – April 25 & 26, 2022

Grace Baptist Church, Kittanning

Hosts: Pastor Nathan S. Bramlet & Congregation

Future Dates for Conferences are on our website

www.parbc.org

were to rely on Him and govern themselves in front of God. Unfortunately, mankind corrupted God's plan and began to centralize government. Genesis 11 shows us that all men were gathered together in the plains of Shinar. They choose to replace God with a centralized government. They would rely on government to care for them, rather than trust God and govern themselves. Because of man's disobedience God chose to intervene and confuse the languages. He scattered the people.

God then attempted to demonstrate his idea for government through his people the nation of Israel. In Exodus 20 God established the first republican form of government. Republican government is the rule of law. All of the civil laws were based upon God's higher fixed law, and not majorities. This makes it a republic and not a democracy. Exodus chapter 20 and the chapters following establish God's laws. The people were to follow those laws and God would bless them. If they chose to disobey, they would be punished. No ruler could be higher than the laws given by God.

God de-centralized the governing of His people the nation of Israel. According to Mark Beliles , "Every group of 10, 50, 100, and 1,000 families could choose or elect someone to be their judge or ruler." Each tribe was also independently governed. When the nation came into the land of Canaan each tribe had its' own territory, its' own army, and its' own rulers.

Unfortunately, Israel did not embrace God's idea of republican decentralized government. Instead, they wanted the safety and security of a king. I Samuel 8 explains that the nation of Israel rebelled against God and demanded a king. Samuel was instructed to tell the people of the oppression that would result from a king. Samuel obeyed God and explained that a centralized government would result in great oppression. The people would lose control of their children, their possessions and their land. The people however wanted to be like the other nations. 1Samuel 8:19-20 "Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles."

The results of choosing centralized government over God's plan were a disaster for the nation of Israel. Just as God told the nation, the kings taxed them to the point where they could not function. The kings also led them away into idolatry. Eventually God was forced to send other nations to judge his people. The nation of Israel was given the opportunity to model a decentralized government where they people relied on God. Instead, they choose to be like everyone else. They exchanged freedom for what they thought was securing, and the result was totalitarianism and eventually captivity.

According to some scholars the republican form of de-centralized government was dead throughout world history until the writing of the Mayflower Compact. The Romans attempted a secular form of republican government during the inter-testamental period, but without each individual controlling themselves, this government also crumbled into a centralized dictatorship.

The Constitution of the United States attempted to reestablish a form of decentralized republican government. Many events took place in Europe leading up to the formation of this document. The first major event was the rise of Alfred the Great in England. Alfred was the King of Wessex who defeated the Viking king Guthrum in 879. When peace came to southern England Alfred had to create a government to rule his land. Instead of serving as a dictator Alfred based his government upon the teachings of Patrick of Ireland. Patrick had written the *Liber Ex Lege Moisi*. This book applied the Laws and Governments of Moses to the chieftains of Ireland. Alfred recognized that he could not govern a large territory himself so he created a government that served the people.

Alfred organized the nation after the Hebrew republic. His basis of law was The Ten Commandments. He divided his nation into units of tens, fifties and hundreds and thousands. He even set up an elected assembly known as the “Witten.” Thomas Jefferson said that the Anglo-Saxon laws were, “the wisest and most perfect ever yet devised by the wit of man.” This kingdom reached its’ height under the leadership of Alfred the Great.

The Normans came and conquered this kingdom in 1066. They destroyed the system of rights set up by Alfred, and instead instituted a royal heredity. The kings and their children created a system that benefited the centralized government and removed the opportunity of self-government from the people. Things continued to get worse until 1215. The barons of England forced King John to sign the Magna Charta. The chief architect of this document was a biblical scholar named Stephen Langton. The Magna Charta sighted that the barons of England were entitled to certain rights and privileges contained in Biblical law. The document explained that both the people and the government were under the law and subject to it.

The next big step forward in the chain of liberty development happened when the Bible was translated in to the language of the people. John Wycliffe completed his translation of the Bible from Latin into English in 1382. Wycliffe did not simply translate the Bible into English. He set out to teach men that God’s Words and not man’s words should govern their lives. Wycliffe’s followers traveled throughout England teaching the people God’s Word in their own tongue. Many of these men were mocked, beaten and imprisoned. As a group they were given the title “Lollards.” This meant “idle babblers.” But they were not idle babblers. Instead, they kindled the idea within the English people, that they could read God’s Word and choose to govern themselves according to the principles of God’s Word. By the end of the 1300’s over half of the population of England was in line with the teachings of the Lollards. The Church of England however, worked hard to stamp out the effects of these men.

In 1525 the flood gates of God’s Word were opened to the people of England by the work of William Tyndale. He published a translation of the New Testament in English. His work was very quickly reproduced on the printing press. As a result, God’s Word began to trickle, and then flood into the hands of the English people. Once again, the people of England began to realize that they could govern themselves under the authority of God’s Word.

With the opening of the New World to colonization in the 1600's many Englishmen came to America to establish de-centralized republican forms of government. When the Pilgrims landed in Plymouth, Massachusetts in 1620 they realized that they were not under the authority of any government. They had been given a charter for establishing a colony in Virginia, but because they were blown of course they landed outside of the boundaries of Virginia. They chose to establish a government based on the Word of God. They wrote the Mayflower Compact which is cited as the first constitution written in America. They agreed to create laws according to God's Word and then they would all be subject to them.

So, when Thomas Jefferson sat down to write the Declaration of Independence, he had a long history of government based upon the Bible. Jefferson himself proposed that the seal of the United States contain a picture of the Hebrew nation following the pillar of fire given by God. Our founding fathers gave us a Republican form of government because they believed this was what God wanted for man.

Today, churches need to remember that republican government starts with the individual governing himself in front of God. Each and every individual needs to understand that they are responsible for their actions in the sight of God. Large centralized government is not necessary for the safety and security of the people. Instead, people need to choose to govern themselves.

Burnout-Continued

give us difficult tasks or impossible commands and then walk away with no further information or help. When we look at the big picture of Scripture, when we take into consideration the many other principles we have been given throughout the Old and New Testaments, we find there are things we can and should be doing to while doing good. Having project on the topic of burn-

some things I learned. First, the key word to consider is the word "depleted". That feel and really, it gives an the situation. Burnout is left to give; we are physical-



and/or emotionally on empty. Our ambition and joy have departed. William Willimon describes it as "a rocket that runs out of fuel and falls back to the earth". Now if NASA had that happen to one of their rockets, where would the blame lie? Would it not be on the mathematicians and engineers that did not accurately calculate how much fuel it would take to reach orbit? The very reason NASA has had so many successful launches is because they have properly planned how much fuel it takes to conquer the gravitational pull of earth. For you and I, there is a similar principle at work. We need to appropriately plan how much "fuel" we need to accomplish the tasks that God gives to us and then, make sure we actually "load" on the necessary fuel.

help prevent burning out recently done a research out, I would like to share

er in the topic of burnout best sums up how people accurate description of when we have nothing ly, mentally, spiritually,

Made in God's image, we are complex, multifaceted creatures. We are spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and relational. All of these facets of our personhood are like the spokes of a wheel or the legs of a chair; you break or neglect one and it puts the whole thing off balance. When we think of sanctification, we often think of only part of our being, usually just the spiritual, intellectual, and some aspects of the physical. We often fail to think through the full picture of what Paul meant when He said in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." God cares about every part of us being wholly devoted to Him. With that in mind, consider these three big picture suggestions for not only avoiding burnout, but also being in a better place in your relationship with God and your ministry to others.

The first thing is to develop healthy routines. God made us with limitations. Being good stewards of this body and this life means we are aware of our limitations and we plan to function accordingly. The first healthy routine we must have is a daily quiet time with God. Not a daily study time, but a time where we read God's Word with the intent to hear what He is saying to us. Ministry leaders can quickly fall into the habit of having a task-oriented quiet time that is really sermon or Bible study or Sunday School prep. That is not a renewing quiet time. Time with God should be a chance to be personal and intimate with Him, where we are reading His Word to be spoken to by Him regarding our lives. It is where we converse back with Him sharing our worries, our hopes, our needs, our disappointments. It is not about getting so many verses or chapters read, but about sitting at His feet. It is where we get filled up or like Moses, where we get exposed to His glory so that we can then reflect Him to others.

In regard to our physical bodies, we need to plan our days with our bodily needs and limitations in mind. It begins with a schedule that allows for enough sleep at night. I realize that with any of our planning, there can be interruptions, emergencies, and all kinds of unforeseen or uncontrollable events. That does not mean we should not plan, but rather we plan margins into our life so that when we do have the unexpected, we are in a good place to handle it. We follow a good plan regularly so that we aren't on the verge of collapse when we do need to skip a meal or pull a late night.

Good scheduling also means we take time to enjoy healthy food. Each of those words were chosen deliberately. First, we should take time so that our eating is something that we do at a healthy pace that allows us to enjoy what God provided, not just inhale it. I have noticed when I am tense or stressed, I eat very quickly, which is not particularly healthy nor enjoyable. Having budgeted enough time, our meals can be eaten at a healthy pace with a grateful heart and good conversation. We should also be wise about what we eat, taking care of this vessel God has given us. Enough sleep is important too. I remember a few years ago speaking with my dad about a man who has been a faithful servant at his church for many years. This man had a managerial position at his job, so he worked a lot of hours, then served as a deacon, a board member at another ministry organization, and was all around a very busy person. He retired a few years ago and I asked my dad how he was doing; he replied, "he's a much better Christian now". You see, it wasn't that he didn't love God or work hard for God, he just was often tired and spread too thin. It affected his interactions and his judgement. Having more space and more rest improved that greatly. We need to be wise and plan our lives so that we don't live stretched and overcommitted as a rule, because it really is a spiritual issue that is connected both to our sanctification and our longevity.

Taking time to invest in relationships is important also. God made us for community. We should schedule time to nurture good relationships where we can both give and receive support and encouragement along with accountability. Those “one another” commands of Scripture are not exclusively for the “another”, they are for each of us. We may look at having a couple of times a month to connect with a friend as a luxury, but in reality, it is important to our well-being. Sin and discouragement grow best in isolation.

Emotional renewal is something we can easily overlook, but it too should be part of our regular routine, and it is closely related to our physical, relational, and spiritual habits. Taking the time for a good walk or some other activity where we unplug and do something refreshing and rejuvenating is not simply a treat or a physical benefit, it helps to give us clear thinking and a new perspective. We should do such activities several times a week and watching TV or scrolling through social media doesn't really count!

The second suggestion, after establishing healthy routines, is to be aware of how God made you. If the first suggestion was all about acknowledging your limitations and keeping within those boundaries, this one is about celebrating your strengths. God has crafted each one of us differently. We are each a distinct package of skills, gifts, personality, and experience. This results in us being uniquely suited to excel in some areas while at the same time being limited in others. This is a biblical principle made especially clear in 1 Corinthians 12. Sometimes we can find ourselves as a foot trying to do the work of a hand. While there may be some success, we aren't going to get very far or last very long. While we need to be willing to do whatever is needed, we should be looking to function out of our strengths, whether in the church or in the workplace. We must give up trying to be someone we are not and be who God made us to be. We will increase in effectiveness and longevity if we ask God to direct us to the role that He has prepared us for.

Finally, we need to be shooting for the right target in life. Many people burnout because they are pursuing the wrong definition of success. Work is often where people find fulfillment, and some are constantly seeking to hear their boss or clients or church members appreciate and praise them. Research shows that a big part of burnout is related to whether we feel respected at work or whether our work is meaningful. God said in Colossians 3:23-24 “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ”. Learning to do your best for God, and not the praise of others, will transform the way you work and help you avoid crushing disappointment when your good work isn't recognized. You will be able to take pleasure in a job well done because even if no one else notices, God sees. This will also help mitigate against the ungodly fear of man that we can all fall prey to, especially those of us in positions of leadership. If you happen to be a pastor reading this, you may be guilty of trying to please everyone. God reminds us that our responsibility is to Him first and foremost. You also may be guilty of thinking you have to do everything. It is important to acknowledge God's Sovereignty. He does have certain things He expects us each to do, but to think any one of us are to do it all misses the fact that He has it under control and desires for us to each do our part out of obedience to Him, while trusting Him use others to ultimately accomplish His mission through us all (Ephesians 4:11, 12, 16).

TALENTS FOR CHRIST CATEGORIES

Calvary Baptist Church, Bloomsburg, PA April 30-May 1, 2021

- Extemporaneous Writing
- Bible Knowledge: Old & New Testament
- Art: 2-Dimensional, 3-Dimensional
- Photography
- Home Economics: Baking, Needlework/Handiwork, Sewing
- Bible Quizzing Team
- Vocal
 - Male & Female Solos
 - Large & Small Group
 - Instrumental*
 - Brass: Cornet, Trumpet, French Horn, Trombone, Baritone, Tuba, Sousaphone
 - Strings: Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass, Classical Guitar, Folk Strings
 - Woodwinds: Bassoon, Oboe, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Flute
 - Piano
 - Large & Small Group Speech
 - Oral Interpretation
 - Public Speaking: Male & Female
 - Visualized Bible Teaching
 - Puppetry
 - Digital Media
 - Digital Presentation

*Exceptions can be made to these categories and instruments with prior approval from the Talents for Christ Committee.