

Community Christian Center

The Word
Fellowship
Prayer

The Good Tidings Newsletter



A Report on the Revival at CCC

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KENNETH CLOWDUS, PASTOR

VOLUME 140

Pastor's Corner

This month featuring Associate Pastor *Tony Paraspolo*
9/11

It is already the tenth anniversary of 9/11 and it has brought back memories to me of that day when our beloved country was grievously attacked by terrorists. Everybody was fearful and didn't know what was going to happen to them. Many people began seeking God because the only hope they saw would have to come from God and our Lord Jesus Christ. For a time people became united and became loyal to one another and to this country.



I am sorry to say that I think for me, and for maybe all of us, our loyalty to

God has kind of gotten very weak almost to the point of becoming mundane in our lives, and that shouldn't be. We should be full of the joy and peace that our Lord Jesus Christ brings. I'm going to give a scripture to help understand this concept: Proverbs 19:15-16 *Laziness casts one into a deep sleep, and an idle person will suffer hunger. He who keeps the commandment keeps his soul, but he who is careless of his ways will die.* NKJV

Many of us are sleeping in the Lord and too many of us are hiding, and I know that that condition only brings problems. Even though we have seen God's hand intervening in our lives to help us manage our problems and even bless us through them, we still get lazy in our relationship with Him. But, it seems that when tragedy happens to us, we then fervently draw near to God and it makes us seek Him desperately; we ask, and even beg and plead with God to help us. But God wants us to draw near to Him without tragedy motivating us. He wants us to move and act in Him like He is the most real thing in life because He is! He will give answers ahead of time if we move in our times of prayer and our actions as Christians.

2 Corinthians 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.* NIV This passage tells us that we are going to stand before Christ and everything that we have done in this world whether good or bad is going to be revealed. I know that all of us would like to stand there with the joy and love of Jesus Christ knowing that we served Him to the best of our ability and didn't let Him down in the way that we do so often - by forgetting Him. And that is not only the neglect of reading of our Bibles and spending time in prayer, but also when He speaks to us (if we even give Him our attention) and He tells us things to do, but then we aren't obedient to Him. It's time for Christians like you and me to stand up and start moving and acting in obedience because our God is real and time is running out.

2 Cor 3:4-6 *Such confidence as this is ours through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant — not of the letter*

but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. NIV These verses tell us who we are and what we can do because we are **ministers** of this new covenant that he was talking about. God has given us the power and the Spirit – which is not in the letter of the law but it is in His grace and love so that we can really apply ourselves knowing who we really are in Christ and we know what He wants from us. You're never too old to change and you're never too young to start afresh, or start over, or begin again. That's our God. He moves and acts in our lives at any time - if we let Him.

So we ask Him to help us to grow and mature in Him. I pray that these scriptures may help to open our eyes. The last scripture is: 1 Cor 9:19 *Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.* NIV And this tells us who we are and tells us that our purpose for being here is to bring more people to God. And He's given us the power through the Holy Spirit to do this. But it's time for me and you to move, and act, and be in Him, by Him, and for Him.

So, Lord, seeing all the tragedies that are happening in the world, we know that the time of your appearing is getting near, and I hope our eyes will be opened more and more to the love You have shown us, and that we will respond by reading our Bibles more often, and going to prayer meetings, Bible studies, and church, and that people will know that they need Christ because of our faithful witness.

Thank you, I pray that God blesses you and keeps you; I hope to see you soon. Pastor Tony.



Editor's Note: I remember the first Sunday after 9/11/01 and I have never seen the church so full of people. Above is a picture of the altar call on that Sunday.



"Some people think God does not like to be troubled with our constant coming and asking. The way to trouble God is not to come at all. -Dwight L. Moody

"All the troubles of life come upon us because we refuse to sit quietly for a while each day in our rooms." -Blaise Pascal

HOW TO CONDUCT THE BUSINESS OF THE CHURCH

A Tale of Three Churches - The Passing of the Mantle by *Jim Conrad*

August 14, 2011 is a day of special significance in the over 34 year history of Community Christian Center, Covina, CA. This neighborhood church led by Kenneth Clowdus, is at an historical point. The announcement was made that, for health concerns, Pastor Ken is retiring! The Board of Directors had met previously and, after consideration, agreed to the pastor's decision. Men of God of other congregations were consulted by Pastor Ken and they gave him their wise counsel and agreement. I also know that choosing a successor was done with much careful deliberation and prayer.

We are indeed a blessed people at CCC, Covina, CA. Our past, present, and future show clear evidence of God at work. The bylaws that we have in place insure us of harmony during these changes and provide an ongoing, unchanging policy that will keep us secure in our church's order of worship and service. Not every church can manage so neat a transition. Trust me, I know, because I experienced the pain of dissolution of two churches that I was a member of before I came to CCC.

Early in the 1980's I was a member of a traditional Baptist church in which I was very involved. I had come out of a cult and was hungry for the one true God and His Word. Cindy, my daughter, was about six years old when she began riding the church bus to services. Because she spoke of Jesus, I suddenly had the realization that I needed Him also! It started a life-long relationship with my Savior, Jesus. I started attending church and got as involved in it as much as possible; one of my ministries was driving the church bus. It was about five years later that my marriage fell apart. Simultaneously, the church lost its pastor and it also fell apart – it seemed to me that it became “deacon-possessed,” and it closed its doors because of a lot of conflict. But, it was at that same time that I was baptized with the Holy Spirit! It happened when I was in my lawyer's office dealing with the separation from my wife. This lawyer 'just so happened' to be a Spirit-filled believer and, when she prayed for me, I received. My Baptist friend, whom I was staying with, was not very happy when he heard this; he looked at me as if I were a demon. So, I moved from his house and eventually joined a Spirit-filled church.

It was an exciting time for me. There was great teaching and the church was growing rapidly. There was 6a.m. prayer daily and home groups. Through this period, I lived in rented rooms because much debt had come with my separation and that was all I could afford. My church brothers presented the case for being a tither, so I did become one. I've written about the many blessings I received as a result of my obedience in tithing in previous issues of this newsletter. Eight years went by and it was a great period of adventure in God. I once again drove the church bus. Things were happening. By a miracle, I acquired a house, but it was some distance from the church. I would have continued with the church, but God had other ideas.

Once again, conflict rose up between the staff and the pastor; so he fired most of them. I wondered how this could come to pass since they had always represented themselves as loving yoke fellows. Well, anyway, another ministry from South Africa changed everything. There was no more 6a.m. prayer or prayer ministry in general. The home groups and the teachings also were eliminated. It all happened at the same time: my move and the church changes. The church was no longer the same as the one I had been familiar with. I was stunned by the whole event: the end of church #2 as it had been. I was churchless!

At that time I was attending many meetings at the Redeemed

and Delivered Ministries. I was at a seminar on a Saturday morning when I met Pastor Ken Clowdus and, about two days later, I received a letter from him. This was a first! I was impressed and that began my best of all church relationships.

Now we of CCC will experience the passing of the mantle to Pastor Enrico Georgio who will become our new pastor. When I learned that it would be Pastor Eric I, frankly, was very pleased. We have been prayer partners at 5a.m. for many months. He and his wife, Marie, are anointed to lead and have a servant's heart. They are experienced leaders and have pastored a church in L.A. for some time.

I am blessed by the statesmanlike transference of leadership. Our Pastor Ken is certainly a caring shepherd of this flock. I personally know that I will miss him and will experience a period of grieving and adjusting. But I'm extremely grateful for the Godly manner in which this critical move has been carried out.


A Way Out of Hopelessness
by *Sharon Johnson*

Have you ever felt like everything is hopeless? Like everything always goes wrong. And you turned to this person and that person for help, but to no avail. There are times when others just can't understand the deep and painful travail of your heart. You hear words like, “You'll be fine,” and you think, “That's so easy for them to say,” but you are so far away from feeling fine that the words fall meaningless on your ears.

Sometimes the cause of the problem or problems that created your despair is quite obvious and sometimes you just can't understand why you feel so bad. Sometimes when you cry out to God, there may be temporary relief for your troubled soul but you have to continuously seek Him in order to maintain peace of mind. I have felt this way in the past and there are brief periods of despondency even now.

I find that each time it happens, I have to turn completely to God. I have to cling to Him like my very life depends on it – because it does. And I have dear friends who go through periods of hopelessness and they have to do the same thing.

As I was reading the Bible this evening, I ran across this passage written by Saint Paul: 2 Cor 1:8-11 *We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. **But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will continue to deliver us, as you help us by your prayers.*** NIV

I know that Paul had enemies that tried to kill him, so his problems were life-threatening. Sometimes our problems are “life” threatening to our spirits. But by relying on God, who raises the dead, and not on himself, Paul was delivered. I believe that it was in no way easy for him. Likewise, depending solely on God is the solution for us. We no longer depend on ourselves. Confidence builds as we see Him working in our lives, creating a pathway out of our despair. We see miracles and feel His love. It is not always easy, but God is faithful and sure to lead us to peace for our weary souls as we surrender to Him. We must really try to be obedient to Him in these times because it is key to letting Him change your circumstances and/or emotional state. All this may take time, but He is faithful.

I need Him every minute – how about you? I beseech God to greatly help and deliver anyone suffering like this right now. Our hearts go out to you – please know that you are not alone. We love you.

Kitchen Korner

from the kitchen of *Dee Paraspolo*

Light Of The Storage Closet

from *God Came Near - Chronicles of the Christ* by Max Lucado, 1987

A few nights ago a peculiar thing happened. An electrical storm caused a blackout in our neighborhood. When the lights went out, I felt my way through the darkness into the storage closet where we keep the candles for nights like this. Through the glow of a lit match I looked up on the shelf where the candles were stored. There they were, already positioned in their stands, melted to various degrees by previous missions. I took my match and lit four of them. How they illuminated the storage room! What had been a veil of blackness suddenly radiated with soft, golden light! I could see the freezer I had just bumped with my knee. And I could see my tools that needed to be straightened.

"How great it is to have light!" I said out loud, and then spoke to the candles. "If you do such a good job here in the storage closet, just wait till I get you out of where you're really needed! I'll put one of you on my table so we can eat. I'll put one of you on my desk so I can read. I'll give one of you to Denalyn so she can cross-stitch. And I'll set you", I took down the largest one, "in the living room where you can light up the whole area," (I felt a bit foolish talking to candles - but what do you do when the lights go out?)

I was turning to leave with the large candle in my hand when I heard a voice, "Now, hold it right there."

I stopped. Somebody's in here! I thought. Then I relaxed. It's just Denalyn, teasing me for talking to the candles. "OK, honey, cut the kidding," I said in the semi-darkness. No answer. Hmmm, maybe it was the wind. I took another step.

"Hold it, I said!" There was that voice again. My hands began to sweat.

"Who said that?"

"I did." The voice was near my hand.

"Who are you? What are you?"

"I'm a candle." I looked at the candle I was holding. It was burning a strong, golden flame. It was red and sat on a heavy wooden candle holder that had a firm handle. I looked around once more to see if the voice could be coming from another source. "There's no one here but you, me and the rest of the candles," the voice informed me.

I lifted up the candle to take a closer look. You won't believe what I saw. There was a tiny face in the wax. (I told you, you wouldn't believe me.) Not just a wax face that someone had carved, but a moving, functioning, flesh-like face full of expression and life.

"Don't take me out of here!"

"What?"

"I said, 'don't take me out of this room.'"

"What do you mean? I have to take you out. You're a candle. Your job is to give light. It's dark out there. People are stubbing their toes and walking into walls. You have to come out and light up the place!"

"But you can't take me out. I'm not ready," the candle explained with pleading eyes. "I need more preparation."

I couldn't believe my ears. "More preparation?"

"Yeah, I've decided I need to research this job of light-giving so I won't go out and make a bunch of mistakes. You'd be surprised how distorted the glow of an untrained candle can be. So I'm doing some studying. I just finished a book on wind resistance. I'm in the middle of a great series of tapes on wick build-up and conservation - I'm reading the new best seller on

flame display. Have you heard of it?

"No," I answered.

"You might like it. It's called Waxing Eloquently".

"That really sounds inter-" I caught myself. What am I doing? I'm in here conversing with a candle while my wife and daughters are out there in the darkness!

"All right then," I said. "You're not the only candle on the shelf. I'll blow you out and take the others!" But just as I got my cheeks full of air, I heard other voices. "We're not going either!" It was a conspiracy. I turned around and looked at the three other candles; each with flames dancing above a miniature face. I was beyond feeling awkward about talking to candles. I was getting miffed.

"You are candles and your job is to light dark places!"

"Well, that may be what you think," said the candle on the far left - a long thin fellow with a goatee and British accent. "You may think we have to go, but I'm busy."

"Busy?"

"Yes, I'm meditating."

"What! A candle that meditates?"

"Yes. I'm meditating on the importance of light. It's really enlightening."

I decided to reason with them. "Listen, I appreciate what you guys are doing. I'm all for meditation time. And everyone needs to study and research; but for goodness' sake, you guys have been here for weeks! Haven't you had enough time to get your wick on straight?" "And you other two," I asked, "are you going to stay in here as well?"

A short, fat, purple candle with plump cheeks that reminded me of Santa Claus spoke up. "I'm waiting to get my life together. I'm not stable enough. I lose my temper easily. I guess you could say that I'm a hothead."

The last candle had a female voice, very pleasant to the ear. "I'd like to help," she explained, "but lighting the darkness is not my gift."

All this was sounding too familiar. "Not your gift?" What do you mean?"

"Well, I'm a singer. I sing to other candles to encourage them to burn more brightly." Without asking my permission, she began a rendition of "This Little Light of Mine." (I have to admit, she had a good voice.) The other three joined in, filling the storage room with singing. "Hey, I shouted above the music, "I don't mind if you sing while you work! In fact, we could use a little music out there!" They didn't hear me. They were singing too loudly. I yelled louder. "Come on, you guys. There's plenty of time for this later. We've got a crisis on our hands."

They wouldn't stop. I put the big candle on the shelf and took a step back and considered the absurdity of it all. Four perfectly healthy candles singing to each other about light but refusing to come out of the closet. I had all I could take. One by one I blew them out. They kept singing to the end. The last one to flicker was the female. I snuffed her out right in the "puff" part of "Won't let Satan puff me out."

I stuck my hands in my pockets and walked back out into the darkness. I bumped my knee on the same freezer. Then I bumped into my wife.

"Where are the candles?" she asked.

"They don't...they won't work. Where did you buy those candles anyway?"

"Oh, they're church candles. Remember the church that closed down across the town? I bought them there."

I understood.



PICNIC PICTURES



WOMEN'S MEETING PICTURES



Women's Meeting Pictures courtesy of
Stephanie Alexander



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