

THE GRAPEVINE

CW
Church

"I am the vine. You are the branches. Those who live in me while I live in them will produce a lot of fruit, but you can't produce anything without me." John 15:5



Genealogy...NOT AGAIN!!!

Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, the women in Christ's history. Matthew 1:3-6

There are many times in my ministry where I would come across lists of Genealogies in Scripture and I can hear the voices of people in the congregation say, "NO!!!! Why are we studying these lists?" There is one person in particular who I can hear and picture in my mind, Bonnie Neff. Every time I would read the genealogy of Christ, or any genealogy she would say, "What does this list have to do with me? Why are you having us study this list? I really don't understand why God would put this in the Bible." Of course we would laugh about it, but there are many who just "skip" over these lists.

I would submit to you that the genealogy lists are important. Let's take the genealogy of Jesus for example. There are 4 women listed in His genealogy. It is unusual to find the names of women in genealogies. And yet we find them listed here as a sign of God's mercy.

- 1. Tamar was a seducer and adulteress who God reached (Genesis 38:24).*
- 2. Rehab was a Gentile rejected by the Jews. She was a prostitute who was saved from judgement because she exercised faith in God and in*

Israel as God's people (Joshua 2:10

- 3. Ruth was a citizen of a nation hated by the Jews, but she was a woman who chose to become associated with God and His people (Ruth 1)*
- 4. Bathsheba deliberately sinned with David, but she sought God's forgiveness along with David (2 Samuel chapters 11-12).*

There is a beautiful picture in the four women listed in Jesus' ancestry, a beautiful picture of the gospel of Christ: the sins of the women are forgiven and they are accepted by God as His own. There are no barriers to God's mercy!!! He will have mercy on anyone—no matter the sex, nationality, or sin. How marvelous is the mercy of God!

Isn't it great to know that the mercy of God never quits? It is never depleted! No matter how terrible our sin against God, His mercy can reach down and lift us up into His eternal care.

Naturalist Loren Eiseley tells a story about the time he was in the seaside town of Constable. Plagued by insomnia, he spent the early morning hours walking the beach. Each day at sunrise, he found townspeople

Sunday Worship

10:30 a.m. in-person or online @ <https://www.youtube.com/user/ColumbusWestChurch> or @ <https://www.facebook.com/columbuswestcog> We also stream to both media outlets on Wednesdays @ 7 p.m. Join us each week for Spiritfilled times of worship. Each day at noon there is a livestream of prayer on Facebook where you can share praises and requests. Join us

combing the sand for the starfish that had washed ashore during the night in order to kill them for commercial purposes. Wisely thought this was a sign, however small, of all the ways the world says "no" to life.

One morning, however, Eiseley got up earlier than usual and discovered a solitary figure on the beach. This man, too, was gathering starfish, but each time he found one live he would pick it up and throw it as far as he could out beyond the breaking surf, back to the nurturing ocean from which it came. As days went by, Eiseley found this man embarked on his mission of mercy each morning, seven days a week, no matter what the weather.

Eiseley called this man "the star thrower." On the beach in Constable, everything that Eiseley had been taught about evolution and the survival of the fittest was contradicted by one man. For this man, strong as he was, reached down to save the weak. There is a star thrower at work in the universe—a God who contradicts death, a God whose nature is mercy itself.

Pastor Rob

Thriftiness

verses extravagance

This is the story of two young boys. Although living at different times in history, each one saw the miraculous provision of God for his family in response to his faith and obedience.

The first boy was the older son of a widow during Elisha's day. Who was the second boy?

The quiet weeping of a mother could be heard by her son. He understood; he, too, shared in her sorrow. His father had died. They were a close family, and the father was greatly missed by him, his mother, and his little brother.

But the loss of the father was not to be deepened by further tragedy. The creditors were coming to take the boy and his younger brother away from their sorrowing mother. They would have to work to pay off the debts which their father had accumulated.

With no food in the house except a pot of oil, the grieving mother had nowhere to turn but to the Lord, Who began to work in a very unique and marvelous way.

God directed the prophet Elisha to tell the mother to get empty pots and pans from her neighbors. "Get as many as you can," he said. The boy and his brother worked with their mother, and soon they had a house full of empty pots. Then they shut the door.

The older son began bringing the pots to his mother. She poured her oil into each one according to the instructions of the prophet. Miraculously the oil was never used up. It filled every container! The jubilant widow sold this oil, paid the creditors, and lives on the rest.

The account of this widow and her sons was passed on years later to another young boy. He also had a mother in need. Their provisions for food were sparse. Rather than having rich wheat, they survived on barley, the grain of the poor.

Like the widow's son of earlier years, this boy purposed to help his mother. One day he listened to the excitement of villagers going out into the countryside to hear a wise teacher. That gave him an idea. He went home, got what he needed, and hurried out to join them.



That day the boy listened to the rich and refreshing truths of Christ. The boy's faith was stirred as he heard and understood.

He decided to put the teachings on giving into action and made his way up to the front of the crowd. He told a disciple by the name of Andrew that he wanted to give something to Christ. Andrew agreed to tell Jesus about his offer.

A few minutes later Andrew returned and received from the boy a basket of five barley loaves and two fish. Christ blessed them, broken them, and then gave them to

His disciples to feed over 5,000 people! Not only did Christ satisfy the hungry multitude, but He had His disciple gather up twelve baskets of food that was left over. With these baskets Christ was able to demonstrate to this boy and his mother the potential of multiplied returns when limited resources are first given to Him.

Both of these stories can be found in 2 Kings 4:1-7 and John 6:5-14.

What we glean from these stories is that Jesus can satisfy our needs. Jesus knew all along what He would do. He had shown the people that He could satisfy their physical need through supernatural means. Now He was able to teach them that He could abundantly satisfy their spiritual need through supernatural means as well. He had revealed another truth to His disciples, taking inadequate resources and making them adequate for the occasion. Their ordinary lives and abilities could be supernaturally used if they were brought to the Lord, broken by Him, and used for His service.

The same is true for us. If we come to Him willingly, broken by Him and then are willing to be used by Him. He can take our small resources and supernaturally feed thousands. Will you allow Him to multiply you today? That is how you make the most of your limited resources, which is a part of *Thriftiness*.

Christmas Around the Piano

December 25, 2022

This is a very special year for the Christmas Season. The Praise Team would like to invite you to join them around the piano on Sunday morning December 18th for a special time of worship. We will have worship service at 10:30 a.m. and be sharing some traditional Christmas Carols as well as some very special music.

As we gather to celebrate the birth of our Savior, we'd love for you to join us

in sharing the real Reason for the Season. We understand that many of you will have family festivities, but this is one service that you won't want to



miss as we join as the Family of God. Hope that you will mark it on your calendar, put it on your schedule, and make this year extra special by sharing your Christmas with all of us.

Moss

How is making the best use of limited resources illustrated in the world of nature?

History provides the amazing accounts of two field workers. One was more famous, or rather infamous, and the other was more common.

From outward appearances they both looked alike, but what a vast difference on the inside! And what a stark contrast resulted from their work.

One day the older and more mature field worker passed by a piece of land that no one wanted. It was filled with rocks. It was so barren and desolate that hardly a patch of grass could be seen anywhere on it. This was just the kind of challenge that he wanted. He went to work immediately exercising all the abilities which God had entrusted to him.

It was hard work, but finally he was able to get established. He had a major advantage over his look-alike, younger field worker. His way of life required less resources, and he made the best use of everything that he had. His basic motivation was to give rather than to get.

While he carried out this incredible work of reclaiming the soil, the younger field worker happened to wander by the lush potato field. It was here that he went to work.

He was also very diligent. His purpose, however, was to take from others and consume it himself. The potato fields provided an ideal place for this.

Unnoticed at first, he began to feed on the potatoes. Soon he claimed more and more for himself. When the owners of the field finally caught up with him, he had already put into



motion a devastating plan that was impossible for them to stop.

Potato field after potato field came under his control, and whatever fell into his hand he destroyed. Soon the people in nearby villages were concerned, and

those who lived in the cities became alarmed. They all depended upon the potato for their survival, both physically and financially. The potato was the staple crop of their country.

For two devastating years this destructive field worker carried out she deadly work. Soon, people began to die of starvation. They died by the thousands. By the time this field worker was finished, about 650,000 people had died. This destructive field worker was the spore, or seed, of a fungus. He was the cause of the 1847 potato famine in Ireland.

Meanwhile, his look-alike field worker continued to accomplish marvelous changes in the rocky land. It was becoming an area that would eventually sustain the lives of many cattle.

This worker was literally turning the surface of the rocks into soil, and the longer he worked, the more increased its richness. This farm worker was the spore, or seed, of the moss, which continues to be a living demonstration of the potential of thriftiness.

Annual Business Meeting

Church family, its getting to be that time of year again. Next month will be our Annual Business Meeting. There will be a couple of changes this year, from the previous couple of years.

First, since we've been meeting in person for worship service, the Leadership Team has decided that we will NOT be live-streaming the Annual Business Meeting this year. We want to encourage all of you to come and be a part of the meeting.

Second, the date of the meeting is Sunday, January 22nd. We will be starting promptly at 9 a.m. There will be some donuts and plenty of coffee available to all who are in attendance.

Third, we will have ballots available by Sunday, January 8th for absentee voting. If you are not going to be able to attend the meeting, you can request a ballot by contacting the church office, talk to a member of the Leadership Team, or contact Pastor Rob. The absentee

ballots must be returned in a sealed envelope to the church office before the meeting on the 22nd.

Fourth, there are a couple of special presentations that will be made this year and decisions that we will be making as a congregation. These presentations will be explained in detail in the Annual Reports and voted on at the Annual Meeting. Please take time to become familiar with these presentations before the meeting, ask questions of Leadership, and be ready to cast your vote at the meeting. We want everyone to be well informed at the meeting as we move forward as a congregation.

God is moving and leading us as a congregation and there are exciting times in the future for us at CW Church. Let's come together and celebrate this on the 22nd as the Family of God at Columbus West Church of God!!!

Family

In the last issue of the Grapevine I spent time writing about my family. As we get ready to head into a New Year, I want us to take a moment and think about our Church Family. This next year CW Church will be celebrating 60 years of ministry. Think about that for a moment...60 years of ministry. There are many churches today that last 5, 10, or maybe even are blessed to make it to 20 years. But the Lord has blessed CW Church to minister here at the corner of Palmetto, Inah, and Gladys for 60 years. That is something to celebrate.



Over this next year, each month, we're going to be sharing and celebrating this milestone as a congregation. I wanted to share a story about one family that started coming to our congregation in the year of 1978.

This year with Christmas and New Year's being on Sunday, I've had many ask me, "Why are you having worship? Why not just live-stream from your home, and not open the building? No one is going to come." There have been some valid points that have been shared with me concerning worship service being canceled on Christmas and New Year's. However, when I think about canceling church, or closing the building, I think of this story.



Many of you remember or know of the *Blizzard of '78*. I remember it very well. That morning we woke up to no electric like many families in Central Ohio and across the state. The wind was

howling and the snow was flying. The parsonage wasn't freezing yet, but was on it's way. The electric came on for an hour or so, long enough for us to fix some food, get cleaned up, warm up the house, and make preparations in case it went out again. It did go out again and we hunkered down in my parents room and played games all morning.

We survived the morning and electric was restored and Dad started calling people in the church to see how they were fairing the storm. There were many who were without electric and their houses were freezing. So, we went out and got them and brought them to the parsonage. By nightfall, we had close to 40 people in our house for a *sleep-over*. By the next morning most everyone had electric again and people started filtering back home.

Well, the cleanup from the storm started, but Inah was a mess. At the time there was no fire station across the street from the church, it was just a big field. The snow plow did come down the street, but it got stuck and the fire truck had to come and pull it out. As the weekend approached, we got more snow and the temperatures were very cold. Dad and Leadership decided to NOT have church that Sunday.

That was probably a very wise choice. Because in looking at the situation across the state and the families in the congregation, the condition of Inah and Palmetto, not sure anyone would have come to service anyway. That's one of the turmoils that pastors have to deal with when deciding to have or not have church on a Sunday. Will



people come, will they not? The "What if's?" It can be quite stressful. The great thing we can do and what I've learned from my Father and from experience, make sure you have Leadership backing that way you can point the finger there when people complain (that's a joke.)

That Sunday morning the church sat dark with no service. At the parsonage, the four boys were up, called to breakfast by our Father

and Mother and we were getting ready to sit down for our own worship service. Just as we were there was a knock on the door. We all looked at each other asking, "Who could that be? Did someone not get the message about worship service? Oh, no someone is going to be really mad that they made the trip out and there's no worship service."



Dad went to the door and there stood Vern Friesen. Now, he had never been to CW Church before. He and his family had just moved to Columbus and they were looking for a church to attend. They had attended Church of God and found CW Church and thought he would come to church. And.....the church was closed. Dad explained to him why church had been canceled and welcomed him in, and invited him back the next week. Vern shared that he and his family were from Buffalo and that this was nothing and they didn't cancel anything up in Buffalo, as he was chuckling.

He understood, though, and came back to church the next week. Not only did he come back, but he brought his family and they stayed and got involved in the ministry of CW Church through the years. Bea, his wife, became Grandma Bea, who sat in the nursery week in and week out. Vern became a strong leader in the congregation serving on several different boards, ushered, and was a greeter. He would also go out with Ted Green door to door witnessing on Tuesday evenings.

As I have gone through my years of ministry, I have been challenged about canceling worship service because of weather, especially in South Carolina. I went ahead and had worship service because of Vern's story. A couple of times it was just Dawn, the kids and I, but we would have had worship service at home anyway. You never know who you might be ministering to. You never know who the Lord might add to your family. I thank the Lord for adding Vern and Bea Friesen to the CW Church family that many years ago. They helped bring and



His Touch

I was in grade school when my sister Pam was born. She wore a brace from her neck to her waist. They told mom then that her daughter had missing vertebrae and this caused her to have a curved spine. She walked with a limp and spent years in that constrictive brace. Mom chose me to be the one to walk my sister to grade school every day. I had 7 brothers and sisters, but mom had me do it. Why? Pam grew up to be very successful in life. She married and had a child later in life. My time with her taught me courage and inspiration. Did God's touch on my life of dealing with special needs begin then? If so, then my life's destiny of caring for challenged individuals began in the late 50's.

In the early 60's, I used to fight a lot with neighborhood kids. I was just a young kid and did not know much about doing the right things. My brother, Walt, who was one year older than me, would instigate my fighting a lot. I had a bad temper and he knew it. He knew how to say just the right (wrong) thing to get me started. I think back on those days and wonder how I could have been so messed up. I had no faith or understanding of God then and no one was there to teach me kindness and the love of Jesus. I was just a young kid with a bad understanding of friendship. Was God teaching me then about how valuable friendship and caring for others was? I regret those days but I have learned a lot about making right choices today. I am glad that my God did not abandon me because of my bad choices back then. I believe that his touch was guiding me to understand the importance of loving others, not hurting them. I wonder if those times were preparing me for his purpose on my life.

I was married in September of 1972. I met Sharon at Huy Road Recreation center when I was a teenager. I had other girlfriends then, so she and I never connected during the teen years. I went into the Army in 1969 and spent 18 months in Germany. When I came home, I had another girlfriend and I spent a lot of time with her. None of my relationships, before or after the army, worked. I believe that God brought Sharon to me then because I needed a good-hearted woman to walk with me, to love me and to work with me on this new journey. I went to her apartment, where she was

living with Jane, her best friend. She was not home then, but when I returned to her house the next time, our life together began.



Sharon was devoted to her church and would not miss going every Sunday. I hardly ever went. That changed quickly after a few stubborn months! My faith in Jesus began then, slow going, but it was going. It seemed that what I learned from Sharon's faith was so essential to any goal of working with challenged lives. My heart had to change, my faith had to grow, and knowing Jesus had to be at the center before I could do anything! Did God's touch on my life of dealing with special needs begin then?

We had a daughter born in 1974. She was our Shelli. She was a joy to us and we loved having her with us. She laughed so freely and raising her brought so much happiness to our family. I did not think much about handicaps then.

We had Tim in 1977 and life changed! He came out purple with a hole in his back. What was happening to my world? This was not supposed to happen. He should have been born normal and happy like Shelli. But he wasn't. He had Spina Bifida, Open Spine. I did not want this and was not much help the first couple years of his life. Then one day I was with him at the hospital when I watched a doctor take a long needle and insert it into his head to draw fluid. God got my attention there. Here was my little boy who needed his daddy and not just his mommy. How could I have been so blind? This period shook me awake and taught me the value caring and loving as Jesus loved. Through my son's eyes I understood what God's touch actually meant.

To be continued...

By Bud McKinney

Christmas Services

In the busyness of the Christmas Season it is always good to take some time to just slow down and celebrate the birth of Christ with your family. This season is extra special with Christmas being on Sunday. However, the Christmas Even Service has always been a very special Christmas Tradition at CW Church. This year promises to be very special. Make plans to come and share with us on Saturday, December 24th at 6 p.m. as we sing carols, read Scripture, and celebrate the birth of Christ. Then on Sunday, December 25th at 10:30 a.m. we will be gathering for an extra special time of worship celebration. Not only is Christmas a great time to be with family, but when you celebrate with your Church Family it becomes extra special. So, on Christmas Day, as part of your Christmas tradition, make worship at CW Church a part of your celebration. We will be live streaming both services and so if you're unable to be with us in person, we would love to have you join us either on FaceBook or on YouTube. However, there is nothing like celebrating and worshiping together in person. Don't let the Christmas Season pass you by without worshiping with your Church Family.

