



the Vision

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SHALLOTTE
NOVEMBER 2023

Prayer, Thanksgiving, and Being Grateful to Play the Game

Pastor Bob

On September 9, American tennis applauded a new champion.

In an extraordinary display of skill, athleticism, and talent, 19-year-old Coco Gauff defeated Aryna Sabalenka 2-6, 6-3, 6-2 to win the women's singles final of the US Open Tennis Championships, and she became the first American teenager, male or female, to win the title since 2001.

While the crowd cheered and officials prepared for the trophy ceremony, Gauff celebrated at her seat. And the world watched as she dropped to her knees and prayed. Not long. Just a moment or two. But unmistakable. And uncontrived. Not fabricated, and not a preplanned display of

public spirituality. It was as natural as breathing. A very private moment in the world's most public place.

Then Gauff followed an official to the trophy presentation, as if nothing unusual had just happened.

But something did happen, and her prayer garnered nearly as much attention as her stellar win.

What just happened?

Secularists responded to Gauff's public display of her personal faith with a mixture of confusion and criticism.

Some avoided calling it a "prayer." NBC

continued on page 2...

Men & Women's Weekly Bible Study

Interested in digging into the Bible while connecting with a small group? Join one of our weekly Bible studies at Homestyle Foods in Shallotte. The ladies' meet weekly at Tuesdays at 10am for breakfast and Bible study. The men meet weekly on Thursdays at 9am for food, fellowship and Bible study. These groups would love to have anyone interested join them!

Church Events

- Nov 1st—Big Daddy Weave Concert
- Nov 4th at 12pm—Deacons Widow Banquet
- Nov 3rd-5th—Youth Fall Retreat Ft Caswell
- Nov 8th at 6:15pm—Disciplelife Classes Start
- Nov 12th—OCC Shoebox Dedication
- Nov 12th—Baptism
- Nov 13th at 6:30pm—Ladies Ministry Meeting
- Nov 14th at 6:30pm—Men's Ministry Meeting
- Nov 19th—Thanksgiving Potluck Luncheon
- Nov 21st at 6:00pm—Family Pizza Night
- Nov 22nd & 23rd—Office Closed, No Services or Activities at the Church
- Nov 26th at 6:00pm—Hanging of the Greens

...continued

Prayer, Thanksgiving, and Being Grateful to Play the Game

news referred to it as a “moment of reflection.” And ESPN’s Sportscenter claimed she “took a moment to soak it all in” while showing a picture of her kneeling at her seat.

Some critics claimed that Gauff’s prayer revealed the inconsistency of Christianity. They sniped that she was “groveling on the ground” before God at the same time people were dying in an earthquake in Morocco.

But the critics missed the point altogether. Gauff’s spontaneous prayer wasn’t so spontaneous at all. It was the result of her deep gratitude and personal faith.

Her public prayer came from a strong personal faith

Her public prayer was consistent with her personal faith. The strength of it was not where it was or when it was, but that it was the spontaneous response of a heart already accustomed to prayer at all times.

Gauff’s Christian faith is well-known. Her family participates actively in a Missionary Baptist Church in Florida, and she prays with her Dad before every match, asking that she and her opponent would be safe.

She says her faith helps her through moments of discouragement and stress. And she is not vague. After winning the Cincinnati Open in August 2023, she said, “I’d like to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I spent a lot of nights alone, crying [and] trying to figure it out. I still have a lot to figure out, but I thank Him for covering me.”

After the US Open match, interviewer Mary Jo Fernandez (also a Christian) asked Gauff about the importance of her faith. Gauff replied that her faith “means so much” to her. Her faith, she said, helps her put past losses in perspective.

And addressing that impromptu after-match prayer at the chair, she said, “I don’t pray for results,” she said. “I just ask that I get the strength to give it my all. Whatever happens, happens. I’m so blessed in this life. I’m just thankful for this moment. I don’t have any words for it, to be honest.”

The lesson here is to be thankful to play, whether you win or not. If you are in the game, God put you there. Ask Him for the strength to do what He has called you to do (Phil. 4:13). Appreciate the moment and know that He has something for you to learn.

To pray is to be grateful

The Monday following the match, Gauff explained her prayer on TODAY. “I was just saying thank you, and I understood all the tough times were just to make that moment even sweeter.”

In an authentic relationship with your Creator, prayer is an



ongoing part of life, not an occasional pause when it is convenient for you. Prayer puts life in perspective and flows from a heart that is grateful and which acknowledges God’s sovereign design for your life (1 Thess. 5:17-18).

Authentic faith is not cultivated by getting what you want, or even from being the best at what you do. An authentic faith thrives in a garden of gratitude. So, like Gauff, the person of authentic faith is thankful to be in the game, no matter the outcome.

Gauff said it well. She didn’t win because she prayed. And she didn’t pray because she won. She prayed because she played.

Cultivate gratitude when you pray

I think it is fair to say that you and I will not be tennis champions. But we can no less demonstrate our faith in God and our gratitude for His help in all that we do.

So here’s the question to ask in a season where you celebrate Thanksgiving—are you grateful to God for the life He gives? Are you only grateful to God because you win, or are you grateful because you get to play the game—to live a life worthy of the calling of Christ?

Gratitude is not a result of favorable circumstances. It’s the result of a relationship of faith with your God.

With Love in Christ,

Happy Thanksgiving!

Pastor Bob



Discipling Through the Holidays

November is typically a month of holiday preparation. If your spouse is anything like mine – you are constantly fighting the battle to leave the Christmas decorations in storage until after Thanksgiving (a fight I routinely lose). Thanksgiving and Christmas bring to mind family time, good food, and celebration. It is an opportunity to gather with family and friends that we might not see regularly. The approaching holiday season is also an excellent opportunity to disciple our families. But what does discipleship entail? What does it mean? Being a disciple simply means you are a follower. Being a Christian disciple means you follow Christ. When using disciple as a verb, it means to train or teach younger believers – just as Christ taught the original 12.

It is easy to let the holidays go by without being intentional to teach our spouse, children, or grandchildren why we are thankful, or why we actually celebrate Christmas. We must take the initiative to develop a

biblical worldview in our family.

Going through the Gospel of Mark with the youth this year, I noticed a pattern: Mark chapters 8-10 are a continuous and sustained teaching on discipleship. 3 things repeat themselves: Jesus predicts his death (8:31-32; 9:30-31; 10:32-34) The disciples make a foolish response (8:32-33; 9:32-34; 10:35-41) Jesus gives a lesson on discipleship, service, and true spiritual greatness. (8:34-38; 9:35-37; 10:42-45). Jesus tells His disciples what it looks like to truly follow Him 3 times. Jesus' discipleship discourse begins in 8:34: "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me," and comes to its climax in 10:45: "For even the Son of Man did come not to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." This pivotal verse lays out the ultimate reason Jesus came. Jesus finishes this discipleship dialogue at the end of his earthly ministry, just prior to his entrance into Jerusalem, where

he would be betrayed, beaten, crucified, raise to life, and ascend into heaven. Jesus lays the foundation on what following Him truly means before the tumultuous time of the Passion week, knowing what lied ahead for Him and the disciples.

Sometimes the holidays feel hectic & rushed, but its important to identify that Jesus was intentional to develop and disciple his followers to prepare them for the chaos that followed His death and the persecution that followed His resurrection. While the chaos you may experience amidst your family dinner can be very real – it is obviously trivialized in comparison to the tumult the Apostles experienced. Still, the lesson remains: discipleship and training in righteousness is essential to prepare and equip believers for all circumstances, especially times of chaos. It's necessary and needed, and there is no better time to disciple our friends and family than when they have all gathered together!

At FBCS, this November signifies the relaunch of our discipleship small groups, known as D4 groups. Our D4 groups are modeled after the apostle Paul & Timothy's relationship. 2 Timothy 2:2 says: "and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." They go through a great study book "Connecting Faith to Life" and are designed to facilitate an intentional transfer of knowledge from mature Christians to younger believers in all aspects of the Christian faith, from the basics to advanced theological topics. If you are interested in joining a D4 group, be sure to sign up!

So, whether at home, around the thanksgiving table, in your day-to-day life, or in a D4 group – be intentional to engage in Christian discipleship – either as a student or a teacher.

In Christ's Love,
Kevin Gore, Associate Pastor of
Family Life & Discipleship

Ladies Ministry

A huge thank you to all who donated to the Socks For Inmates! We were able to collect 311 pairs of socks and they were delivered Monday October 16th.



This month we are asking for donations of non-perishable foods for our church to have on hand. If you would like to donate please bring those to our November meeting.

Kacey Gore will be sharing her testimony with us at our meeting on November 13th. Please join us @ 6:30 for a wonderful meal prepared by our faithful cooks and a time of fellowship and sharing.

We hope to see all of our ladies there! "O Magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt His name together." Psalm 34:3

Men's Ministry

All men welcome to the monthly men's ministry meeting on Nov 14th at 6:30pm. Dinner will be provided. Devin Sellers will be sharing his testimony.



Deacon of the Week



VERNON ABNEY

(859) 358-4224
abney358655@gmail.com

Nov 5th-11th



JACE MYERS

(910) 603-3501
jace_myers@hotmail.com

Nov 12th-18th



MARK VARNAM

(910) 842-3076
markmonicaandgirls@atmc.net

Nov 19th-25th



JEFF HOPKINS

(828) 964-3904
mrhopj88@gmail.com

Nov 26th – Dec 2nd

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SHALLOTTE

LOVE GOD. LOVE ONE ANOTHER. LOVE THE WORLD.

4486 Main Street
Shallotte, NC 28470

910.754.4048
fbcshallotte.org

Office Hours:

M-Th 9am—3pm

Closed Friday

Sunday School—9:45am

Worship—11:00am



Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 318
Shallotte, NC

THE WORD OF GOD IN A YEAR

O send out thy light and thy truth! Let them lead me.

READ WITH FAMILY		DAY	READ IN SECRET		READ WITH FAMILY		DAY	READ IN SECRET	
2 Kings 14	2 Timothy 4	1 st	Hosea 7	Psalms 120–122	1 Chronicles 7–8	Hebrews 11	16 th	Amos 5	Luke 1:1-38
2 Kings 15	Titus 1	2 nd	Hosea 8	Psalms 123–125	1 Chronicles 9–10	Hebrews 12	17 th	Amos 6	Luke 1:39
2 Kings 16	Titus 2	3 rd	Hosea 9	Psalms 126–128	1 Chronicles 11–12	Hebrews 13	18 th	Amos 7	Luke 2
2 Kings 17	Titus 3	4 th	Hosea 10	Psalms 129–131	1 Chronicles 13–14	James 1	19 th	Amos 8	Luke 3
2 Kings 18	Philemon 1	5 th	Hosea 11	Psalms 132–134	1 Chronicles 15	James 2	20 th	Amos 9	Luke 4
2 Kings 19	Hebrews 1	6 th	Hosea 12	Psalms 135–136	1 Chronicles 16	James 3	21 st	Obadiah	Luke 5
2 Kings 20	Hebrews 2	7 th	Hosea 13	Psalms 137–138	1 Chronicles 17	James 4	22 nd	Jonah 1	Luke 6
2 Kings 21	Hebrews 3	8 th	Hosea 14	Psalms 139	1 Chronicles 18	James 5	23 rd	Jonah 2	Luke 7
2 Kings 22	Hebrews 4	9 th	Joel 1	Psalms 140–141	1 Chronicles 19–20	1 Peter 1	24 th	Jonah 3	Luke 8
2 Kings 23	Hebrews 5	10 th	Joel 2	Psalms 142	1 Chronicles 21	1 Peter 2	25 th	Jonah 4	Luke 9
2 Kings 24	Hebrews 6	11 th	Joel 3	Psalms 143	1 Chronicles 22	1 Peter 3	26 th	Micah 1	Luke 10
2 Kings 25	Hebrews 7	12 th	Amos 1	Psalms 144	1 Chronicles 23	1 Peter 4	27 th	Micah 2	Luke 11
1 Chronicles 1–2	Hebrews 8	13 th	Amos 2	Psalms 145	1 Chronicles 24–25	1 Peter 5	28 th	Micah 3	Luke 12
1 Chronicles 3–4	Hebrews 9	14 th	Amos 3	Psalms 146–147	1 Chronicles 26–27	2 Peter 1	29 th	Micah 4	Luke 13
1 Chronicles 5–6	Hebrews 10	15 th	Amos 4	Psalms 148–150	1 Chronicles 28	2 Peter 2	30 th	Micah 5	Luke 14