

the Vision

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SHALLOTTE
APRIL 2020

JOIN US ONLINE

Fellowship, Worship and Study the Bible with Your Church From Home

- ◆ Our 11 am worship service will continue only on our online platform until further notice. Worship with us online and invite friends or family to join you virtually! Be sure to access the online bulletin each week as well. Available on our website, YouTube and Facebook Live.
- ◆ All other activities, services, groups and events at the church have been suspended until further notice.
- ◆ Look for the daily Prayer Alert posted on social media and use it in your quiet time!
- ◆ Bible studies, youth small groups, Sunday School classes, and some DiscipleLife groups have shifted to online platforms!
- ◆ Residents of assisted living and nursing homes cannot see family members during this trying time. You can help! Universal Care in Bolivia has asked that cards and notes be sent to their residents. This would be a great ministry for your small group or SS class. If interested, contact Pastor Bob at pastorbob@atmc.net or Phillip McDonald at (910) 617-7719 or mcdx22@atmc.net
- ◆ Do you know someone in need of food or supplies, we would love to help! Contact Don Evans at (910) 880-9242 or donaldgevens07@yahoo.com.

Visit fbcshallotte.org to learn more!

Virtual Opportunities

- **Sunday Morning Worship**
- **Adult, College, Youth & Fusion Sunday School Classes**
- **Youth Bible Study**
- **Youth Small Groups**
- **Disciplelife Classes**
- **Weekly Video Lessons for Children**

God's Big Vision, Our Salvation, and What It Means for You to Be "In Christ"

In 2017 Billy McFarland, CEO of Fyre Media Inc., had a big vision. He had developed an app for promoting music acts, and needed a big launch, an unforgettable promotion that would send sales of the app through the roof.

So he partnered with rapper Ja Rule to offer Fyre Festival 2017, two weekends of sun, fun, and rock 'n' roll on Norman's Cay, a private island in the Bahamas. Famous social media influencers were paid to promote the event. A promotional video of bikini models and speedboats promised an experience "on the boundaries of the impossible."

Their dream was huge, their promotion captivating, and their idea boundless. But they were also naïve, or just plain foolish.

See, neither McFarland nor Ja Rule had ever staged a festival. So, even though they had a big dream, they didn't look into what it would entail to make that dream a reality. And they didn't check on the logistics before they started promoting it. They just figured if they dreamed it, and promoted it, somehow it would magically happen. But the truth is, even big dreams have boundaries.

First, it turns out, Norman's Cay was not even available. Suddenly, they were guilty of false advertising. Then word leaked out on social media that Norman's Cay was the former private island of drug kingpin Carlos Rivas, something that McFarland had tried to hide.

They were forced to change the venue from Norman's Cay to a parking lot on another island. That eliminated the luxury accommodations. Other oversights, dominated by wishful thinking, eliminated the gourmet meals and most of the rock 'n' roll. Attendees who had ponied up thousands for the party got instead a windswept parking lot, along with soggy sandwiches, FEMA tents, and torrential rain.

Billy McFarland was charged with several versions of fraud, got six years prison, and was fined \$26 million. Lawsuits against some of the participants are still pending.

Epic fail. Why? Because the promoters thought that just because they wanted something to happen, it would. And they thought that all the trappings of opulent promotion would mask the ugly truth—that, in fact, they had no idea how to make it happen. The dream was just a dream. The reality exposed their foolishness and pride.

Reminds you of religion, doesn't it?

No amount of religious enthusiasm can save us. It's wishful thinking. People make big plans. Opulent or sparse, luxurious or ordinary. Man-made religions have different practices, different flavors, and different tastes. But in the end all earthly religions have in common the belief that just because



we dream the dream it will come true. If we show up, if we swing the incense or light the candles or warm the pews or sing from hymnals or screens or not at all, as long as we are religious, no one will notice that we really don't know what we are doing.

And that what we are doing isn't really making a difference in what matters most.

But God knows. No amount of outward display will mask the condition of our souls. We are in desperate need of a well-planned, sin-defeating event that can truly change us and do for us what religion can never do—cleanse, redeem, and give life.

So from the day Adam and Eve crumbled under the weight of temptation, God set His plan in motion. And God's plan is foolproof (meaning, people-proof, of course). Because God plans for every contingency and possibility, it took time. Generations, in fact. But His plan unfolded in His perfect timing (Gal. 4:4), and Christ came into the world to save us from our sins (Eph. 1:7-14).

God's actions in the cross and the resurrection of Christ implemented His plan and fortified eternally salvation for all who trust Him. How so?

Once we trust Christ, we are, as Paul would say, "in Christ." What does that mean? In Ephesians 2:5-6, Paul says that God did three things the moment we are saved. He "made us alive with Christ," "raised us up with Christ," and "seated us with him" in the heavens. In all three, God did for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Each time we are told what God did, to make us "alive with," "raised with," and "seated with" Christ, Paul uses the word that gives us our word "synchronize." That is, being "in Christ" means that your resurrection life is eternally synchronized with His.



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Let that sink in. In much the same way that your computer files sync in the cloud so they are always the same everywhere, you are synced with God in Jesus Christ, so you are eternally with Him everywhere. Your salvation is secure, permanent, and eternal, not because of your plans, but because of what God did for you in Christ.

But God made it clear, this has nothing to do with our religious effort. We are saved by grace through faith in Christ and Christ alone. God took away your

chance to brag about your works, your religion, or your salvation (Eph. 2:8-9).

All of our plans are bumbling and bluster compared to what He has done for us.

So what about religion? Should we forget church and just stay home? No, because now we understand that religious expression has a place. We are to celebrate that God did for us what we could not do for ourselves. All of our own planning to try to change, to be saved, to have life, is a

façade. And God sees what's really going on beneath the surface and loves us anyway.

And he did for us what we could not do for ourselves.

So be here Easter and celebrate what Christ has done for you! By the power of His resurrection, He made you alive in Christ, raised you up with Christ, and seated you in the heavens.

With Love in Christ,

Pastor Bob

Romans 12:5

"In the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another"

Prayer Principles for Relieving Stress

Philippians 4:6,7

To reduce stress in our lives, Christians should remember these facts about prayer:

- Prayer is meant to be a preventative more than a remedy. Prayer is to be our first thought, not our last thought.
- Prayer teaches us to depend on God. We can never meet the expectations of our situation without God's help and guidance.
- Prayer is a lifestyle. Everything that happens in our lives is the result of God's loving superintendence.
- Prayer testifies of our trust in the Lord. Prayer turns our eyes away from our inadequacy and to God's adequacy.

- Prayer allows us to bring God the specific needs in our lives through supplication. God encourages us to come with our needs. Prayer displays our gratitude toward the Lord. In all kinds of praying, we are to be thankful. Appreciation is to mark all of our prayers.
- Prayer protects us from outward stress when it plays a central role in our lives. We must choose to build our inner strength through prayer; only they can we deal joyfully with outer events.

**Source jeremiahstudybible.com*

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He has **risen**



MATTHEW 28:6



Love God.
Love One Another.
Love the World.

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**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF
SHALLOTTE**

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Office Hours:

M-Th 9am—3pm; F 9am—1pm

Sunday School 9:45am
Morning Worship 11:00am
Evening Worship 6:00pm
Wednesday 6:00pm

«Name»
Or Current Resident
«Street Address»
«City», «State» «Zip»

Read the Bible Beginning to End Reading Plan

1-Year Plan. It is important to understand the fullness of God's message to the churches, and a great way of doing this is reading the Old and New Testaments simultaneously. This plan, which can be completed in one calendar year, does just that. Readings from both Testaments are included from the beginning and although each reading does not contain both Testaments, the two are read effectively.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/1 Judges 13-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/12 1 Samuel 19-21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/23 2 Samuel 16-18 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/2 Judges 16-18; Luke 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/13 1 Samuel 22-24 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/24 2 Samuel 19-20; Luke 18 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/3 Judges 19-21 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/14 1 Samuel 25-26; Luke 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/25 2 Samuel 21-22 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/4 Ruth | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/15 1 Samuel 27-29 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/26 2 Samuel 23-24; Luke 19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5 1 Samuel 1-3; Luke 8 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/16 1 Samuel 30-31; Luke 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/27 1 Kings 1-2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/6 1 Samuel 4-7 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/17 2 Samuel 1-2; Luke 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/28 1 Kings 3-5; Luke 20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/7 1 Samuel 8-10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/18 2 Samuel 3-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/29 1 Kings 6-7 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/8 1 Samuel 11-12; Luke 9 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/19 2 Samuel 6-8 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/30 1 Kings 8-9 ; Luke 6 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/9 1 Samuel 13-14 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/20 2 Samuel 9-11; Luke 15 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/10 1 Samuel 15-16; Luke 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/21 2 Samuel 12-13; Luke 16 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4/11 1 Samuel 17-18; Luke 11 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4/22 2 Samuel 14-15; Luke 17 | |