

The Messenger of Mountain Bible Church

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Sunday Morning Services at Mountain Bible Church: 8:30 and 10:30

Children's Programs are available at the same times.

Infant care (0-2 years) is available in the nursery

Senior Pastor: Dr. Marvin D. Slifer

Children's Ministries Director: Lori Henry

Youth Ministries Director: Christy Boyd

Human Resource Director: Christy Boyd

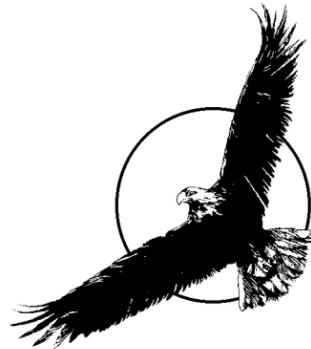
Trustees for 2015: Bruce Crespo, Andy Eloff, Robert Garcia, Paul Hughes, David Lange, Paul Smith, and Ed Weston

Elders for 2015: Dennis Collins, Sam Conklin, Ed Dunlap, Darrin Mason, Andy McCain and Andy Ohmit

The Messenger is published monthly. All submissions to *The Messenger* are due the twentieth (20th) of each month. We would like contributions of news articles, photos and other information from the Youth Group, Men's and Ladies Bible Studies, Missions Team, Let's Eat Cafe, Energizers and Praise Team. Please remember to put your name on the article so we can give proper credit.

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The Messenger



MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

Volume 29 Issue 6

June 2016

O Sin That I Love by David Woodworth

People fall in love all the time. When we love someone or something, we pour our mind and emotions into the object of our love. That focus will often set the trajectory of our lives. It's the object of our love that will impact our lives. Love was originally directed to the celestial realm not the terrestrial. Love today seems to be flipped around.

Let me explain. I have a defective love indicator. It focuses on things that provide only short-term satisfaction, when in reality I am looking for something more lasting.

A personal illustration may help. I have a boat that was made in 1909. It's equipped with a 1909 engine. I saved for it. I have people working on it. I want this boat to be correct for 1909. As I do all of this I dream of good times and happiness the boat will provide when it's restored. I imagine people complimenting me on having such a fine boat. I see myself basking in the admiration of other boaters. The boat to my amazement turns out to be relatively unim-

portant. It's only a means to bring some form of gratification. I did not realize that when I bought the boat. It turns out it's not the boat I want; it's the admiration, pleasure and contentment that are byproducts of the boat. I want the boat to deliver more than it can. Alas my desires are bigger and more complex than the boat. You of course will have no difficulty in seeing how silly my expectations were.

My misplaced love in an object has the same result when focusing on a person, event or status; they will never be able (over the longterm) provide what a person is seeking. They are incapable for they are

less than we desire. You and I know people who live their entire lives with their love out of focus, and never realize it. They've attached themselves to things that can never provide what they are hoping for. Some people fail to see it is not objects, status or even relationships, they desire, but

something else. While people are pursuing these kinds of things they play mental games with themselves. It goes something like this. This time I came up empty, but next time it will be different, and move on to a new attachment for their love. To follow that road is an elusive dream. I want to point out that material objects like a new car, boat, home or even non-material things like celebrity status have no lasting value. They provide us with an illusion of satisfaction and temporary enjoyment only. I want you, the reader to see that mis-directed love cannot provide true contentment. The boat illustration I hope represents this. The accolades, admiration, and attention bring only temporary contentment and that will soon fade. It should be clear by now that I want more than the boat can, or will provide. What I crave is a by-product of the boat, not the boat itself.

As a result I find myself empty when my life is full of things.

The person who is pulled into an affair, more than likely wants to feel important, valued and taken seriously so they feel loved. It is rarely sex that is the attraction. As time passes this



O Sin That I Love cont.

relationship too changes from excitement to just a relationship. In the same way this happens to the person who purchases an object with expectation it will bring them pleasure and happiness. In both cases these activities will fill a need for a while, but as time passes both will fade in importance. Like the young woman who wanted to be married and prayed "Oh God if I could only have him." After years of marriage, she was heard saying "Oh God I have him". Life is like that.

We are on a search for happiness and fulfillment and too often we don't find it. Why? Let me try to answer that.

Over the years I have picked up some insights that may have escaped some religious and nonreligious alike. These insights came from Augustine, a Roman citizen and religious philosopher who lived in the 3rd and 4th centuries. He makes the point that anything that diverts our attention or love from God is sin. Now don't freak out; just keep reading. The word, "sin" has a simple definition; it means "miss the mark". The next question is more difficult.

What is the mark that people miss?

This is an impossible question for culture to answer.

You will receive as many answers as people you talk to. This is because we live in a period of history when people view right and wrong and truth as they would view ice cream. If you like chocolate, someone else likes vanilla and a third craves strawberry who can say you are wrong for liking the flavor you choose. This kind of judgment is not a problem if you stay with ice cream, but our culture has allowed this reasoning to spill over to issues other than ice cream. No doubt you have heard someone say "Well that may be all right for you." With that kind of reasoning everything will be personal preference and there will no longer exist right and wrong or truth.

Contrary to culture the Bible speaks with a clear voice. This is one place where knowledgeable Jews who study the Torah and Christians who study the Bible agree.

The "mark" according to both is set forth in Devarim or (Deuteronomy 6:4 in the Christian Bible). Restated by Jesus in Mark 12:29: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength." That is the mark. To love God. If we fail to love God we miss the

mark. Turning back to Augustine, he summarizes the problem as, "We love wrongly". The love part of our lives is out of order; it's broken. We attach our love to things or positions which can never bring about satisfaction. In other words we have a damaged love indicator. This love indicator is all the time fixing itself to the wrong objects. That's my problem with the boat. I focused on something that could not provide what I was looking for. I never realized that sin was anything that came before God. For years I thought of sin as something bad you did, like murder, and I had no buried bodies in my backyard. I had taken my views of sin from culture, and not the Bible. I assumed everyone understood what sin was; turns out I was wrong. It does not have to be something "bad" as most people in my culture think. It has to do with misplaced love, and my love indicator led me in the wrong direction. I have for most of my life replaced God with something of lesser importance. So the focus of my life was sin (I missed the mark of loving God). I loved the wrong things. Don't get me wrong; everybody loves love. So I want to make it very clear, love is good and a noble part of everyday life, but it is only beneficial if the correct object is its focus. How did

things become so confused? The Torah and Bible gives us some help at this point. Originally God and man lived in perfect harmony. Then man turned from God to pursue a life of independence from God. Ever since that time man has tried to attach to something other than God to find fulfillment, like loving things, status or people which will never bring fulfillment to life. God designed us to have our completeness in loving Him. Love or desire needs to attach to the creator. He will provide for our mental and emotional needs. To attach to anything else will end in frustration and ultimate failure in finding the fulfillment we want. For nothing else is eternal but God. "The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind and with all your strength." A personal note: I'm becoming aware that in life, God and things need to be in proper order for individuals to have the significance they long for!

If you have suggestions or I can be of help, please email

modelttours@gmail.com

David

(David has been in ministry for over 50 years and a college friend of Pastor Marvin)

Recently in Traffic Court, a man who received an expensive parking ticket testified that a uniformed Policeman had given his OK for the man to park there. The Judge asked the man if he would recognize the Officer if he ever saw him again, and the man replied that he would. The Judge then said, "Good. When you see the Officer again, tell him he owes you 57 dollars. Next..."

Looking to get involved? Join Us



Family, friends, bandmates and peers attended Merle Haggard's private funeral on Saturday, April 9th, with many paying tribute to the late legend through song. Jim Phillips attended and gave tribute through his gift of music.



For Help and Answers

Call the church office-----822-7541
Crisis Prayer requests-----Call Carol, 822-5479
Change address or phone-----822-7541
Doctrinal questions-----822-7541
Wedding questions-----822-7541

Hospital visits-----822-7541
Counseling Information-----822-7541
Child dedication Service-----822-7541
Student Ministries (Junior High to College)-----822-7541
Membership/Baptism-----822-7541

What's Good Tonight

Our family-owned restaurant is the setting for many of our discussions about how to handle the customer who asks, "What's good tonight?" Obviously, we would never serve anything we didn't think was good. I braced myself one Saturday night when I heard the dreaded question posed to my husband. He calmly replied, "Anything over \$17.95."

Remembering Our Military

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in service of the United States of America. Over two dozen cities and towns claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day. While Waterloo N.Y. was officially declared the birthplace of Memorial Day by President Lyndon Johnson in May 1966, it's difficult to prove conclusively the origins of the day. Regardless of the exact date or location of its origins, one thing is clear – Memorial Day was borne out of the Civil War and a desire to honor our dead. It was officially proclaimed on 5 May 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11. "The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the pur-

pose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village and hamlet churchyard in the land," he proclaimed. The date of Decoration Day, as he called it, was chosen because it wasn't the anniversary of any particular battle. The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war).

Honoring our Fathers

Fathers are the biggest source of strength for a child. The innocent eyes of a child perceive father as the all-powerful, most knowledgeable, truly affectionate and the most important person in the family. For daughters, fathers are the first men they adore and fall in love with. While for sons their fathers are the strongest person they know and someone they aspire to emulate. Even for the grownups fathers are someone whom they look up to for the most experienced and honest advice that is always in the best of our interest. For this great figure in our life that we know as father - it becomes our utmost duty to pay our humblest tribute on the occasion of Father's Day.

When fathers are first and foremost dedicated and devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ they will be to their children what they should be. What greater gift could a father give?

Thank you Christy!

Christy Boyd is resigning from the staff of Mountain Bible Church June 1, 2016. It's the end of a bravura era. She directed our Youth Ministries and our H R operations. Lately she has shared secretarial duties with Becky Mason.

Christy has honored MBC with over 10 years of serving on our staff. We feel a DEEP sense of loss!

We are also excited at what the future holds for Christy and the Boyd family.

God has set more than one "Open door" in front of Brent and Christy so they are waiting for clear directions from God as to their next move.

Christy says their summer is already so full she felt it best to step down now. She still plans be involved in the Youth Camp and our summer VBS: 6/27 – 7/1.

Please keep the Boyd family in your prayers!

To Brent, Christy, Brooke, JT and Andrew; we send our love and appreciation with each one of you.

We pray God's blessings upon you continually!

THANK YOU thank you thank you; Christy and family!

Evaluate Your Life

How the Commandments Set Us Free

Occasionally, it's important to step back from our lives and evaluate whether or not God is our true hub. Is He really first-not in the sense that there are other things on our list but in the sense that He's the center of our existence? Someone made an acrostic out of the word "first" that might help us evaluate our own lives according to the first commandment: "You shall have no other gods before me" (Ex 20:3).

Focus. What is your focus? What are you thinking about? What are you watching? What are you listening to? In Colossians Paul says to "set your minds on things above, not on earthly things" (Col 3:2).

Income. How do you spend your money? We tend to pour our dollars into things that are meaningful to us. Jesus put it this way: "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matt 6:21). If someone were to evaluate what's important to

you based on your check-book register or your online bank statement, what would that person conclude?

Relationships. Who influences your life? Who is in your inner circle? Who do you go to when you need some counsel? Perhaps an even better question: Who are you trying to please? Or this: Who are you trying to impress?

Spiritual Food. Describe your spiritual diet. What place does the Word of God really have in your life? Are you regularly feasting on God's Word? The apostle Peter said, "Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk" (1 Peter 2:2).

Time. How do you spend your time? We all need time for relationships, for work, and for play. It's amazing, though, how many hours we can spend doing things that really aren't that necessary or important. Then, when it comes to the things of God, we say, "I don't have time for that." Scripture says, "Be very careful, then, how you live-not as unwise but as

wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:15-16).

When I ask myself these questions, I quickly realize how often I fall short. Here's my prescription: Simply run to Jesus. Instead of feeling guilty and burdened by your sin, confess your sin and remember God's promise in Romans 8:1: "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

But don't stop there. Take the next step and ask God to help you make some changes. If you know Christ, then the Holy Spirit lives within you, and the Holy Spirit doesn't just convict you from the outside, He also helps and empower you from the inside, Remember, the Ten Commandments are meant to enrich you, not to enslave you. You can yield to the Holy Spirit and begin to make God your only God. That's the path to true freedom.

Article taken from "Our Daily Bread Ministries"

The End is Nearer Than You Thought

A priest and a pastor are standing by the side of a road holding up a sign that reads "The end is near! Turn around now before it's too late!" A passing driver yells, "You guys are nuts!" and speeds past them. From around the curve, they hear screeching tires—then a big splash. The priest turns to the pastor and says, "Do you think we should just put up a sign that says 'Bridge Out' instead?"

VBS IS COMING!!

June 27 - July 1



Early Church History by Jerry Henry

The Apostolic Fathers (Part 1)

Clement of Rome (1st Century Unknown – 99)

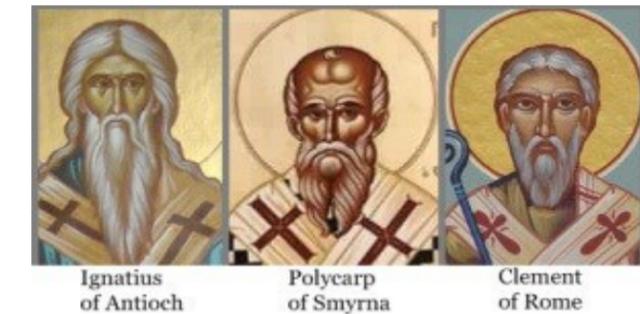
Saint Clement of Rome, is listed by Irenaeus and Tertullian as Bishop of Rome, holding office from 92 to his death in 99. He is considered to be the first Apostolic Father of the Church. Few details are known about Clement's life. According to Tertullian, Clement is known to have been a leading member of the church in Rome in the late 1st century. Early church lists place him as the second or third bishop of Rome after the Apostle Peter.

Clement is known for his epistle to the church in Corinth (c. 96), in which he asserts the apostolic authority of the bishops/presbyters as rulers of the church. The epistle mentions episkopoi (overseers, bishops) or presbyteroi (elders, presbyters) as the upper class of minister, served by the deacons. In the epistle,

Clement uses the terms bishop and presbyter interchangeably for the higher order of ministers above deacons. Clement's only existing, genuine text is a letter to the Christian congregation in Corinth, often called the First Epistle of Clement or 1 Clement. It is considered the earliest authentic Christian document outside of the **New Testament**. Clement writes to the troubled congregation in Corinth, where certain "presbyters" or "bishops" have been deposed (the class of clergy above that of deacons is designated indifferently by the two terms). Clement calls for repentance and reinstatement of those who have been deposed, in line with maintenance of order and obedience to church authority, since the apostles established the ministry of "bishops and deacons." He mentions "offering the gifts" (a reference to the Eucharist) as one of the functions of the higher class of clergy.

The epistle offers valuable insight into Church ministry at that time and into the history of the Roman Church. It was highly regarded, and was read in church at Corinth along with the Scriptures.

According to apocryphal book, **acta** dating to the 4th century at earliest, Clement was banished from Rome to the Chersonesus (The ancient city is located on the shore of the Black Sea at the outskirts of Sevastopol on the Crimean Peninsula) during the reign of the



Emperor Trajan and was set to work in a stone quarry. Finding on his arrival that the prisoners were suffering from lack of water, he knelt down in prayer. Looking up, he saw a lamb on a hill, went to where the lamb had

stood and struck the ground with his pickaxe, releasing a gushing stream of clear water. This miracle resulted in the conversion of large numbers of the local pagans and his fellow prisoners to Christianity. As punishment, Saint Clement was martyred by being tied to an anchor and thrown from a boat into the Black Sea.

Ignatius of Antioch (AD 50- 108)

Known as Ignatius Theophorus ("the God-bearing"), he was a

student of the Apostle, John and was the third bishop of Antioch. En route to Rome, where according to Christian tradition he met his martyrdom by being fed to wild beasts, he wrote a series of let-

Cont.

ters, which have been preserved as an example of very early Christian theology. Important topics addressed in these letters include ecclesiology, the sacraments, and the role of bishops. Ignatius converted to Christianity at a young age. Later in his life he was chosen to serve as a Bishop of Antioch, succeeding the Apostle Peter and St. Evodius (who died around AD 67). The 4th-century Church historian Eusebius records that Ignatius succeeded Evodius. Theodoret of Cyrrhus reported that the Apostle Peter himself appointed Ignatius to the episcopal see of Antioch. Ignatius is one of the five Apostolic Fathers (the earliest authoritative group of the Church Fathers). He based his authority on being a bishop of the Church, living his life in the imitation of Christ. It is believed that Ignatius, along

with his friend Polycarp, were disciples of the Apostle John. Accused by the emperor himself of violating the imperial edict to worship the emperor, and of inciting others to like transgressions, Ignatius bore witness to the faith of Christ. If we may believe the account given in the "**Martyrium**" (early Christian mausoleum for a martyr), his bearing before Trajan was characterized by inspired eloquence, sublime courage, and even a spirit of exultation. Incapable of appreciating the motives that animated him, the emperor ordered him to be put in chains and taken to Rome. Along the route he wrote six letters to the churches in the region and one to a fellow bishop. He was sentenced to die at the Coliseum in the 11th year of Trajan's reign; i.e., AD 108 and was martyred by wild beasts. After Ignatius' martyrdom in

the Coliseum his remains were carried back to Antioch by his companions and were interred outside the city gates. In 637 AD the relics were transferred to the Basilica di San Clemente in Rome. **Polycarp** (AD 69 – 155) Polycarp is regarded as a saint and Church Father in the Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Lutheran churches. It is recorded by Irenaeus, who heard him speak in his youth, and by Tertullian, that he had been a disciple of the Apostle John. Jerome wrote that Polycarp was a disciple of the Apostle John and that John had ordained him bishop of Smyrna. With Clement of Rome and Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp is regarded as one of three chief Apostolic Fathers. The sole surviving work attributed to his authorship is his *Letter to the Philippians* and it is first recorded by Irenaeus. The following is the story, from around 160 AD, of the martyrdom

of Polycarp, the Bishop of the church in Smyrna, a city in Asia Minor (modern Izmir in Turkey) that was devoted to Roman worship. The account is in the form of a letter from eyewitnesses to other churches in the area. It is the earliest chronicle of martyrdom outside the New Testament. Polycarp was an old man, at least 86, and probably the last surviving person to have known an apostle, having been a disciple of the Apostle John. This was one reason he was greatly revered as a teacher and church leader. One interesting feature of the letter is that the writer is very conscious of how Polycarp's death followed the pattern of Christ's. As you read it, look for parallels between this story and the Easter story in the gospels.