

# the *LINK*

First Baptist Church Newsletter

## Rescued by Love

An author recounted a childhood memory. One afternoon my older brother Johnny and I were walking home from school when we suddenly found ourselves surrounded by four older boys we didn't know. Johnny was a good fighter, but they pushed us into a field, threw ropes around us, and shoved us down on the ground.

"What did we do?" we demanded. "We didn't do anything to you."

They laughed, tying us up, tangling us together, and cinching the knots tight. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves, taunting us and pulling on the ropes. Then the bullies left us in the secluded field – just left us all trussed up. We yelled at them to free us, but they were soon gone.

At first a wave of relief rolled over me. They're gone! Now we can squirm free. We yanked at the ropes, thinking we could surely get loose somehow. But we couldn't. We strained and strained, feeling panic building as it started to get dark. We lay there as the light slowly vanished. The moon and the stars appeared. We wondered how anyone could find us in the dark and how long this could go on.

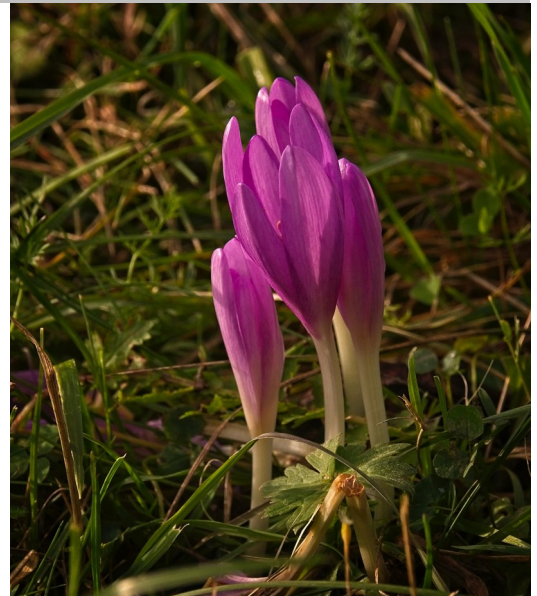
At long, long last, under the evening sky, we heard our father's voice. He had searched all along the way to school and found us in the field.

This author's experience illustrates God's persistent love. Vicious bullies beat and brutally killed Jesus. He was buried. But Jesus did not stay dead. Three days later Christ was raised back to life by Almighty God. The eternal Creator was fully aware of the Son's situation. Absolutely nothing escaped Yahweh's notice. And when the Savior's work of redemption was fully accomplished, Jesus was rescued by love.

There are times when we find ourselves bound by various uncomfortable situations. Nothing about our circumstances escapes God's notice. Yahweh's unending love is always for us. The bodily resurrection of Jesus proves beyond all doubt that we serve the all-powerful God of deliverance. We trust the LORD.

Rest in God's Relentless Love,

Les



He is not here;  
He has risen,  
just as he said.  
Come and see the  
place where he lay.



# Greatness and Goodness

Did anyone else learn and recite these words as a child? "God is great. God is good. Let us thank Him for our food. Amen." I must have verbalized those simple words at least 10,000 times during my growing up years. Hopefully you and I never outgrew our confidence in the Creator's greatness and goodness.

Psalm 16 is David's lament. A lament is an expression of grief. I admit that reflecting on a dirge seems like an odd tactic to help us remember God's goodness. But flowing out of a time of deep personal heartache, David wrote some remarkably prophetic and helpful words. Israel's shepherd-king reminded himself, and countless others since, that God's goodness can give us great joy. Here is my outline of Psalm 16, along with a few questions for your personal reflection and encouragement.

Living for a good God (16:1-4)

Enjoy the LORD's Presence (1-2)

Enjoy the LORD's People (3)

Enjoy the LORD's Principles (4)

Q. How have you seen God's goodness expressed through other followers of Jesus?

Q. What spiritual exercises help you personally experience the LORD's presence?

Receiving from a good God (16:5-6)

Treasure God's Person (5a)

Treasure God's Protection (5b)

Treasure God's Provisions (6)

Q. When was a time you were acutely aware of the Almighty's protection?

Q. Can you recall an incident when the LORD provided for you in a clear way?

Trusting in a good God (16:7-11)

Delight in the LORD's Direction (v.7)

Delight in LORD's Security (v. 8)

Delight in LORD's Life

Here and now (v. 9)

Then and there (v.10)

Q. How might we improve our capacity to hear God's voice directing us?

Q. Can you write down TEN of the greatest delights you have in life right now?

Yours in Christ,

Les

## UNITE IN PRAYING THIS TOGETHER

LORD Jesus, during Your ministry on earth You showed Your power and love by healing people suffering from physical, mental, and spiritual ailments. Reach out to people now with Your compassionate touch because of COVID-19. May they feel Your healing power directly and through skilled doctors and nurses. Banish all fear and anxiety. Dear LORD, we lift up the elderly and people with chronic health conditions. Protect them and be their comfort in this time of uncertainty and seclusion. God, guard and renew the energy of health care workers and first responders facing long shifts. Multiply their supplies so they have the protective items needed to stay safe on the job. Inspire and invigorate all researchers developing better tests to diagnose the virus, create vaccines to prevent it, and identify protocols to eliminate the disease's spread. Eternal God, be with people making decisions that affect us and our families, communities, countries, and the wider world. We especially pray that You protect and empower President Trump, Vice-president Pence, and the rest of their administration. Help them communicate clearly, truthfully, and calmly — with each other and with the public — and that their messages are received and heeded. Let truth and empathy be the touchstones of all world leaders setting policies for our protection. Holy Spirit, as families adjust to everyone being home with businesses and schools closed, give us grace in how we all treat one another. Jesus, when people feel financial strain during the uncertainty, bring them comfort and peace; remind them in unique ways that You are there for them. Provide for everyone creatively and abundantly. LORD, we are grateful for those who continue to work so others can eat. Keep their vehicles running smoothly as they deliver needed supplies or food people have ordered online. Eternal Creator, we know that that You are all-powerful, all-knowing, and completely loving. Guide us to respond generously and with excellence in this time of crisis. God, please end this pandemic soon. Our hope is focused on You. Until then, give all people everywhere the wisdom and willingness to follow guidelines for social distancing and recommended hygiene. In the mighty name of Jesus we pray. Amen!

### **FBC Info**

We will not meet for Sunday school, worship, or other events at our building through the end of April. The church office will be closed through April 20, due to the latest request from Governor Holcomb. This time frame could change as the Governor updates his requests. Les and Debbie will work primarily from home. Please feel free to call them on Les' phone: 273-9073. We are still here to serve you. Les will continue to post his sermon on our church website by Saturday evening of each week. If you do not have the internet, please expect this newsletter each week in order to stay connected.

The church family is asked to mail tithes and offerings to the church. Mail is taken into the church building daily. The same people who count and/or deposit our offerings on Sunday mornings will continue doing it. Each person/family in our church has been assigned a specific deacon. If you have any needs, questions please contact your deacon or Les.



# Help People Follow Jesus

[fbcbluffton.com](http://fbcbluffton.com)

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