



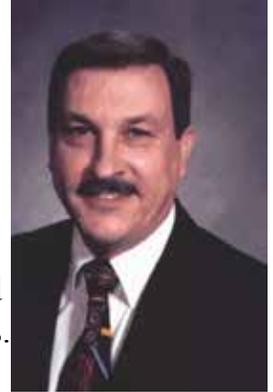
<http://www.parbc.org>

Keystone **BAPTIST**

Official Paper of the Pennsylvania Association of Regular Baptist Churches

Are We the Last Hope for America?

By Pastor Charles Dear, Crescentville Baptist Church



Believers are facing increasing challenges to our faith. As we see essential institutions of our society being corrupted with increasing animosity towards Bible believing churches, pastors, and people, we might think we've been transported into a Marxist country somewhere else in the world. In government, from Washington D.C. to City Hall, there is sufficient evidence for doubt that the last declared Presidential election results were consistent with the votes cast by legitimate voters. Speaking from personal knowledge, the national election results in Philadelphia were manipulated during vote counting after the election.

Consider the decline in public education, where the vital subjects of English, Math, Science and Social Studies/History has been preempted by gender issues, including gender "choice," preferred pronouns, promotion of homosexuality, etcetera, being taught behind the backs of parents who have never consented to having their children taught such Woke ideology. We now have sex education being implemented in public education as early as elementary school grades. We have also discovered the harm done to students' educational progress, as a direct result of closing schools for such a long time. Recent studies estimate the loss of educational progress extends from one to three years. The prospect of students catching up remains in doubt. Further questions also remain regarding the impact of the requirement of masks and distancing imposed in school classrooms.

There is also a major impact of these perverse ideologies being foisted upon every branch of the military, which has seriously undermined our military preparedness to go to war, if necessary. There are also serious problems with training women for combat. Woke subjects are now a priority in every military college, under the direction of the Joint Chiefs, among whom are Woke advocates. The Air Force Academy recently conducted a Transgender Visibility seminar. It should also be noted that efforts continue across all branches to eliminate Christian "extremists" from the military by denying deserved promotions and assignments. Some of the rank and file were dismissed when they declined to

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What a Blessed Fellowship!

"For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto you;

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

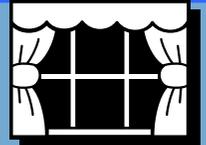
But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" I John 1:2-3, 7.

There are a number of biblical references using the term "fellowship," but here in I John we find the bases for the fellowship. We are focused on Christ in what He has done for us. Verse seven enlarges. The action to "one with another" and that certainly encompasses individuals and churches. Matt. 28:18-20: Acts 1:8

That is why I keep saying over and over.; "What a blessed fellowship!" In fact, I can remember my predecessor, Lee Hufhand (a dear brother in the Lord), saying it often as well. And it is so true – It is a very blessed fellowship that we share in together. I have benefited and been blessed as a pastor (as well as my church) for twenty years and as it's state representative for the last twenty--five years. The Lord has shown me again and again the need, value and preciousness of a "blessed fellowship."

The Pennsylvania Association of Regular Baptist Churches is a fundamental, separated group of independent Baptist churches. It is also: Caring. Friendly. Helpful. Supportive.

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Who Made Dirty Fish?

by Anita L. Fordyce, Hanover, PA



I took great pride in my fancy-tailed fish, a species called an oranda. He had all markings of a good breed--a double plummed tail, orange bubble-shapes crowning his forehead like the king that was and silver-white fins; however he had black splotches on his face. These splotches were a sign of his heritage but my grandson, Raymond saw them as a problem.

"Nanna, why does your fish have a dirty face?"

Until then, I hadn't thought of the markings as a dirty face. I started to give him a big explanation about the pedigree, but he wanted to know more, "Who made dirty fish?"

A teachable moment flashed to my lips, "God made Dirty Fish" I quickly named the critter.

"Oh God made Dirty Fish," he accepted

He pushed his little face closer to the aquarium, the fish's domain. Not to lose the moment, I continued, "Do you know who made you, Raymond?"

Without a breath, I pushed on, "God made you, too!"

"God made Dirty Fish. God made me."

"Now, he's got it," I thought.

"Raymond, if God made Dirty Fish and God made you, who made your little brother?"

"I don't know!" he looked at me sincerely.

Chuckling at how he missed the point, I turned away and left him to look at the fish, and asked him to help feed Dirty Fish. It became an everyday ritual, while we talked more about God's creation.

Raymond is 26 now and has long forgotten "Dirty Fish." He is growing secure in who he

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be vaccinated for religious reasons. Some were even court-marshalled and given a dishonorable discharge.

Law enforcement has been crippled and/or compromised so much that major cities, like Philadelphia, daily report increasing numbers of murders and other crimes. Evidence and whistle-blower reports confirm that national law enforcement agencies consistently fail to provide equal justice under the law. We now have political candidates who boast of being anti-police and others whose political platform includes support for the release of murderers who are serving life sentences.

Federal law enforcement agencies have recently demonstrated excessive force and intimidation, including presumptuous charges against pastors and other professing Christians, placing them under arrest; and in a recent case, a pastor's home was attacked by a large number of FBI agents with guns drawn, terrorizing the children in a raid on the pastor's home. Members of the U.S. Congress demanded the incarceration of January 6 demonstrators, who today still languish in inhumane prison conditions and being denied their Constitutional rights for more than a year. Even President Obama, during his tenure, advanced "diversity training" against "hate groups," a label that was pinned on Bible believing-Christians.

Family structures have been disrupted by economic pressures that too often leave children to fend for themselves, with neither adult example nor parental guidance and instruction. The prolonged absence of fathers in the home has been connected for decades with juvenile delinquency.

There is also the further decline of non-Biblical religions, which are complicit with these concessions to Marxism. Consider the Pope's concession to homosexuality, which is clearly condemned in Scripture, and the mainline denominations that freely accept homosexual members and pastors without hesitation. Consider the expansion of the cults in America and their promotion of unbiblical books that contradict the clear teaching of the Bible. To all of them we quote the Apostle Paul in his confrontation with Elymas the sorcerer in Acts 13:10: "O full of subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?"

So where are our fellowshiping churches in all of this chaos? Where does your church stand in the midst of all this disorder? Some have not recovered since the Covid closures, while others have suffered loss of financial support and active participation by members, who have become accustomed to online and TV worship or are yet possessed of fear of gathering with other believers, lest they catch some disease. The decision to forfeit sound Bible teaching and fellowship together with other believers, as the Body of Christ, the Church, comes at a price a true believer cannot afford. Hebrews 10:25a "Not forsaking (leaving behind) the assembling of yourselves together.." On a personal note, we praise the Lord that we could return to in-person services early without anyone contracting Covid in our church.

We are not advocating isolationism. We are in the world but not of the world, neither are we on the rooftops just waiting for Jesus to come and take us home. We live among the broken and corrupt society of unbelievers, but we are not obliged to "fit in" or capitulate to their anti-Christian ways. Quite the contrary, we are here to make a definite difference with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as ordinary people who were born with a sin nature, just like everyone else, but who have come to take God at His word and have trusted in Jesus Christ as our personal savior.

True believers have the privilege and obligation of demonstrating the difference Christ makes in the everyday life of the believer, as commanded in I Timothy 4:12. To be an "example" requires exposure to others, unbelievers as well as believers, to demonstrate the difference Christ makes in sinners who

have found salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The evidence of old things passed away and all things become new (II Corinthians 5:17) is demonstrated in the changed life of the believer in Christ, as commanded in Matthew 5:16. Note that it is not limited to only “shine” in the presence of other believers. It reminds us, “Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” Likewise I Peter 2:12 instructs, “Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.” Ironside comments here, “. . . consistent believers shut the mouths of those who would deride and vilify them making these very foes of the truth bear testimony to the consistency of their (believers) lives.”

We cannot ignore the corruption of the unbelieving world but rather identify it for what it really is and speak out against it. Paul, in Ephesians 5:11, states, “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove (i.e. call it what it is!) them.” May the Lord grant us the courage to stand firmly upon the Word of God and preserve the testimony of our churches that we may be found faithful when He comes again.



Churches Searching for Pastor

As of June 2022



First Baptist Church – Corry
 Perry Baptist Church -- Hadley
 East Lawrence Baptist Church, Lawrenceville
 First Baptist Church – Limestone
 Mountain Top Baptist Church – Mountain Top
 Grace Baptist Church – Norristown
 Chestnut Street Baptist Church – Port Allegany
 First Baptist Church – Roulette
 Carmel Baptist Church – Saegertown
 Tidioute Baptist Church – Tidioute
 Calvary Baptist Church – Union City

Coming Activities for our Fellowship Activities

Spring Conference – April 17-18, 2023

First Baptist Church, Butler
 Hosts: Pastor Dave Maitland and Congregation
 Speaker: Marty Von (Church Care Ministries)

Youth Retreat and Talents for Christ

Calvary Baptist Church, Bloomsburg
 Special speaker: Pastor Nathan Bramlet
 (Grace Baptist Church, Kittanning)

Date: April 28-29 2023

Bible Quizzing: I Corinthians 9-16
Bible Knowledge: NT I Cor. 9-16 / OT I Samuel 15-31

See www.parbc.org (Teen Activities)

Fall Conference – September 11-13, 2023

Marsh Creek Fellowship Baptist Church, Wellsboro
 Hosts: Pastor Keith Williams and Congregation

Spring Conference -- April 1-2, 2024

Independent Baptist Church, Towanda
 Hosts: Donn Hauser and Congregation

Fall Conference -- September 16-18, 2024

Bible Baptist Church, Quakertown
 Hosts: Pastor Tom Harris and Congregation

“The Morning Meet” (Psalm 5:3) Part 2

by Pastor Jeff Kistler (Retired)

Let me suggest two basic thoughts: one, this ‘Morning Meet’ is a very biblical endeavor, and secondly, it is an endeavor that brings God’s blessings. ONE: Let’s take the first: it is a biblical endeavor or practice. For some examples, consider:



• Genesis 19, Abraham rose early in the morning to meet with God.

- In Genesis 28 Jacob did the same;
- In Exodus 8, 9, 24 and 34 Moses did it;
- In Joshua 3, 6, 7 and 8 Joshua rose early in the morning;
- Gideon in Judges 6;
- Hannah in 1 Samuel 1;
- Samuel in 1 Samuel 15;
- David in 1 Samuel 17;
- Job in chapter 1 verse 5;
- The apostles in Acts 5:21;
- Mary in Luke 24, Mark 16, John 20

Then, the supreme example, our Lord Jesus Christ - the One who gives us the power to live like Him, Mark 1:34; ‘He healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him. And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him. And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee’.

Here, the Lord Jesus has been busy all the day before healing the sick, making blind eyes to see, doing mighty miraculous works before men. The crowd is around about Him, everybody is thronging Him, everybody wants Him, they're pushing up against Him in the press; and the nightfall comes and He, understandably, is really tired. We assume He rests, but then early the next morning, He rises to meet with His heavenly Father. See Him there, perhaps upon his knees as He communes with God and as He cries out to Him for power! There is not another soul around Him. There is no one to witness this, but there He is, the Son of God communing and fellowshiping in the morning with His Father - in the morning watch.

The phrase ‘the morning watch’ goes right back to ancient Jewish times, when city walls were guarded. The city guards would stay up all night and take shifts in order to protect the inhabitants. In those days the morning watch was divided into three watches. There was a set watch from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM, followed by a watch from 10:00 PM to 2:00 AM, and then another watch from 2:00 AM to 6:00 AM - three watches.

Then in Roman times, in the days of our Lord Jesus and the disciples, the division was into four watches of the night. The first watch, their evening was, was from 6:00 PM through to 9:00 PM. Then there was the midnight watch which was from 9:00 PM to 12 Midnight. That was followed by what was the cock-crowing watch from 12 Midnight to 3:00 AM. Then there was what is called the morning watch from 3:00 AM to 6:00 AM.

With that in mind, it is interesting that it is constantly repeated in the scriptures that the Lord keeps the nightly watch over His children. This is when we are asleep or better, when the children of Israel were asleep. In the Old Testament, it was the Lord who would keep them during the night. He was watching over them. Psalm 121: 'The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night'. The Lord watched over them! Psalm 127:1 references this: 'Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it', also says, 'except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain'. The KJV word for 'keep', as in, 'except the Lord keep the city', is the same word for 'watchmen'. Meaning: 'Except the Lord watches the city, what is the point in the watchmen watching it, if the Lord is not over it?'.

So, understand, there was this knowledge throughout the scriptures that the Lord is constantly watching over His people - all through the night, all through the watches of the day and night. So then, out of respect, reverence, and devotion for Him, out of a heart of love - before, as it were, the final watch was over where the Lord was taking care of them, His people would rise out of their bed and come to meet with their God. Comprehend this: It's as if the Lord is saying, 'I've been watching over you all the night while you've slept, and I wish that you would give me the refreshment of a quiet bit of talk and fellowship with you before the day begins'.

Isaiah 50:4 refers to this: 'The Lord GOD hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He' (speaking of the Lord) 'wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as the learned'. This describes a "Morning Meeting" with God, and it is at His special request. Do you see who is waking us up? It is the Lord who is waking us up in the morning. Note, it is daily: 'He wakeneth morning by morning'. Then, as a result of His wakening, I have a trained ear and a trained tongue! I can have a life of helpfulness! I can live a life of power, and have a life of victory!

First, this is a very biblical endeavor, but, secondly, it is an endeavor that brings blessings. There are many Biblical examples that show how God has used the early morning hour for blessing His own.

First, from Genesis 32: Jacob who was a wicked man, needed to be changed. He needed to have a touch from God. The passage reveals that he was awakened at midnight, and he wrestles with this supernatural figure into the wee hours of the morning. It was at this point of the early morning that supernatural figure touched his thigh and Jacob became weak. The text quotes Jacob with these words: 'I will not let you go until you bless me'! Understand, that it was at that early hour of the day that God blessed him there. Jacob (Deceiver) was given the name 'Israel' (a prince with God and with men), and that place was called 'Peniel' (the face of God), because it was there in the early hour of the morning that Jacob/Israel looked into the face of God.

What about Moses in Exodus chapters 33 and 34? He has had the awful experiences that we read about in that book, trying to lead the people of God. But as he prays to God, he asks this prayer: 'Lord, show me Thy glory'! - a prayer we should desire! The Lord's response in Exodus 34:2: 'Be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount'. Then, 'and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up', and he got such a glimpse of the glory of God! As he came down that mountain after spending much time with God in His presence, scripture records, says that his face shone and all the people could see it, though he was unconscious of it!

These are just several of the many Biblical examples detailing the scriptural examples to wait upon God in the early morning. The result of which will manifest God's blessings. Consider that 'Morning Meet', alone with God before the world awakes. Alone with Him before our minds and our hearts are filled with all the distractions of a busy day. Consider giving your the best time to God. Please do not think of this as a trivial matter. Please do not miss the difference that this precious fellowship time makes. Consider the poem, 'The Difference' – Poem by Alan Grant'

I got up early one morning and
 rushed right into the day;
 I had so much to accomplish that
 I didn't have time to pray.
 Problems just tumbled about me,
 and the heavier came each task.
 "Why doesn't God help Me?" I wondered.
 He answered, "You didn't ask".
 I wanted to see joy and beauty,
 but the day toiled on, gray and bleak;
 I wondered why God didn't show me.
 He said, "But you didn't seek."
 I tried to come into God's presence;
 I used all my keys at the lock.
 God gently and lovingly chided,
 "My child, you didn't knock."
 I woke up early this morning,
 and paused before entering the day;
 I had so much to accomplish
 that I had to take time to pray'.

Do you strive to have a "Morning Meet" with the Lord? Do you take time daily to pray and spend time in the Word? The invitation to you is ever extended, 'Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my voice and open the door I will come into him and sup with him, and he with me'.

Is your morning hour given to God? While I plead with you, understand, I failed in my many of my morning attempts, but I do know that it makes a difference. Have a daily "Morning Meet" with the Lord. I believe that the reason many of our churches lack a vibrancy for the Lord and I believe the reason of a lack of empowerment, zeal, and joy in many Christians' lives is due to not meeting alone with Him. -----

R. Kent Hughes writes that "Some years ago a young man approached the foreman of a logging crew and asked for a job. 'That depends', replied the foreman, 'Let's see you fell this tree'. The young man stepped forward and skillfully felled a great tree. Impressed, the foreman exclaimed, 'Start Monday!'. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday rolled by, and on Thursday afternoon the foreman approached the young man and said, 'You can pick up your pay check on the way out today'. Startled, he replied, 'I thought you paid on Friday'. 'Normally we do', answered the foreman, 'but we're letting you go today because you've fallen behind. Our daily felling charts show that you've dropped from first place on Monday to last on Wednesday'. 'But I'm a hard worker', the young man objected, 'I arrive first, leave last, and even have worked through my coffee breaks!'. The foreman, sensing the boy's integrity, thought for a minute and then asked, 'Have you been sharpening your axe?'. The young man replied, 'I've been working too hard to take the time

Challenging. Compassionate for souls. Encouraging. Faithfully proclaiming the Word of God and beyond all that, it is a blessed fellowship.

It is always a special time when the churches within the PARBC gather together once in the spring and once in the fall. This year seemed to be especially a blessed time with the spring conference theme being "Getting Back to Basics" and the fall theme being "Prayer." The spirit in the services was exceptional and I believe we all realized it. It was enhanced by the wonderful congregational singing and special music – you sensed the desire to worship the Lord and encourage one another. The messages from God's Word were up-lifting and powerful. It all blessed my heart to tears.

The comradery within the fellowship was most impressive. As your State Rep, I witnessed many of the pastors sharing, kidding, laughing and praying together that demonstrated to me just how valuable and precious this fellowship really is. Pastors went back to their respective ministries refreshed and encouraged knowing the Spirit of God has used the fellowship of the PARBC to bless and strengthen them and their churches.

One special blessing to me has been the privilege of working with the many "host churches" in preparation for the conferences. I cannot express enough my love and respect for the pastors and churches that have volunteered to have folks from all over the state come and spend two and three days with them. To prepare the facilities, work on the schedule, work with local motels and restaurants, and do so much behind the scenes is so greatly appreciated, all to make the fellowship a blessing to all.

is. And, he's accepted two more brothers and a sister as valuable people also.

It goes without saying that children today are faced with many questions created by not understanding the value of life and that God created life. Little could we ever have dreamed about what they would face. Little could we have known how complicated life would be for our offspring.

Parents and often times grandparents are the best source to teach children Who God is and that He created them for a purpose. We also have the best opportunities for teaching them how valuable they are because what God creates is "good." When a person is valued, they respect life; they are loved; they are honored; all of life is a primary concern. There are no decisions to be made as to whether a person lives or dies, how old he is or whether he might be handicapped. There is no question about whether the unborn should be born; the elderly person's life is also valuable; and no one is ever a mistake.

The prophet Isaiah cautioned, "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker...I have made the earth and created man upon it" (Isaiah 45:9 & 12).

The time to teach children about God and creation is when they are little and have uncluttered minds. It is then they learn and most easily accept simple truths that have eternal values. It is in those moments that they learn how to live the rest of their lives. It is a proven fact that they learn more the first five years of their lives than at any other.

Because our relationship with a grandchild is often one of trust and reverence, grandparents can make indellible impressions. Maybe it doesn't occur with a fish like "Dirty Fish," but you'll know when the opportunity is there. Seize every possible moment. We don't know what their future holds but maybe a brief encounter with a fancy fish with a dirty face might be an example.

PARBC Youth Retreat & Talents for Christ

April 28-29, 2023

Calvary Baptist Church, Bloomsburg

Friday – April 28th

- 6:00 – 7:00 PM Registration (Church Lobby)
Groups arriving early may play in gym with sponsor's supervision & proper gym shoes
- 7:00 – 8:00 PM Rally Time – Pastor Nathan Bramlet (Church Auditorium)
- 8:00 – 8:30 PM Pizza and Pop (Fellowship Hall, Downstairs)
- 8:30 – 9:30 PM Bible Quizzing (Church Auditorium)
There are three pianos available for practice ONLY on Friday night
- 9:30 – 10:30 PM Girls staying in host homes leave
Game Time / Free Time (Gym)
- 11:30 PM Lights Out!

Saturday – April 29th

- 7:45 AM Registration (Church Lobby)
- 7:45 – 8:30 AM Breakfast for All (Fellowship Hall, Downstairs)
- 8:15 – 8:30 AM TFC Judges' Meeting (Church Auditorium)
- 8:30 – 8:50 AM Contestants' Meeting (Church Auditorium)
- 8:50 – 9:00 AM Sponsors' Meeting (Church Auditorium)
- 9:00 – 12:30 PM TFC Competition (Various rooms in church and school)
- 12:00 – 1:00 PM Lunch for All (Fellowship Hall, Downstairs) & Free Time
- 1:00 PM Final Bible Quiz Off - (Church Auditorium)
Rally Time with Pastor Nathan Bramlet
- 2:00 PM Award Ceremony (tentative time)

PARBC Council of Ten – 2022-2023

Chairman – Dr. Allen Harris – Hope Baptist Church Hanover
Vice Chair – Rev. Dan Hick -First Baptist Church of Ogden, Boothwyn
Secretary – Rev. Gary Smith – Faith Baptist Church, Bradford
Treasurer – Dr. Earl Shawley – Messiah Baptist Church, Kylertown
Rev. Nathan Bramlet – Grace Baptist Church, Kittanning
Dr. Charles Dear -Crescentville Baptist Church, Philadelphia
Rev. Jeff Howell – Calvary Baptist Church, Jersey Shore
Rev. Dave Maitland – First Baptist Church, Butler
Rev. Mark Strangman – Swissvale Baptist Church, Pittsburgh
Rev. Keith Williams – Marsh Creek Fellowship Baptist Church, Wellsboro



150th Anniversary

On Sunday, August 21, 2022, the Roseville Independent Baptist Church celebrated its 150th Anniversary. Pastor Paul Connor, State Representative for the Pennsylvania Association of Regular Baptist Churches, gave the celebration message with over 75 attendees present. Pastor Erich Brooks and his family provided special music.



Holiday Greeting

*It won't be long before we will be celebrating
 Thanksgiving, Christmas and the New Year.
 We would like to express our warmest wishes
 to all of you as we rejoice in our Savior Jesus Christ,*

*In Christ's love & grace,
 Paul & Judy Connor*