

April 2008 Newsletter

Fellowship Presbyterian Church

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“Reflection”

by Martin H. Martin



Have you ever had something that you knew you needed to get done but didn't know where to start? I confess that I was that way about this newsletter article when I awoke early this morning; but as I ran with a friend in the early morning darkness, the answer popped up right in front of me! It was the moon, beaming at nearly full phase, so bright you could read by its light, hovering just above the trees in front of me.

Have you ever noticed how bright the moon can be? We spend so much of our time inside, or surrounded by an overabundance of artificial illumination, that we feel little need of or appreciation for the moon. But how can it be so bright? The moon is essentially a big round hunk of rock that produces no light, so how does it supply us with “moonbeams”?

The answer, of course, is that it is merely reflecting the light of the sun. And, from our vantage point, the moon becomes brighter the more fully it faces and reflects the light of the sun. In other words, the moon is a giant reflector which is dependant on a source outside itself to make it “shine”. The brightest moon is the one which is exposed to and reflects back the greatest amount of light from the sun. That is exactly the way it is with us and Christ. The more we are looking toward Christ, the more we meditate upon His character and work, the more we will reflect His glory back toward others.

So do you want to be radiant? Do you want to be glorious? We all have a God-given, sin-perverted desire for significance, accomplishment and influence. The problem is that we seek it by trying to accomplish things, influence others and be affirmed as important in *our* strength and for *our* sake. The sad irony is that we will never find what we are looking for in ourselves, we will find it only in Christ; and we will never build anything more than a house of cards when our focus is on exalting ourselves. Do you want to be important? Do you want to make a difference? Do you want to be of any earthly use at all? Then think about the following:

You and I need to begin by being exposed to as much “Sonlight” as possible. How much do you contemplate the finished work of

Christ on the cross, its significance in your life and how He continues to work in you now? You might be thinking, “Now he’s just talking about the gospel again.” That’s true, and it’s also necessary because the gospel of Christ is the bedrock to lives that are increasingly transformed and glorious.

Christ’s cross will always keep you humble because it will always remind you what you did, what you were like and what it cost. We have an innate ability to develop a pretty high opinion of ourselves, even to becoming indignant with those who don’t affirm our high self-esteem! Christ’s cross constantly knocks that stool out from under us and tells us again that we are nothing more than beggars who can tell other beggars where we were given what we didn’t deserve.

Christ’s cross also delivers us from despair. Are you ever weighed down by guilt? Do you cringe when you remember those things that you haven’t talked about for a decade? When you remember the way you used to think and behave? Those struggles that still go on in your mind? And when you are being really honest, you realize that they reveal something fundamentally wrong, even *wicked*, about *you*. Christ’s cross reminds you that He died for all of that – the hatred, the perversion, the deception, the self-indulgent waste of life and opportunities. And the gospel says to you that Christ didn’t just die so that you would avoid hell *one day*, Christ died to make you a new creature and to deliver you from sin’s bondage *now*. We are worse than we know, but Christ has covered us in a righteousness we will never fully comprehend.

Now, having looked and continually looking to Christ, we need to reflect Him back to others. We often reflect on the “heroes” of the Christian faith and imagine ourselves, or aspire to be, “warriors” for Christ; but that is not where the Christian should start. You and I need to start by demonstrating the humility of Christ. We need to humble ourselves in the way that we love one another, in the way that we respond to the criticism of non-Christians, in the way that we forego our own advancement so that others might be advanced and built up in Christ. We need to reflect the genuine kindness of Christ in serving the needs of those who don’t appreciate us, look down on us and would take advantage of us if they could. We need to exasperate others not because we are prevailing over them, but because we look like Christ even while they are prevailing over us.

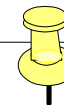
So how are you working as a mirror? As we look to Christ, I pray He will continue to turn us toward Himself, clean off more and more of the remaining grime and smudges, so that we reflect and delight more and more in His glory!

~Pastor Marty



MEN’S PRAYER BREAKFAST:

Saturday, April 5th, 7:00—9:00 AM



Church Notes:

The sacrament of the Lord’s Supper will be celebrated Sunday, April 6th, during morning worship.

FROM THE DIACONATE: for everyone’s safety and the security of our facilities, please keep all exterior classroom doors shut/ locked at all times (except in case of an emergency), enter/ exit the building through the front or side doors only, and please **do not prop open/ block the side door.** ~Thank you for your cooperation!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE—SUPPER & ACTIVITIES:

5:30 PM: Supper (catered meal cost: \$3.50/adult, \$2.50/child, \$10 max/family)

4/02: Lasagna, salad, French bread, tea & cheesecake with cherries

4/09: Fried chicken, macaroni & cheese, green peas, rolls, tea & strawberry shortcake

4/16: Hawaiian chicken, brown & wild rice, broccoli casserole, rolls, tea & red velvet cake

4/23: Beef tips in gravy, rice, green beans, rolls, tea & apple pie

4/30: Ham, scalloped potatoes, corn, rolls, tea & strawberry shortcake

6:30 PM: Devotional & Prayer Time (adults); Catechism (children grades k-4 thru 6th)

CATECHISM TEACHERS:

4/02: Dave & Jane Lesley

4/09: Marty & Celanie Martin

4/16: Jeff & Susan Wayne; John Way

4/23: Andy & Sara Wortman

4/30: Pamela Farmer & Carolyn Root

SUPPER CLEAN-UP:

4/02: Annette Stubbs & Carolyn Root

4/09: Terry & Wendy Richards

4/16: Marty & Celanie Martin

4/23: Terry & Wendy Richards

4/30: Annette Stubbs & Carolyn Root

A Session meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 8th, at 7:00 PM.



Ladies’ Bible Studies:



The Ladies’ Tuesday Morning Precepts Bible Study (an inductive study of 1 Peter) meets Tuesdays, from 9:30-11:30 A.M. at the church; nursery is available. Please contact, Wendy Richards (877-3267 or 399-9276) for more information.

The Ladies’ Thursday Evening Bible Study, “Walking with God-Learning Discipleship in the Psalms”, meets Thursdays, 7:00 P.M., at the Wilders; contact Barbara Wilder (848-6434 or bwilder220@bellsouth.net) for more information.

The April edition of TABLETALK is available (free of charge) to all members and visitors; pick up your copy (in the narthex) today!



MAY NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS FRIDAY, APRIL 18th.

SERVING IN APRIL:

Elder of the Month: Jeff Wayne 967-8434

Deacon of the Month: Sam Stubbs 968-9555

Greeters of the Month: Edith Shelley

Ushers: Troy High & Bill Wilder.

Family and Youth Corner: “Family, a God-given Gift”

What is your hobby? What is the thing that you cherish so much that you can't get enough of it? Is it sci-fi movies? Gardening? Is it reading John Grisham novels? Memorizing Baseball stats? Messing around with Google Earth? There are some things that we just love and would get as much time with as we could.

Family is one of the greatest gifts God has given us. It is part of our education; it is part of our nourishment and preparation for life; indeed family is a school of God for life and godliness. Do you cherish your family? Do you seek to spend time with your spouse and children? Or is family time a necessary evil?

One way in which you have come to love your hobbies was by spending time with them, looking into the fruitful aspects and pleasant things associated with them. The more we seek to cherish our family the more we will indeed cherish it. We can learn to appreciate the interests of one another, sharing before our God the wonders of His creation and providence. We can learn to grow in grace in our relationships, by teaching and being taught by our family. We can experience in a small scale what it is that God has reserved for us in heaven. Make your family one of your hobbies, cherish it, spend time with it, invest your life in your family.

~Emilio



Sunday Evening Picnic Supper (with the Buckners!)

Sunday, April 27th

We look forward to having our missionaries from Hong Kong, James & Bonnie Buckner, with us **Sunday evening, April 27th**, following evening worship, we will have a

Fellowship Picnic Supper (with the Buckners)!

Menu: hotdogs, sides, lemonade & sundaes!!

(hotdogs, buns, condiments & lemonade will be supplied by the church)

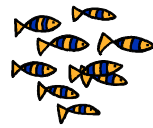
Please sign-up to bring: a side dish

(baked beans, potato or pasta salad, fruit or veggie tray, etc.)

or your favorite sundae topping!

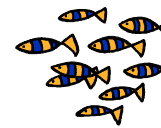


Sign-up sheet is in the narthex; thank you!



MISSIONARY MISSIVE Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

by Carolyn Root



The faculty, administration, and student body of Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary (GPTS) are thankful to have moved into their new facilities at 200 East Main Street, Taylors, SC. A dedication service was held Monday evening, March 10, with tours before and after the service and a reception afterwards. In conjunction with the dedication, GPTS held its annual Spring Theology Conference March 11-13 at Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church, entitled “A Reformed View of End Times.” This doctrine of the return of Christ and the reality of heaven was given to motivate and comfort us.

Affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), GPTS was founded in 1987 with five students meeting at Augusta Road Presbyterian Church. In 1998, shortly after Dr. Pipa became its first president, the seminary moved to an 11,000-SF church building in Taylors. As the seminary grew, space became cramped and the facilities did not meet the federal guidelines stated in the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Therefore, the seminary recently acquired part of the old Taylors Elementary School. This building had been rebuilt in 1945 after the original structure burned, but was vacated when the school closed in the early 1980s. The seminary acquired the main building that faces Main Street. The other two buildings were acquired by the Academy of the Arts, directed by Dr. Nicky Chavers, who graciously allowed the seminary to use their auditorium for the dedication service.

Taylors Elementary School had three classrooms, each at least twice as large as those at the previous building. A new media room was added, with audiovisual materials including 10,000 audiotapes of sermons and lectures from the Mt. Olive Tape Library in Mississippi. The new library was named the Smith-Singer Library in honor of seminary founders Morton H. Smith and C. Gregg Singer. The new facility has the latest wireless technology, which allows real-time video conferencing for classes.

In addition to cash and stock gifts for the Capital Funds Campaign, several friends of the seminary provided gifts “in kind.” For example, one who owns a window business produced and installed new windows at cost. Another brought a crew of ten to spend a week cleaning the brickwork for the new building. Those two donations alone shaved over \$55,000 off the bottom line. Volunteers also donated many hours moving all the library books and shelving them. If you would like to help this outreach ministry, here is their contact information:

Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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