

# Pastor's Corner

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October 2011

Celebrate the good times!

As I was preparing this article I stopped to read an Upper Room Devotional. The Scripture passage for the day was Philippians 4:4-8. "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

Too often it is so easy to become caught up in fear and despair. We read in the newspaper about bad things that are occurring all around us. We watch the evening news, which is full of doom and gloom. We see people who are unemployed, and we may be one of them. It seems that everywhere we look, whatever we hear, the news is always bad; and we begin to wonder what the future will be like or even if there is a future for us.

Paul was writing to the early Christians who were facing persecution and possible death because of their faith. They faced fear and anxiety on a daily basis. Yet, Paul tells them to rejoice in the Lord always, and to focus on the things that are good.

My aunt gave me a 2000 Buick Century, but I had not noticed many of them around until I started driving the car. Now it seems I see at least one of these cars on every road I travel. That is how my thoughts tend to be, too. If I focus on the struggles, it is not long before I become all wrapped up in them. Matthew 6: 25-34 reminds us not to worry. Verse 27 reads, "Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?" Sure, there are things that we have control of; but then there are things which are truly out of our hands.

Last week during the Church Council, I was thinking about when I first came to Ebenezer. Looking back, I see how God has worked in the lives of His people. While some of those dear to me are no longer here, their spirit continues to live in the lives of those that they touched. We have much to be thankful for. Just as Paul wrote, we need to focus on the good things—the things that God has accomplished in and through us, and give God the glory in all that we do.

While driving home the other day, I was thinking about a dear friend of mine that was lying in an ICU unit. I was feeling down about it, until I was reminded by the most beautiful sunset I have ever seen, that God is in control of his life and mine. That brought a peace to me. I realized that—whatever comes—the Creator of the universe is in control, the struggles of this world are temporary, but the joy and peace that Christ promises to all those who believe in him is eternal.

When you first open your eyes in the morning, give God the glory. When you lie down to rest at night, thank God for all that he has done. And as you go through your day, rejoice in the Lord and the peace of God will abide with you always.

God Bless!

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