Assurance in Troubles Times
John 16:33

Introduction:
A. Life is filled with an ever changing parade of opinions and, activities.
B. Products are new and improved.
C. Services are innovative.
D. Movies are instant hits.
E. No matter how new and improved the world may appear nothing satisfies.
F. Subscribing to this philosophy only leaves one standing alone in quicksand when trouble comes our way.
G. Our hope lies in trusting in God and relying upon the promises of His Word.
H. Here are four reasons why this is true.

I. The Holy Spirit is An Abiding Presence with Each Believer.
   A. In his presence there is intimacy. Psalm 139:7
   B. In his presence there is constancy. John 4:14
   C. In his presence there is sovereignty. I Cor 3:16
   D. In his presence there is freedom from the power of sin.
   E. In his presence there is communication with the Father. Zechariah 12:10

II. The Holy Spirit is The Guiding Hope of Each Believer.
   A. He is with us eternally. I John 3:24

B. He is the light that shows us the right way. Isaiah 30:21
C. He is the wisdom of every right decision. Isaiah 42:16
D. He is the sustaining strength in life's trials. II Cor 12:9
E. He helps our memory recall God's Word.

III. The Holy Spirit is the Educator of Each Believer.
   A. He gives us operating knowledge to serve God correctly. II Corinthians 4:6
   B. He gives us humbling knowledge that encourages confession of sin. I Corinthians 8:1
   C. He gives us sin despising knowledge to expose the deception of sin. Philippians 3:8
   D. He gives us transforming knowledge that teaches how to live Christ like. Titus 2:12
   E. What the Spirit writes in the heart remains. I John 2:27

IV. The Holy Spirit is God's Guarantee of Salvation.
   A. God's promise of salvation is offered to anyone who believes Romans 10:9, 10
   B. Following salvation every believer is given the seal of God's Holy Spirit. Ephesians 1:12, 14
   C. The Holy Spirit is the promise ('earnest') of God's eternal promise.
D. In addition believers are made heirs and joint heirs with Christ. Romans 8:17
E. Jesus alone has the power to keep and establish us. Romans 16:25

Pastor Carl E. Fitzgerald -
Grace Missionary Baptist Church

More to Life
Matthew 6:25-34

Introduction

1. Life - The property or quality that distinguishes living organisms from dead organisms and inanimate matter, manifested in functions such as metabolism, growth, response to stimuli and reproduction.
2. Living organisms collectively (plant and marine life)
3. A living being - a person
4. Physical, mental and spiritual experiences that constitute a person existence
5. An interval of time between birth and death
6. A Spiritual state regarded as the transcending of death.

I. What is your life? (James 4:13-16)

A. Employment - To some their life is their job. We should enjoy our work - God has commanded us to work. Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden "to dress it, and to keep it". (Gen.2:15) After the fall work was made much harder (Gen.3:19). Labor is commanded by God to Israel. (Ex.20:9) "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work. Man should work from morning until night." (Ps.104:23) with the hands (I Thess.4:11) and (Eccl.9:10) God hates laziness because it: 1
1. Leads to waste - (Prov.18:9) 1
2. Leads to want (Prov.6:9-11)
God commands if a man will not work - neither should he eat. If that man is physically able. - (II Thess.3:10) For the Christian work should be a means to glorify the Lord Jesus ⋅⋅⋅(Eph.6:5-7) (Col.3:22-23) I

B. Involvement with family and friends. Husbands are to love their wives, and wives are to honor and love their husbands. (Eph.5:22-33) Children and parents are to love each other. (Eph.6:1-3) and (Col.3:20-21). We must love God above all others - (Matt.22:36-37) (Lk.14:26) (Matt.10:34-39) To hate, in one sense means "love less" Love God all the way that he has loved us.

C. Entertainment - We are a pleasure - mad society - men are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God" (II Tim.3:4) - Dr. A.W. Tozer said "America is laughing her way to Hell" Our philosophy today is eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die. (Isa.22:138) Our bellies have become our Gods and we mind earthly things. We live as if there were NO GOD, NO HEAVEN OR NO HELL. (PHIL.3: 19) WE ARE TO LIVE AS THE STEWARDS OF GOD IN THIS WORLD (Cor.4:2) We are to have our affection set on things above. (Col.3:1-3) (Matt.6:33).

II. Who are you serving with your life? (v.24)
You will serve someone. You can't be neutral. (Matt.12:30)

A. GOD He is light (I john 1:5) He is Love (I John 4:8) His Spirit brings true liberty - (II Cor.3:17) We should love Him because He first loved us.

B. Mammon - "Wealth" It means life goals opposed God - God doesn't condemn us for having wealth, but for loving it (I Tim.6:10) It is "the root of all evil" Riches may block a man from being saved - (Matt.19:23-24) also in (Mk.10:17-27) DON'T TRUST RICHES; TRUST ONLY IN GOD!!

III. Where is the destiny of your life?

A. Heaven
B. Hell - (No middle ground)
CHOOSE JESUS - CHOOSE LIFE - REJECT HIM CHOOSE DEATH - CHOOSE YOU MUST !!!!!!!! CHOOSE YOU WILL! !!!

Bro. John Gaddy
Arden N.C.
A PASSION FOR CHRIST
Matthew 5:6

"Lord, I want to know You more." Are you hungry? Is your life and ministry full of passion and desire? The Bible talks to us about the level of passion and hunger in our lives. Some people just have a passion for life. Better yet, some have a passion in their spiritual lives. Jesus talked about this in Matthew 5:6. Hunger, a deep spiritual quest for God! The pursuit of God-it's a passion for the will, the work, and the way of God. I'm often asked how did you plant a church in Atlanta, Georgia; how did you get started; how have you kept it growing? I'm going to tell you the bottom line—church growth is not a formula or a plan or a pattern or a principle—it is a Person! It is the Church that Jesus built!

How are we going to reach this generation for Christ? We simply need to recapture our history! What we need to reach the 21st century generation is the same as the 1st century generation—we need to preach Christ and Him crucified. We need an encounter with the risen Lord. We need a hunger and a passion for righteousness. We need to live by Acts 5:42 "that daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ."

We must remember to keep the main thing the main thing, to keep first things first, to make it your priority to "seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." The first thing in church growth is to get your goals right: (1) Disciple people to have a Passion for Christ; (2) Disciple people to have a Passion to Share Christ.

Are you hungry? Or do you have the old spiritual burnout? Have you lost joy, enthusiasm, passion, just running on empty? If so, that is not where the Lord wants you! He wants you to have a deep hunger and thirst and passion to experience God and to KNOW him in a NEW way. The first step to Spiritual Growth is to

Hunger after God. Spiritual growth comes to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Righteousness is having the right relationship with God (II Cor. 5:32, Titus 3:5) and having a Life of Integrity Before God (Col. 1:10, I John 3:22). A Lack of Hunger Brings Spiritual Decline. A passion for Christ plus a passion for souls will result in passionate preaching! Have you lost your passion for preaching? For preparing? For praying? For people? The fuel for passionate preaching must come from within, must be a secret place in your soul—those times when you get alone with God in prayer and His word that fans the flames of the spirit within you. Personal and private time with the Lord is what keeps the passion alive! The Man of God does not say, "I am interested in Christ." The Man of God says, "For me to live is Christ!"

A Hunger for God Brings Out Our Best Effort. God wants from you a heart that is hungry for God and a heart that wants to do something for God. (Eph. 6:6, Co. 3:23) Blessed are they that hunger and thirst ... for they shall be filled!

54th Annual
2008 Pastors and Missionaries Conference,
Pastor Paul W. Vance

The Secret To Success
Joshua 1:1-9

Introduction: All of us want to be a success. We want to experience the thrill of victory. We want to hear the applause of the crowd. We want to know the joy of a job well done. Why then are most of us content to settle for mediocrity? Do you not want to hear the words "Well done, thou good and faithful servant"? The book of Joshua is a book of victory and is given, partially, so that we can know how to have success. These verses contain the basic principles that were to guide Joshua and Israel, so they could obtain all that God
had promised their forefathers. Today, it provides us with principles to achieve the kind of success God wants us to enjoy.

I. Realize Your Calling From The Lord - vs. 1-4

A. God called Joshua to be the leader of the Israelite nation.
   1. The older generation has passed during the wandering in the wilderness (except for Joshua and Caleb).
      a. The nation had just finished mourning Moses' death for 30 days, and Joshua was commissioned to lead the nation.
   b. God, Himself, had chosen Joshua, and the nation of Israel knew that he was to be their leader.
      2. Joshua knew this land and was qualified to lead the people.
         a. He had been one of the twelve spies.
         b. He had been willing to take the land at that time

B. God Informed Joshua of how He would bless his leadership.
   1. God would take them over the Jordan and into enemy territory.
      a. God had reaffirmed this promise, or covenant, over many centuries beginning with Abraham all the way to Moses.
   b. He is now going to enable them to claim the land that was promised to them.
      2. Although God had already promised them the land, they still had to step out in faith and take it.

C. Practical Application.
   1. Success is not determined by the world, but by finding your calling and fulfilling it.
   2. God has a purpose and a plan for your life, and wants to bless your leadership.
      a. However, it is your choice whether or not to be defeated or successful.
      b. You will find success in life when you purposefully, passionately pursue His purpose for your life.

II. Raise Your Confidence in The Lord - vs. 6-8

A. God commanded Joshua to be bold.
   1. Before God would divide the land as an inheritance to the nation of Israel, Joshua was to exercise faith and "be strong and of good courage."
      a. Divine sovereignty is not a substitute for human responsibility.
   2. "Joshua's strength and courage would come from meditating on the Word of God, believing its promises, and obeying its precepts."
      a. Moses had taught this same principle to the nation of Israel, and now God was specifically applying it to Joshua.
      b. Joshua was to meditate and obey the Word of God that Moses had written.
   2. In one of his farewell addresses, Joshua urged the nation of Israel to live in submission to the Scriptures (Joshua 23:6).

C. Practical Application.
   1. Your courage does not rest in who you are; it rests in the trust and confidence you have in God
      a. "Behind every command of God is the power of God to carry out the command."
      b. Remember, you cannot be strong in your strength, for you can only be strong in His strength
   2. If Joshua was able to conquer Canaan having only the first five books of the Bible, how much more ought we to overcome now that we have a complete Bible?

III. Remember Your Closeness To The Lord - vs. 5

A. God promised Joshua His power.
   1. Other nations inhabited the Promised Land, but if Joshua obeyed the Lord, He promised to defeat all his enemies.
2. The same promise was given to the nation of Israel.

B. God promised Joshua His presence.

1. What a reassurance to the new leader of the Israelite nation.
2. God Himself would walk with him all the days of his life.
3. The Gospel of Matthew opens with "Emmanuel ... God with us" and closes with Jesus saying, "Lo, I am with you always." Genesis 1: Revelation 22.
4. "God's people can move forward in God's will and be assured of God's presence."

C. Practical Application.

1. God gives us the power to do everything He asks you to do, yet we are not successful when we use only our strength.
2. God will never, ever, leave you nor abandon you.

Conclusion: Joshua would face many enemies in the years to come, but when he was tempted to give up, he could look back and remember the promises God had made to him and the Israelites. He could gain strength, courage, and boldness in order to carry on, because he remembered the secret of success in verse 9.

55th Annual 2009 Pastors and Missionaries Conference
Bro. Matt Gholson

Bacon Cheese Christians

Introduction:

A. We live in a customizable society
1. From the cars we drive to the burgers we eat, we control every detail.
2. Burger King's slogan 'Have it your way' seems to be our cultural mantra.
B. Sometimes customization is foolish

1. When a world class chef says the dish is best with hollandaise and not Miracle Whip, he or she is generally right.
2. We cheat ourselves of something carefully crafted by someone better than ourselves when we want to control every detail.
3. Sometimes things work together synergistically (define) and in our ignorance we remove an essential part.
   a. consider a child who doesn't like eggs
   b. he might ask for cookies with no eggs, much to his detriment.
C. But on the subject of our walk with God - no, you can't have fries with that.

I. God's Word is perfect without our meddling

A. Psalm 119:129-136
   1. We are the simple!
   2. We need to adapt to God's word as it is.
B. We should desire to live the lives master designed for us.
C. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

II. Our tastes are not perfect

A. Jeremiah 18:1-4
   1. We must submit to being remade:
   2. If we have it our way, we will remain blemished.
B. God desires that we be remade according to His Son's image.

III. No ingredient is unimportant

A. James 2:8-13
   1. Be it divorce, homosexuality, drunkenness, rage or pride...every sin is linked.
   2. We cannot add or take away sins as we could put cheese on a burger.
   3. Like the egg in the cookies, god knows what He is doing - YOU don't.
B. Matthew 5:48
   1. BE PERFECT
   2. God allow no variation in those who would be His. If we do not hate
our father, mother and our own life also - we are holding back.

IV. The final word on customization
A. If any had the right to customize, it was Christ
1. Matthew 26: 39-46
2. Jesus submitted to God's design, even to death on a cross.
B. Revelation 22:18-19

Conclusion:
A. There is no customization of sin, Christian. The only way to live is in God's perfect way.
B. There is no customization of salvation. A well meaning but incorrectly made burger is thrown out and a well meaning but unscriptural person is thrown into the furnace.
C. Now is the time to turn to God and say, "Heavenly Father, have it Your way"

Justin Gatlin
Student HBI
Member Alvin MBC

The Courage to Be Still

Introduction:
1. The unique nature of the preaching profession. Not a profession than can be left at the office.
2. Successes are marginalized, failures are publicized.
3. It is not for everyone - and certainly not for anyone who will not learn total dependence.
4. It takes courage to be a pastor/missionary. To go where God wants you to go, say what He wants you to say, lead where He wants others to follow.
5. Courage may mean you step out on faith, boldly do what needs to be done.
6. But the most courageous thing you will ever do is to learn to be still.

I. Hezekiah was a great model for success.
A. He wasted no time in setting things right.

1. Immediately he set out to organize the priests/Levites to clean the abandoned temple.
2. He saw that the very core of worship was cluttered - overtaken by idols and ignorance.
3. He offered an offering for the leadership and the nation.
4. He put in place sanctified leadership to handle the offerings of the people.

B. He extended reconciliation to the northern tribes.
1. He sent letters to invite the remnant of Northern Israel to come and worship.
2. He reminded them that the captivity they had suffered was due to their neglect of Jehovah.
3. Many laughed and rejected the notion.
4. But some accepted and came with offerings to worship at Jerusalem.
C. By all accounts his efforts were a great success and pleasing to the Lord.
1. Worship was genuine and meaningful.
2. Surrounding people were included, not excluded.
3. What a great leader. What a great success. What a great target!

II. Sennacherib was a great model for trouble.
A. He was unstoppable.
B. He was arrogant.
C. He was unsatisfied with anything less than everything.

III. Hezekiah learned the art of being still.
A. First he responded with the usual rebellion against evil.
1. This didn't work. They overtook the surrounding villages.
2. They set up a siege against Jerusalem.
B. Then he responded by apologizing for his actions.
1. He tried to payoff Assyria, even giving up what his success had built.
2. But that only made their appetite stronger.
C. Finally he brought his problem before God.
   1. He laid out the blasphemous letter of Assyria before God.
   2. He determined to wait on the Lord to solve what he could not solve.
   3. He was weak, but not a coward. In fact, this took courage.
   4. The enemy was at the gate, all was hopeless.
D. Psalm 46 is attributed to the conditions of Hezekiah and Sennacherib
   1. "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." (Psalm 46:10).
IV. Hezekiah was not the only leader to learn the strength of being still.
   A. Moses.
      1. There was a time when Moses saw injustice and responded by smiting the Egyptian.
      2. But his faith was immature and the result was a delay of decades of training to be still and wait on God.
      3. So that when the army of Egyptians was pressing upon them, the same army he once ran away from, he instead stood still,
      4. "And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever." (Exodus 14:13)
   B. Elijah.
      1. Elijah was a man who experienced great success against evil religion.
      2. And he [the angel of the Lord] said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire, a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah? (1 Kings 19:11-13, emphasis mine)
      3. The prophet was a great orator. But in the mouth of that cave he became still and listened.
      4. He had been convinced he was the only believer left in the nation, (1 Kings 19:14)
      5. And the Lord said unto him ... Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1 Kings 19:15a, 18).
   C. John.
      1. He and his brother were insulted and humiliated at the rejection by the Samaritan village
      2. They offered to "command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?"
      3. I mean, a Biblical precedent.
   Right?
      4. But something happened between then and their next rejection in Acts 4 - the resurrection.
      5. So when they were rejected and insulted by the Sanhedrin, John said simply,
      6."... Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:19-20)
      7. He did not compromise or apologize - he simply had courage to trust God and keep preaching.
   D. Mary who sat at the feet of Jesus.
      1. Martha was concerned with service, but Mary chose to sit at His fee, apparently doing nothing!
      2. Mary sat at the Savior’s feet and learned from her Lord.
      3. Some insist she was not a practical Christian, avoiding work under the pretense of learning.
      4. But when the Lord described her action, He indicated that sitting at His feet was more important than cooking in the kitchen!
      5. "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one
Continued from page 7
thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that
good part, which shall not be taken away
from her" (Luke 10:41-42).
6. When Mary anointed the Lord with
ointment, Jesus said, "...against the day of
my burying hath she kept this" (John 12:7).
7. At that point in time she was the
only disciple who knew about Christ's
approaching death.
8. That realization enabled her to
share her treasure before it was too late to
give Him anything.
Conclusion.
1. There are many fights to be waged.
2. There are many struggles that are
worthy of your efforts for Christ.
3. But sometimes the greatest thing
you can ever do is to be still and get to
know this God.
4. Get to know His timing. Get to know His
faithfulness. Get to know His true purpose.

55th Annual
2009 Pastor and Missionaries Conference
Bro. Bob Wiegel

!!!!!!!!!!!!NEWS FLASH!!!!!!!!
Sounding Out The Word is
suffering along with the
economy. Companies are no
longer able to donate paper.
The loss of this resource has
added to our cost increase with
each bi-monthly edition. The
July - August postage cost was
$3,000.00. This allowed us to
mail 2500 papers around the
world. As the Lord provides we
will continue this great ministry.
Please consider giving.