

THE NEW PORT REPORT

October, 2011

“Are there no foes for me to face? Must I not stem the flood? Is this vile world a friend to grace, to help me on to God?” (Isaac Watts, *Am I Soldier of the Cross*)

This place we live in has certainly not been a friend to grace lately. There have always been those taking punches at Christianity, hoping to land a knock-out blow, but lately it seems as if many consider that Christianity has already been laid out on the mat, never to get up again. Here are some of the examples in the last few weeks of what I mean.

Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN has told InterVarsity, the Christian Legal Society, and other Christian organizations, that they could lose their standing on the university and be barred from using any of its facilities if they do not comply with the university’s non-discrimination policies. What are the Christian organizations discriminating against? The university says they are discriminatory if they require their leaders to be Christians. The Christian Legal Society’s by-laws require leaders “to lead Bible studies, prayer and worship at chapter meetings.” Apparently, it’s o.k. to have Christian organizations as long as non-Christians have a chance to be its leaders. I wonder if the same policy is true with honor societies – are they required to give flunkies an opportunity to be their leaders, or are they being discriminatory against stupidity?

In San Juan Capistrano, CA, a couple has been fined \$300 (with more fines being threatened) for holding a Bible study in their home twice a week because as many as 50 people attend. I’m old enough to remember communist nations boasting about their freedom of religion – anyone was free to practice their religion as long as they acquired a government permit for gathering and worshipping. Of course, those permits were highly regulated and rarely given out by the government. Sometimes I wonder if that’s the freedom of religion we have here.

In Illinois, as of July, Catholic charities will no longer be able to provide adoption services because they do not place children in homes of unmarried or homosexual couples. I guess the state has decided that Christian morality is immoral.

In Bay Minette, AL, convicts have been offered a choice: prison or church. That’s right, thousands of detainees have been offered the chance to get out of jail if they attend church services for a year. I can hear the t.v. talk show comedians quipping, “Hmmm. Jail or church? Give me a minute, I’m thinking.” Fortunately state ACLU Executive Director Olivia Turner has challenged the idea, saying that when offenders must pick between prison or religious service, they do not have a true choice. I wonder what a true choice would be?

So many more examples abound, but these are just a few of the ones I’ve heard in the last couple of weeks. What’s a Christian to do when they live in a place where more and more people (and often their own government) have decided they are the enemy?

First off, don’t become your own enemy. As an example, while President Obama was speaking in California this week, an observer started shouting, “Jesus Christ is the son of God.” To which the President replied, “I agree.” But when the heckler wouldn’t stop shouting and was eventually carried off by security, he shouted back to the President, “You are the Antichrist.” I wonder what he hoped the President and the audience would do when told that, repent and become like *him*? As he was carried off, another person in the crowd shouted out, “Don’t forget the medical marijuana!” To which the President replied, “Thank you for that.”

In our protest to injustice and immorality, we must not offer just an adversary; we must offer a savior and a solution of truth and grace.

How do we do that? First, we live what we say we believe. When we say we have a solution to the pain of brokenness and sin in this world, do we really mean it? Do our lives show it? Unfortunately Christians say one thing and often live another. No one’s going to believe a solution that you don’t live out yourself.

We must offer humility and grace. Admit to the world that we blow it just like everyone else. And, therefore, we need more than morality, we need a gracious savior that forgives and restores.

We must pray for our leaders, pray for our enemies, pray for any who do not yet know the Savior. We're commanded to do it. Paul and Peter advocated it for the oppressive government of Rome and the immoral culture of the Greco-Roman world. Jesus stood at the edge of Jerusalem praying and weeping for those who rejected him and the life he offered. Do we simply demand our rights or do we pray for those who would take them away?

We must realize that the greatest issue is not the immorality of our culture, or the growing intolerance toward Christians; the greatest problem is that many do not know the Savior. We cannot tell people who are dead to live a certain way until they have been raised from the death of sin.

Finally, we must stand. Christians must present a savior, not just an adversary, to a dying world – but that doesn't mean that Christians fail to stand for what is right with gentleness and respect and firm resolve. It's the way that Jesus stood before Pilate. It's the way Paul stood in chains before King Agrippa (Acts 26), pleading not for his own freedom, but pleading that the King would be freed from sin through a Savior. It's the way Christians stand at the Life Chain: offering a stance on what is right and wrong, but also offering grace and mercy. It's the way a worker refuses to act unethically because they entrust themselves to their Savior more than their job.

Is your life a stand for the gracious Savior, or do you live as if the world is a friend? The world is not a friend to grace, but a victim of sin. Let us stand and offer the peace of a gracious Savior.

October Worship Notes

Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:31)

Worship on Sunday is greatly enhanced by personal worship throughout the week. This is especially true as we work our way through the challenging words of 1 Corinthians. Eating one meal a week makes the body weak; eating one spiritual meal a week makes the spirit weak.

Remember, as an aid in preparing for worship, each week's bulletin is posted on the church's website (www.newportpca.org) by Thursday or Friday. Audio files of past sermons and the current monthly newsletter are also available there.

| Scripture | Sermon Series: <i>1 Corinthians</i> | Date |
|------------------------|---|-------------|
| 1 Corinthians 1:10-17 | <i>Called to Unity in Following Christ Jesus</i> | Oct 2 |
| 1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5 | <i>Foolishness is a Virtue in Christ Jesus</i> | Oct 9 |
| 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 | <i>God's Wisdom is Not Natural (Lord's Supper)</i> | Oct 16 |
| 1 Corinthians 3:1-23 | <i>How to Build a Church</i> | Oct 23 |
| 1 Corinthians 4:1-7 | <i>Servants of God: Stewards to be Judged by God</i> | Oct 30 |
| 1 Corinthians 4:8-21 | <i>Servants of God: Scum to be Imitated by God's Children</i> | Nov 6 |

New Port Shepherding Folds

As mentioned in last month's newsletter, the elders would like to be more intentional about shepherding the members and regular attenders at our church. We'd like to make sure each person is contacted by an elder once a month so that we might be better aware of the things happening in your lives, and so you might know us a little better too.

In order to do that, we've divided the members up into three groups. You should be hearing from your elder soon. Feel free to contact them yourself if you have any questions or would like us to understand how we might minister to you and your family.

Allgaier, John

Barrett, Jim (Deacon)
Barrett, Louis (Deacon)
Barklage, Bert
Allen, Karen
Allen, Kasia
Allen, Sophia
Amburgy, Mimi
Barrett, William
Blaylock, Andrew
Breithaupt, Dan
Brinker, Tiffany
Gordon, Kim
Kackley, Dave
Koirtyohann, Jean
Reed, Dennis
Shearman, Tom
Dixon, Ross (Missions)
Robertson, Steve (Missions)

Allyn, Rob

Galbraith, Bob (Deacon)
Allen, Madeleine
Stackhouse, Larry
Barrett, Ben
Barrett, Suzanne
Brockmann, Stephanie
Galbraith, Gavin
Galbraith, Katie
Gieseke, Jennifer
Klott, James
Modglin, Asile
Pratt, Heather
Ruether, Kevin
Johnson, Gary (Missions)
Leander, David (Missions)

Schmidt, Rich

Brockmann, Dave (Deacon)
Anderson, Violet
Barrett, Gary
Barrett, Dean
Barrett, Matt
Borcherding, Erna
Coulter, Mike
Forsythe, Hugh
Gillette, Barry
Goggan, James
Humphrey, Janet
Kuhlmann, Tom
Scheer, Charlie
Herrera, Tim (Missions)
Rug, John (Missions)

**Ladies'
Bible Study**



The ladies of New Port would like to invite all the women of the church to join us for our monthly Bible Study. We will meet on **Wednesday, October 19th, at 7:00 p.m.** here at the church. We will be studying a book titled "**Tyranny of the Urgent.**" Don't let the title scare you.

This book explains why our greatest danger is letting the urgent tasks crowd out those that are important. We realize that we've become slaves to demands that devour our time and energy. Please contact Joan for a book so that you can join us for this study. Melodie Allgaier will be our hostess for the evening.

**Fall into Fun at the
Fall Family Night!!**

Pull out your favorite chili or pot luck recipe, and bring a lawn chair for a seat to watch the fun unfold and enjoy the fire! On November 12th, we will have loads of fun for kids of all ages with a bounce house, a puppet show, fun fall games and prizes—including apple bobbing, potato sack races, a chili cook off, washers, bonfire and s'mores, and MORE! Bring friends, and we'll invite Good News Club and other friends, too!

Operation Christmas Child

**THE POWER OF
A Simple Gift**

We are going to collect items for *Operation Christmas Child* again this year.

Please bring items for the shoe boxes (small toys and other gifts that can open hurting children's hearts to God's love) by November 6 so that we can fill and label the boxes for the collection week which is November 14-21.

A Little Humor

After attending their first wedding, one small boy asked his slightly older brother, "How many women can a man marry?"

Barely hesitating, his brother answered, "Sixteen."

Amazed, his little brother asked, "How do you know that?"

"Easy," he said. "All you have to do is add it up like the preacher said – 4 better, 4 worse, 4 richer, 4 poorer."



New Port Presbyterian Church
2745 New Port Road
Washington, MO 63090

- 2 Life chain, 2:30 p.m.
- 4 Good News Club at Campbellton, 2:40 p.m.
- 9 Worship at New Haven Care Center, 2:30 p.m.
- 11 Good News Club at Campbellton, 2:40 p.m.
- 16 Lord's Supper at Morning Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 18 Good News Club at Campbellton, 2:40 p.m.
- 19 Women's Monthly Study, 7:00 p.m.
- 25 Good News Club at Campbellton, 2:40 p.m.
- 27 Session Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

November 1 Good News Club at Campbellton, 2:40 p.m.

November 5 Men's Prayer Breakfast, 8:00 a.m.

October Calendar

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- 1 Kevin Ruether
- 2 Gavin Galbraith
- 4 Jane Arnold
- 6 Dara Steinhoff
- 7 Heather Pratt
- 12 Karen Scheer

- 12 Todd Schmidt
- 18 Suzanne Barrett
- 19 Kim Coulter
- 21 Brock Steinhoff
- 22 Kathy Brockmann
- 23 Sarah Barrett
- 24 Alex Kackley
- 28 Cindy Rust
- 29 Terry Anderson