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MAY 2026

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Christians
Vote?**

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Why Should Christians Vote?

A Biblical, Historical, and Practical Case for Faithful Civic Participation

by Pastor Ty Orr

In every election cycle, many Christians wrestle with the same question: Should I vote? Some feel politics is too corrupt. Others worry about placing too much hope in earthly systems. Still others wonder whether Scripture calls believers to engage in something as modern as democratic elections.

While the Bible does not explicitly mention voting, it offers a rich framework that strongly supports thoughtful, responsible civic participation. When understood biblically, voting is not about partisan identity or misplaced hope—it is about stewardship, love of neighbor, and seeking justice in the place God has providentially placed us.

GOVERNMENT IS GOD'S SERVANT

Scripture teaches that civil authority is not an accident of history but an institution under God's sovereignty. The apostle Paul writes that **“there is no authority except from God,”** and that rulers are **“God's servant for your good”** (Romans 13:1-4). Peter likewise commands believers to **“be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution”** (1 Peter 2:13-14).

If government is real, morally significant, and accountable to God, participation in its formation matters. In systems where citizens are given a voice—

however limited—choosing leaders is not trivial. It is one way to influence whether justice is upheld or undermined.

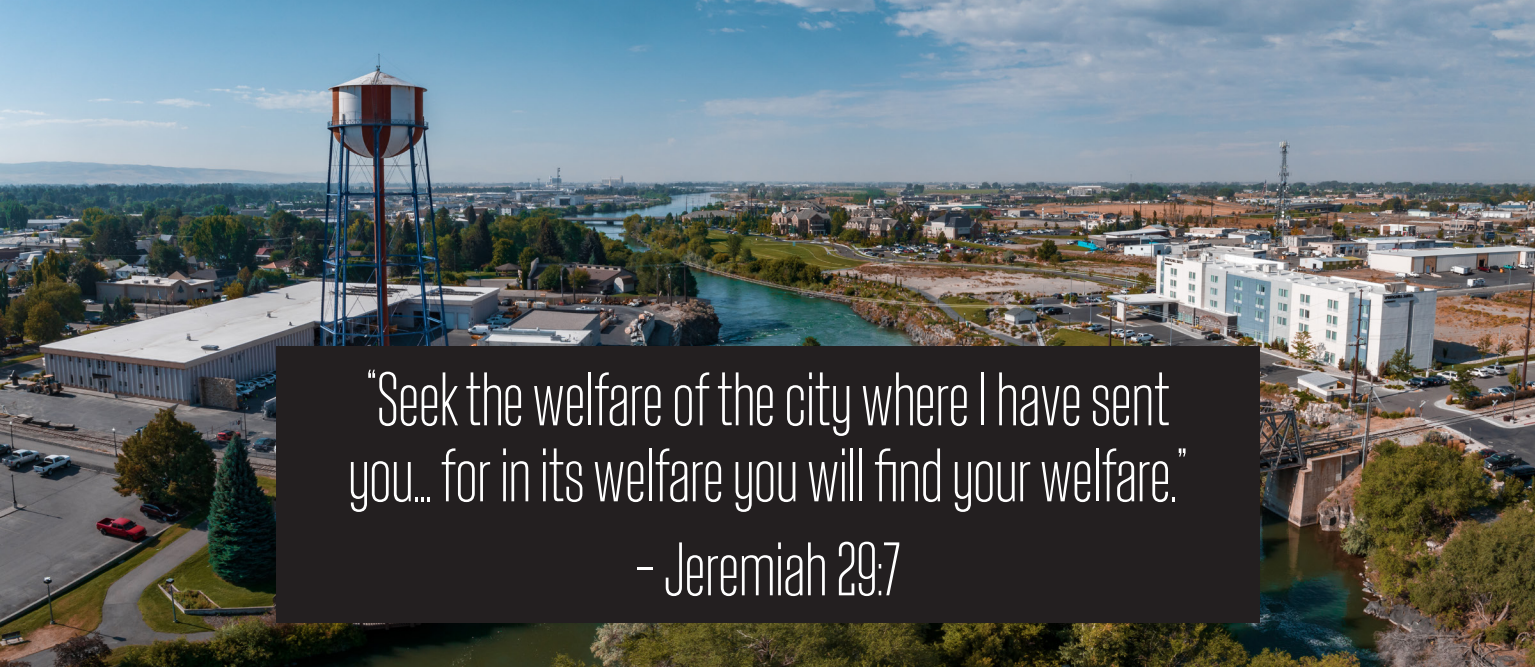
LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR HAS PUBLIC IMPLICATIONS

Jesus' command to **“love your neighbor as yourself”** (Matthew 22:39) is often understood in personal terms, but it also has unavoidable public consequences. Laws affect real people: the poor, the unborn, the elderly, families, and the vulnerable.

Voting is an ordinary way Christians can seek the welfare of others. It is not the only way—but it is a meaningful one. Loving our neighbor includes caring about the systems that shape their safety, freedom, and human flourishing.

SEEKING JUSTICE IN THE “GATE”

In the Old Testament, the city “gate” was where public decisions were made and justice was administered (Deuteronomy 16:18-20; Amos 5:15). The prophets repeatedly called God's people to pursue justice in these public spaces: **“Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy”** (Proverbs 31:9).



“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you... for in its welfare you will find your welfare.”

– Jeremiah 29:7

While our political systems look different today, elections serve as a modern equivalent of the gate. Voting is one way to “open our mouth” in the public square—not with words, but with responsible action.

SEEKING THE GOOD OF THE CITY

When Israel was exiled to Babylon, God did not tell His people to withdraw from society. Instead, He commanded them: **“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you... for in its welfare you will find your welfare”** (Jeremiah 29:7).

This instruction is striking because it was given in a pagan context. God’s people were not ruling the nation—they were living within it. Yet they were still called to care for its well-being. Christians today find themselves in a similar position. Voting is one way to seek the good of the place where we live.

STEWARDSHIP OF INFLUENCE

Jesus’ parables about stewardship teach that we are accountable for what God entrusts to us (Matthew 25:14–30). In many countries, including the United States, citizens are entrusted with a measure of political influence.

To abstain entirely from that influence is not always a mark of faithfulness. In some cases, it may be a *neglect of responsibility*. Voting is a small but real stewardship, an opportunity to act in ways that reflect biblical convictions about justice, truth, and human dignity.

SPEAKING FOR THE VULNERABLE

Scripture repeatedly calls God’s people to defend those who cannot defend themselves: **“Rescue those who are being taken away to death”** (Proverbs 24:11) and **“open your mouth for the mute”** (Proverbs 31:8).

Voting is not the only way to obey these commands, but it is one concrete avenue. Laws and leaders directly affect the vulnerable. Participation in elections can be an act of advocacy for those who lack power or voice. For example: we can speak for the unborn child.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF FAITHFUL ENGAGEMENT

Throughout Scripture, God’s people often lived under imperfect governments—yet they still engaged them faithfully:

- **Joseph** administered Egypt’s resources wisely (Genesis 41).
- **Daniel** served in pagan courts without compromising his faith (Daniel 1–6).
- **Esther** used her position to protect her people (Esther 4).
- **Paul** exercised his Roman citizenship to seek justice (Acts 22:25–29).

None of these examples lived in ideal political systems. Yet each used available opportunities to promote justice and preserve life. Their example suggests that engagement—not withdrawal—is often the faithful path.

THE WITNESS OF CHRISTIAN HISTORY

Christian thinkers throughout history have affirmed the importance of civil life under God's authority.

Augustine described political order as part of earthly peace, writing that "the peace of the city is the orderly harmony of command and obedience."¹ John Calvin called civil government a "most sacred" institution necessary for human society.² Martin Luther taught that temporal authority is ordained by God to restrain evil and preserve order.³

In more recent history, Abraham Kuyper emphasized Christ's lordship over every sphere of life, declaring that there is not "a square inch" of creation outside His rule.⁴ John Stott urged Christians to live faithfully "in the world," including its social and political realities.⁵ Wayne Grudem has argued that believers should avoid both withdrawal and domination, instead seeking meaningful influence grounded in biblical principles.⁶ Francis Schaeffer likewise warned against disengagement, insisting that Christ's lordship extends to all of life, including society and government.⁷

Across centuries and traditions, the pattern is consistent: Christians are called to live out their faith in both the public and private spheres.

PRACTICAL AND LOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Beyond theology, there are simple realities to consider. Laws shape nearly every aspect of life, education, religious freedom, family policy, economic opportunity, and the protection of life itself. Leaders appoint judges, enforce laws, and set the tone of public life.

If Christians choose not to participate, decisions will still be made, but without their voice. Voting does not guarantee good outcomes, but it does provide an opportunity to contribute to them.



CONCLUSION

None of this means Christians should place their hope in politics. Scripture is clear: salvation does not come through governments, parties, or policies. Christ alone saves.

At the same time, faithfulness includes how we live in the present world. Voting should be understood not as an act of ultimate trust, but as an act of responsible stewardship.

Christians should vote:

- Humbly, recognizing the limits of political solutions.
- Prayerfully, seeking God's wisdom (James 1:5).
- Biblically, informed by Scripture rather than party loyalty.
- Charitably, treating others with respect even in disagreement.

In the end, voting is not about securing a perfect society. It is about loving our neighbor, seeking justice, and stewarding the opportunities God has given us—while remembering that our true citizenship is in heaven (Philippians 3:20).

¹ Augustine, *The City of God*, bk. XIX, ch. 13, excerpted in "St Augustine Extracts from *The City of God*," *Imagining Other*, accessed April 24, 2026.

² John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, bk. IV, ch. 20, "Of Civil Government," *Christian Classics Ethereal Library*, accessed April 24, 2026.

³ Martin Luther, "Temporal Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed" (1523), excerpted by *Natural Law, Natural Rights, and American Constitutionalism*, accessed April 24, 2026.

⁴ Abraham Kuyper, "Sphere Sovereignty," quoted in "7 Abraham Kuyper Quotes on Faith and Culture," *Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary*, accessed April 24, 2026.

⁵ John R. W. Stott, *Issues Facing Christians Today*, quoted in *The Trinitarian Bible Society PDF*, accessed April 24, 2026.

⁶ Wayne Grudem, *Politics according to the Bible*, summarized on *WayneGrudem.com*, accessed April 24, 2026.

⁷ Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto*, quote listing at *Goodreads*; *Crossway book description*, accessed April 24, 2026.



*Coffee
with the
Pastor*

MAY 24TH • 1 PM
HOMESTEAD

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Cool Youth Summer

by Ryan Fugh

Believe it or not we're already five months into 2026 and summer is just around the corner. I wanted to take the time to mention a few key details regarding youth group over the summer.

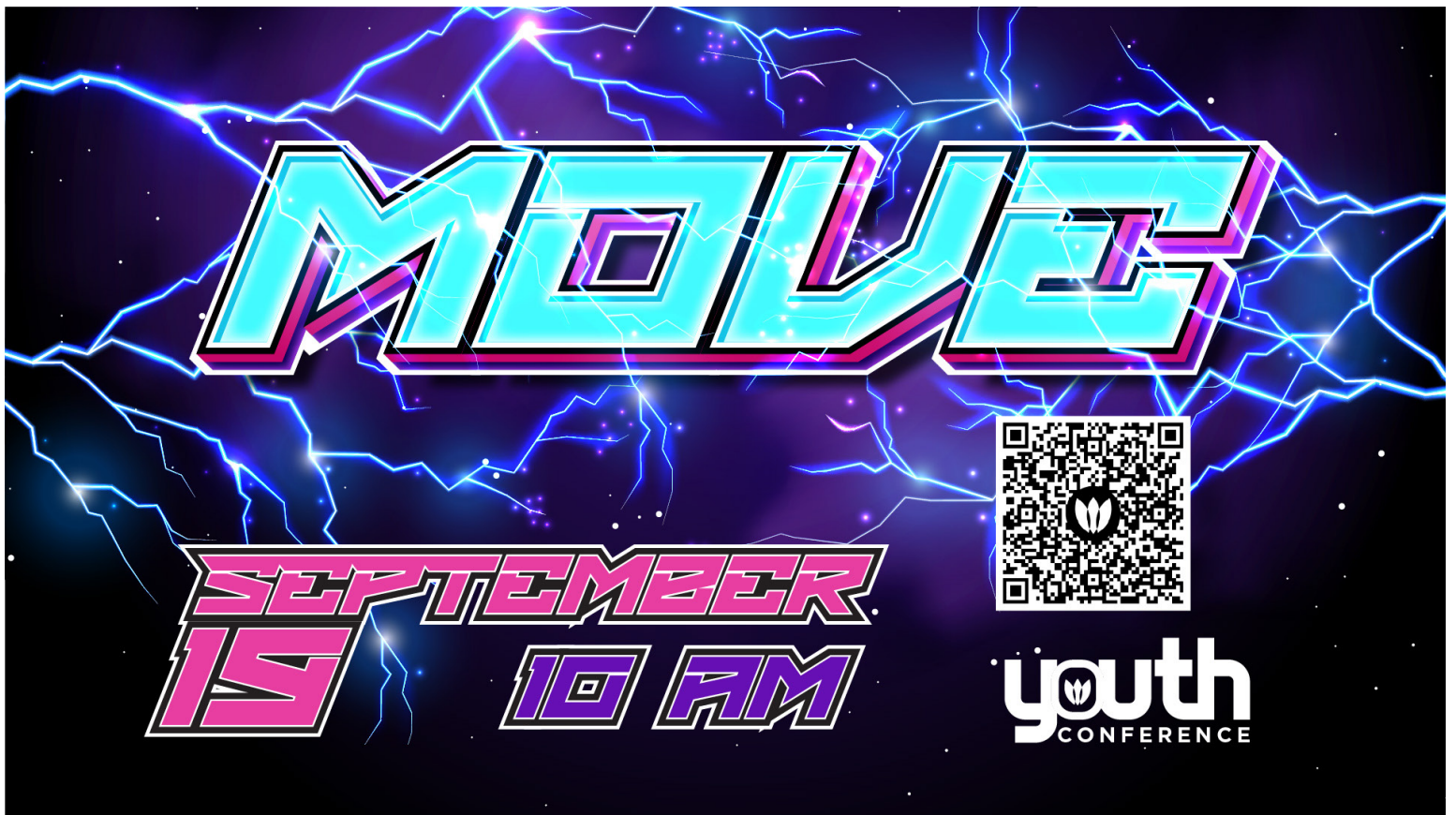
First off, it's a blast. Some of our traditional activities that we'll be bringing back again this year include a lake day, slip and slide kickball, water days, and other outside activities.

I also want to mention that all incoming 6th graders are invited to join Thrive this summer. They don't have to wait till the school year starts. In fact, I encourage

students to start during the summer because it makes for a softer entry before school starts and all the craziness that comes with it. The activities we plan aren't just for fun, but also help create camaraderie and fellowship. I've been doing youth ministry for several years now and a couple things I've always noticed is that over the summer the kids miss the socializing they get over the school year with their peers, at youth group they can get that with Christ at the center. Another thing that comes up is that their favorite time to be at youth group is over the summer. Nothing says we're a youth group family like throwing water balloons at each other.

For more information on youth group make sure to head over to Watersprings.net, and if you have a kiddo that's between 6th and 12th grade be sure to register them to keep up to date with any youth information. Look for Thrive if they're in middle school and Revive if they're in high school. While you're there make sure you register for the September 2026 MOVE! Youth Conference.

God bless



MOVE!

SEPTEMBER 19 10 AM

youth CONFERENCE



A NEW CREATION

by Melanie Verhoeven

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV)

If you are in Christ you are to live a new life. Living for things that Christ wants us to live for. We are to think about how to do things and live out Christ's love and His ways. We were raised in Christ and we are to live out certain behaviors that are appropriate to the Christian. Because we have been raised, we should act just as Jesus did when He was resurrected.

He left the tomb: we don't live where we were; dead. He was with and ministered to His disciples: Jesus did not go alone- He walked and talked with those who loved Him and He loved. We are to be in community with other believers. He lived in supernatural power with the ability to do the impossible: we have that power through Him and the Holy Spirit to do things that are not possible in our flesh. He looked forward to Heaven: He knew that the earth was going to pass away and was moving toward heaven: we have to remember that this earth is not our final resting place, we have citizenship in heaven with Christ.

With this ideal we are to seek the things that are above: we are to have our mind set on things in heaven. What is in heaven that we are to be pushing forward to?

Is it riches, gold, pearls? How about a mansion or streets made of gold? Nope, those things will not matter as we will be with the Savior there!

Set your mind on things that are above. Our lives are hidden in Christ, and we get to have the end goal of heaven. We get to set our thoughts on it.

When you have a goal, what do you think on most of the time? I usually think of the end product. The prize so to speak! Heaven is the goal! But as that is the goal, what do we do to get there? We think on, we act, we have a plan to get there! Here in Colossians 3, Paul shares part of that plan. We are to be ever thinking and be engrossed by the heavenly. Pleasing God.

Now earthly things are not all evil. We have good things here on earth. Everything God created He said was good. So if we have good things here on earth, why do we replace God with those things? I believe it's because we forget who gave or made those things. We need to refocus on the goal-Jesus in Heaven. We have the promise of His return. I think it's getting closer and closer!

DEATH TO OLD SELF

In the light of thinking on things that are above, we still

are on earth. There are still things we need to do here as we wait for His return. We have some weeding of the soul to do. We need to get some evil out of ourselves. We can't do this alone. We also don't know what needs to go. In our earthly eyes the weeds often look pretty and lovely, sometimes they even have flowers on them. We see the sin and think that I can enjoy it just while the flowers are blooming. I can pull it out later, or is it really a weed?

Last year one of my daughters and I planted a bunch of wild flower seeds. They started to come up in the spring. They were green and lovely. We watched with anticipation for what would bloom. I saw that there were weeds in the flower bed, but were they really weeds? I'm not a great gardener and had no idea. So I left them to see what was what. We watched and waited some more. Finally we saw buds and flowers started to arrive. By then the weeds were so overgrown that I could not pull them without hurting the good plants. I needed wisdom from someone who knows about weeds so I could have pulled them before they intertwined in my beautiful wild flower garden. As the garden grew, so did the weeds. I tried to pull some of them out as best as I could, but I lost a bunch of plants that I wanted to keep. So it is with sin and our old man/woman.

Colossians 3:5 says to put to death the members that are against God: we must place our identity in Christ and not the flesh. We put that which is not from God to death. Anything that is contrary to our identity in Him.

To make dead: it's a verb; to deny these things that are against God and consider them dead, that you are not able to use them. The list of things we are to make dead, to put to death: fornication, uncleanness/impurity, passions/inordinate affection, evil desires, covetousness,

and idolatry. These sins, or weeds in the garden, are part of the way the world lives and not the way Jesus lives or wants us to live. Who do you identify with? God or the world? Know God's Word, Pray, Seek His wisdom, that's how we grow into a mature christian.

Paul is telling the Colossians and us to put off this old (wo)man with all these ugly deeds and sins and weeds. With Jesus we are different! When these thoughts and desires arise we must deal with them like they are alien intruders, spiders, mice in the cupboard, ants or the vermin that they are. So, as we look at this really ugly list of sins and attitudes, I find it hard to figure out what to do. I was chatting with a fellow believer and we were encouraging each other that we are to get rid of these things, but how?

We came up with the idea that these sins are like vermin who want to invade the quiet and peace and lovely garden that we are growing in Christ. Have you ever just had a fabulous time worshiping God whether in church, the car or in your personal devotions? And then BAM a thought makes you mad. Yup, it happens to all of us. Those sinful thoughts and attitudes need to be eradicated, evicted out of your heart and mind.

If those thoughts and attitudes came in like a mouse who is in the pantry, what would you do? Would you say, "It's only one, no big deal. He's so cute and little. He won't hurt a thing." Well, not me!

Acknowledge, Trap, Eradicate. Use the exterminator of the Holy Spirit conviction to get rid of those sins. But in the absence of sin, we must put on something or the old ways will come creeping back in. We are to live grounded in Christ and steadfast in the new person He created us to be!





Let's Talk About Communion

PART 2

by Pastor Dave Coleman

Building on what we established in last month's Newsletter—that Communion is a sacred act requiring self-examination and sincere repentance—we now turn to an often-overlooked dimension of the Lord's Table: accountability within the body of Christ. Scripture not only invites us to come, but also instructs the church on how to respond when sin is unrepentant and ongoing. With that in mind, this next section explores both the protective and redemptive role of church discipline, and how it ultimately points us back to the grace found at the Table.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE

There is even biblical precedent for the local church withholding Communion (the Lord's Supper) from a church member due to unrepentant sin. This practice is rooted in 1 Corinthians 5, where the Apostle Paul addresses a case of serious, unrepentant sin in the Corinthian church. Paul instructs the church to take disciplinary action against a member who is living in ongoing, unrepentant sin: *"Let him who has done this be removed from among you,"* (1 Corinthians 5:2, ESV). Paul goes on to explain that this is not just for the sake of discipline, but also for the spiritual well-being of the individual and the purity of the church body. In verse 5, Paul writes, *"you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord."* Paul clarifies, in verses 11-13, that the church is not to associate with someone who calls themselves a believer but is living in persistent sin, such

as sexual immorality, greed, or idolatry. He specifically instructs that believers are not to *"eat with such a one,"* (1 Corinthians 5:11), implying that the practice of sharing in fellowship, including Communion, should be withheld from those who are unrepentant in their sin.

Again, this action is to protect the purity of the church and to call the individual to repentance. The purpose is redemptive, aiming to restore the individual to a right relationship with God. The church's withholding of Communion is a means of reminding the unrepentant member of the serious nature of their sin and the importance of reconciliation with God and the church. It is in no way a statement that the local church, nor the local pastor or bishop, has the authority to damn a person to hell. The ultimate goal is repentance and restoration - just as in Matthew 18:15-17 - for the health of the local church and the spiritual wellbeing of the individual.

Communion is an important ordinance that should be taken with reverence and in a manner worthy of the sacrifice of Christ. It is much more than just a simple, symbolic act. The Lord's Supper is a time for self-examination, as described in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29. Individuals should approach the Table of the Lord with humility and gratitude, understanding the weight of partaking in Communion. It is a means of spiritual nourishment and remembrance of Christ's death for the forgiveness of sins, and should therefore not be taken by those whose intent is to continue in unrepentant sin, as

it would be dishonoring to the meaning of the elements and to the literal body and blood of Christ. Because our Lord Jesus allowed His body to be brutalized, taking the punishment for our sin, and His precious blood to be shed, providing remission from our sin, it is reasonable that the Apostle Paul tells us not to partake of the bread and wine (symbols of His broken body and shed blood) if we intend to knowingly continue in sin. To do so is to mock the body and blood of Christ.

THE SINNER'S FEAST

When we come to the Table of the Lord, we are celebrating our forgiveness. We are made the righteousness of God through the redemptive work of Christ on the cross of Calvary, (2 Corinthians 5:21). This is exactly what we are talking about when we oft times refer to Communion as “the sinner’s feast.” We are the prodigals who have been received by the One who paid the ultimate price, exchanging our sins for His righteousness, (Luke 15). We do not deserve the riches of His mercy and grace, but He would not have it any other way. He has clothed us in the best robe – His righteousness – and put shoes on our feet – that we might walk in His way – and killed the fatted calf – withholding no good thing from us, but rather, giving us the abundant life in His Spirit.

Pastor Chuck Smith once said, “My worthiness is not something that is predicated upon my goodness, my works or my efforts, but it is on the grace of God and my believing in Jesus Christ. Thus, I partake [of Communion] freely today, because I believe in Him and I rest in His grace. You talk about truly being worthy, in that sense, I never have been, but by the grace of God I stand through faith in Jesus Christ,” (Smith, C. (June, 2005). Verse by Verse Study on 1 Corinthians 11 by Chuck Smith. Retrieved from <https://www.blueletterbible.org>).

As the old song goes, “He paid a debt He didn’t owe,” because, “we owed a debt we couldn’t pay.” When we come to the Table of the Lord, partaking of the bread and the wine, we are not proclaiming our own worthiness, we are showing forth His death until He comes again for us.

Like Pastor Chuck and virtually all Calvary Chapel fellowships, we embrace what is known as “open communion.” That is, we do not insist that one must be a member or active participant with our local church in order to partake of communion with us when we observe the ordinance together as a church family. All

Jesus-followers, regardless of denominational affiliation, are welcomed and invited to the Table of the Lord, however, we do emphasize the importance of doing so with a heart of sincere reverence and not superficially.

CONCLUSION

In summary, Communion is a sacred ordinance and essential practice for every believer under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It is an opportunity to remember and give thanks for His sacrifice, to engage in self-examination and confession, and to renew the bond of fellowship with other believers in the body of Christ. Communion is a time of reflection on God’s grace, a moment to renew one’s commitment to live in holiness, and a reminder of the hope of Christ’s return. It is a time to reflect, with deep reverence, upon the significance of the Lord’s suffering on our behalf, for the forgiveness of sin, and the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

The image is a Spotify advertisement. At the top left is the Spotify logo. Below it, the text reads "Sermon to Sermon. Stream teachings anywhere. Follow us!". There are two green buttons with white text and icons: "WATERSPRINGS CHURCH PODCAST" with a church icon, and "PASTORS LIVE" with a group of people icon. The background is dark with a pair of headphones in the bottom right corner.



THE PHILIPPINES

Excerpt from Brad & Haley Dick's Newsletter

ABIDE IN ME

Sometimes, on the mission field, we have a tendency to count our effectiveness based on our production. For example, if we have baptized several people, we will say that we have been productive. Another example is, if we have seen huge results in evangelism, we count those who go on to be disciples as being productive. Is this the only metric that there is in the Christian life?

Why don't we ever count our involvement in the Word? Our time in prayer? Our time in worship? Should we even try to quantify our effectiveness by such means?

Isaiah 43:20b-21 says, **"... I have given waters in the wilderness and rivers in the wasteland, to give drink to My chosen people. The people whom I formed for Myself will recount My praise."** This verse explains God's purpose for His chosen people, to bring Him praise and glory. Earlier in the chapter, verse 7 says, **"Everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made."** Again, we see our purpose highlighted. So, if our purpose is to glorify God, then how do we go about it? Let's look at John 15:7-8 **"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples."**

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you..." The starting place for bringing God glory is a saturation of the heart in the Word. Time spent reading and pondering God's Word, will change our views, our involvement in activities, and our speech. When someone spends minutes of time digging into some passage, hours of results can be recorded. When someone spends hours learning the intricacies of a set of verses, a week's worth of affect can be observed. Days breed forth a month. A week can impact several months.

Let's continue through the verse. **"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."** This word, "abide," can simply mean to live in, remain in, as in a house. As Christ's words live inside our hearts and heads, they will shape our mindset and our outlook on life. With a changed mindset, we then step into a place of prayer, or conversation with God. The things that He desires become our desires. The way that He views a particular situation becomes the lens that we look through. So, when we start asking for things, these "things" will be in alignment with His will, which we find in His Word. And God will bring about His will.

What about, **"My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit?"** Well, let's see what this "fruit" is. As we look systematically through the Bible for passages containing the word "fruit" we begin to see some patterns emerge. Fruit can be a physical, edible item produced by a plant, but it is also a metaphor for the product of labor and lifestyle. The "Fruit" spoken of in this verse is what is produced through our works and lifestyle. "Fruit" produced, is always in conjunction with the type of works or lifestyle that we live. Jesus, in one of His sermons, states, **"For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit, nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a bramble bush"** (Luke 6:43-44).

If our lives are lived with intentions and actions to glorify God, then the result will be the same. If we live with selfish motives seated in our minds, then we will end up glorifying ourselves; this is the way of the world. But we are called out of the world, to be holy and blameless. We are a chosen people whose actions bear the scars of our Savior. We are His "fruit." If the results of our works bring glory to God, then we prove that we are Christ's disciples.

Is this “fruit” only what we can produce with our hands? No. Rather, this fruit is something that can be produced in our everyday actions. For example, driving with extreme consideration for others shows gentleness and self-control. Not getting angry when other people don’t reciprocate your considerate driving behaviors, shows patience and humility. You see, just bearing fruits like the fruit of the Spirit, can prove that we have spent time in communication with God. For a short list found in one place on right attitudes see Galatians 5:22-23. Take a browse through that list and find what “fruits” you need to pray to God about developing in your life. If you can’t find any, then pray that God removes the blinders of pride in your life, then ask someone real close to you to tell you which ones that you are lacking. Family members and spouses seem to be the best at pointing this out, hahaha.

By just bearing the fruit of right attitudes and behaviors our “Father is glorified by this,” and we “prove to be” Christ’s “disciples.” Praise God! What a wonderful place to be, bringing God glory! However, this is never a substitute for living in obedience to His commands. For an easy list, found in one place, on many of the commands that Christ issued us see Matthew 5-7:27.

In short, reading God’s word and praying daily will allow His word to work in us to change our lives, prove to us and others that we belong to Christ, and ultimately fulfill our eternal purpose of bringing God glory. Sounds easy right?

“WHEN THE WEATHER SHAPES THE WORK”

Finally, for those of you who gave to our Flood relief, thank you! The little house church has begun rebuilding their house and are building an addition that will give room for the now doubled church body that will be attending there. We will provide what photos we can now but expect more in the future. Your loving donations have been put to use furthering the Kingdom of God.





Watersprings School Open Enrollment Is Here

by Katheryn King, Head of School

Open enrollment for the 2026–2027 school year at Watersprings School is officially underway! There has never been a more exciting—or more accessible—time to consider Christian education for your family. Thanks to the Idaho Parental Choice Tax Credit, more families than ever can pursue the kind of Christ-centered education they desire for their children.

At Watersprings School, we are committed to providing an exceptional educational experience rooted in a biblical worldview. With small class sizes, caring and dedicated teachers, a secure closed campus, integrated technology, and thriving athletic programs, our students are equipped to grow

academically, spiritually, and socially. From Preschool (ages 2–4) through 12th grade, families experience a consistent, Christ-centered education all on one beautiful campus.

Last month, our Director of Admissions and Marketing shared what parents are saying about Watersprings School. This month, I'd love to give you a glimpse through a different lens—our students, who experience life here every day.

Recently, we invited our students to complete a survey and share their thoughts about our school. Their responses were both encouraging and inspiring. As part of that survey, we also asked where they felt proceeds from our upcoming

fundraiser should go. Without hesitation, many suggested that a portion be used to help students who may not otherwise be able to afford a Christian education. This response speaks volumes. Our students understand how special this community is, and they genuinely want others to have the same opportunity to learn, grow, and be rooted in a Christ-centered environment.

Here are just a few of the things they shared:

- ***“I love all of the activities we do!”***
- ***“The teachers really want to help us grow and improve.”***

- *“I love how everyone is kind and loves Jesus.”*
- *“The community feels like a family—people trust each other.”*
- *“The teachers are patient and truly care about us.”*
- *“I love the friendships between students and teachers—it feels like we can go to them for anything.”*
- *“This school is amazing!”*
- *“I enjoy learning about Jesus every day.”*
- *“I love my friends, my teachers, and being at a Christian school.”*



These reflections capture what makes Watersprings School so unique: a culture of love, connection, and a shared commitment to Christ.

We believe every child should have the opportunity to receive a Christ-centered education. If you have been praying about Christian education, we invite you to take the next step. Come visit us. Walk our hallways. Listen to students worshipping Jesus in their classrooms. Experience the joy, the laughter, and the love for learning that fills this campus each day.

There is something truly special happening here. The Lord is at work—raising up a generation grounded in truth, equipped with character, and passionate about their faith.

We would be honored to partner with your family in that journey. Please call or stop by to schedule a tour—we would love to welcome you to Watersprings School.



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Wonder



God promises His Holy Spirit to every person who trusts in Jesus. The Spirit isn't reserved only for Christians who've been walking with God for decades. The Holy Spirit is for everyone who believes! There's no such thing as a junior-sized version of the Holy Spirit. The very same Spirit who raised Christ from the dead fills kids, helps them, and gives them strength and boldness!.

BUT YOU WILL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES ON YOU. THEN YOU WILL TELL PEOPLE ABOUT ME IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDEA AND SAMARIA. AND YOU WILL EVEN TELL OTHER PEOPLE ABOUT ME FROM ONE END OF THE EARTH TO THE OTHER. -ACTS 1:8

FAMILY WONDER QUESTIONS

1. Share about a time when you were bold for God.
2. How do you need the Holy Spirit to help you this week?
3. Why do we need the armor of God? How does the armor help us?





At-Home Bible Story Video

Spotify playlist

FAMILY SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

- Great Commission Mission:** Jesus gave the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20 to His followers, commanding them to share the good news with others all over the world. Think and pray together as a family for someone in your lives who needs to hear the good news. Pray for that person and together, share the story of Jesus with them.
- Armor of God Prayer:** Read Ephesians 6:10-18 aloud, then pray over your kids while laying hands on their body (if they're comfortable with it). Pray the following: **Helmet of Salvation:** May they know Jesus and His salvation. Protect their minds. **Breastplate of Righteousness:** May they trust in Jesus. Protect their hearts. **Shield of Faith:** Give them strong faith in Jesus. **Belt of Truth:** Help them know and live in God's truth. **Shoes of the Gospel of Peace:** May they walk in peace and share God's love. **Sword of the Spirit:** May they know and love God's Word.

SERIES OVERVIEW

Bible Story	Bible Passage	Wonder Truth
Jesus Gives the Great Commission and Ascends	Matthew 28; Acts 1	Jesus Promises to Send the Holy Spirit
Jesus Sends the Holy Spirit (Pentecost)	Acts 2	The Holy Spirit Empowers Us to Share God's Story
The Role of the Holy Spirit	Luke 11; John 14; Galatians 5	The Holy Spirit Helps & Guides Us
Peter and John Before the Sanhedrin	Acts 3-4	The Holy Spirit Helps Us Be Bold
Peter and Cornelius	Acts 10	The Holy Spirit Is for Everyone Who Believes
Armor of God	Ephesians 6	The Holy Spirit Gives Us Strength

WORD OF WONDER

**The Holy Spirit gives us power.*

—Acts 1:8

*Early Childhood



EXPEDITION & SUMMIT

by Tammy Garnier

In Trek Bible Quiz, our teams earned both 1st place (Levi Carey, Lucy Bolinger, Eden Freeman, and Danny Fugh) and 3rd place (Aliyah Anderson, Emelia Crocket, David Kirsch, and James Fugh). Our Journey Bible Quiz team also brought home 1st place, with Niomie White, Trevor Friend, Audrey Hill, and Ersinia Jaramillo leading the way.

On the games side, our Trek team took 1st place, while our Journey teams secured 2nd and 3rd place finishes—an outstanding showing of teamwork and determination.

In Performing Arts, our Journey Clubbers earned 1st place for their group skit and 2nd place in Music Ensemble. Individually, Niomie White received 2nd place for her vocal solo, and Danny Fugh earned 2nd place in poetry.



Our Visual Arts participants also shined brightly. In 3D Art (Journey), Trevor Friend took 2nd place and Audrey Hill earned 1st place. In 2D Art, David Kirsch received 1st place for Trek, while Ersinia Jaramillo took 2nd place for Journey. Audrey Hill also earned 1st place in Color Photography.

We are so proud of each of these clubbers for their hard work, creativity, and commitment. Their achievements reflect not only their talents but also their dedication to growing in their faith and using their gifts for God's glory. Congratulations to all who participated!

We are also thrilled to celebrate the accomplishments of our Awana Journey (High School) Clubbers who recently competed at Summit, the national-level Awana competition! Summit brings together top clubbers from across the country to compete in Bible Quiz, Awana Games, Volleyball, Performing Arts, and Visual Arts—and this year, our Idaho team made an incredible impact.





Niomie White earned a Silver award for her vocal solo. In Visual Arts, Audrey Hill received Bronze for her piece, while Trevor Friend and Ersinia Jaramillo both earned Silver honors.

We are incredibly proud of these students for their dedication, hard work, and Christ-centered focus. Their achievements at the national level are a testament to their commitment to excellence and their desire to use their gifts to honor God. Congratulations to all who participated in this amazing experience!



Our Idaho team, known as the Widespread Witnesses, was made up of over 20 clubbers from across the state, including 7 from Watersprings. These students represented our community with excellence, teamwork, and strong faith.

In Bible Quiz, our teams achieved outstanding results among 39 competing teams nationwide. One team placed 2nd in the nation (Neeko Richards, Niomie White, and Ersinia Jaramillo), while another earned 4th place (Trevor Friend, Audrey Hill, Jace Hill, and Jeremiah Freeman).



In Awana Games, the Widespread Witnesses competed against 12 teams and finished with an impressive 3rd place overall. Even more exciting, in Volleyball—against 15 competing teams—our team brought home 1st place, demonstrating incredible skill and unity.



Our clubbers also shined in individual categories.

REPORTING FOR DUTY

by Hayley Earley, Military Outreach Coordinator



Welcome Watersprings Family,
to the Military Outreach Ministry.

Our mission is dedicated to connecting our Southeast Idaho community with opportunities to show God's love by serving and expressing gratitude for our local Soldiers.

Our most recent initiative, "Goodie Bags for Local Soldiers," has seen a tremendous response. With an initial goal of 400 bags, we not only reached that goal, but exceeded it. We received 650 bags. We are incredibly grateful for this outpouring of appreciation.

In addition to the requested items, the community contributed a variety of extras, including deodorant, socks, crossword puzzles, Bop-its, travel Uno, decks of cards, and much more. Many also included personal touches such as letters, scripture, and Bibles. This effort even extended beyond our immediate congregation to a local elementary school, Watersprings Pocatello, and the American Legion Auxiliary Unit in Alpine, Wyoming. God is so good!

These bags are being distributed to the Soldiers of the Idaho Army National Guard's 1-148th Field Artillery Battalion. This battalion consists of approximately 450 Soldiers serving in units between St. Anthony and Burley, Idaho. Approximately eighty percent of these Soldiers live and work civilian jobs right here in Southeast Idaho, while fifteen percent commute from the Boise area, and the remaining five percent commute from farther, including a few from outside the state of Idaho.

Recently, about 50 of these Soldiers were rerouted to a separate mission requiring them to depart early. When we realized it would cost approximately \$250 to ship their bags, a generous donor from our Military Outreach email list immediately offered to cover the full amount. Praise the Lord! We are also pleased to confirm that every additional bag collected will be placed on the convoy to the Battalion's final destination and distributed among the five different units.

As we conclude this project, we want to offer a heartfelt thank you! Thank you, God, that you first loved us. Your love is our guide to loving others. Thank you for stirring the hearts of our community to show your love through these goodie bags. And thank you to the Southeast Idaho community for showing God's love and light to our local Soldiers. In Jesus name, Amen!

If you would like to join the Military Outreach Ministry email list for future opportunities, please sign up here:

God bless,
Hayley Earley
idmilitaryoutreach@gmail.com



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**THE STRONG
BLUE LINE**



Lest we forget...

by Tim Rupp

Do you remember September 10th? Let me refresh your memory. On that day, a 31-year-old husband and father of two young children died of a gunshot wound to his neck. The suspect was soon arrested and charged with the horrific crime that left behind a grieving widow and two fatherless children. Perhaps you're thinking, "Yes, of course I remember the shooting. I'll never forget." You recall where you were when you heard the news about the life of a young man dedicated to the service of others came to a senseless and tragic end. You remember that for days, it was the lead story in the news media, and it was all over social media. You recall that thousands came to pay tribute, and millions more across the globe mourned the loss. Although tragic, I'm not referring to September 10, 2025; I'm asking about September 10, 2024, when Philadelphia Police Officer Jaime Roman died in a hospital room after being shot in the neck.¹ Officer Roman's death, as are most line-of-duty deaths of America's law enforcement officers (LEOs), went unnoticed by the majority of Americans. I don't suppose I'll ever forget when I heard the news about Charlie Kirk being gunned down. His assassination was a tragedy. So too are the deaths of police officers killed in the line of duty—let's not forget their sacrifice.

Three months before Officer Roman died, he and another officer initiated a routine traffic stop. The vehicle was unregistered and was going to be impounded. The driver was permitted to get his personal possessions before the car was towed. As he was retrieving his belongings, the officers noticed an empty holster.



They asked about it and the driver fled on foot and the officers pursued. The suspect turned and shot at the officers, striking Roman in the neck. He was transported to the hospital and was on life support until he succumbed to his wounds on September 10th.

¹ <https://www.odmp.org/officer/27139-police-officer-jaime-junior-roman>

There have been over twenty-seven thousand officers killed in the line of duty. The second week of May is National Police Week, a week set aside to remember and honor America's LEOs who have died in the line of duty. Thousands of officers and family members will gather in Washington DC for a week of remembrance. The Strong Blue Line Foundation also honors the fallen, but we're also committed to do more.

Our goal is to make stronger officers with stronger relationships by providing resources that include on-call chaplains, books, and retreats. The new **Adopt a Cop** initiative provides an avenue for those who support our officers to partner with us. Please join with us by giving \$19 a month to make the thin blue line a strong blue line by bringing real hope to LEOs and their families.



BRINGING HOPE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

The Strong Blue Line Foundation—at no cost to officers or their agencies—brings hope to LEOs with training seminars that help them navigate a myriad of issues they deal with. One issue is suicide. Statistics show that officers are much more likely to die by suicide than being murdered in the line of duty. In the “Suicide is Not an Option” seminar and book, officers learn not only why people who claim to be Christian opt for suicide, but where they can find real hope. Please partner with us to make strong officers with strong relationships by giving them real hope for complete victory! To help, go to TheStrongBlueLine.org and click on the “Donate” button.

ON THE ROAD

After being on the road for the first quarter of this year, Sherry and I are happy to be at home for a while. We continue to work on getting the Adopt a Cop initiative fully funded and up and running.

Pray for your police.

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5TH & 6TH GRADE

Why Is There So Much CONFLICT Among Believers?

PART 2

by Ty Orr

As we continue our study in James 4:1-4, the strongest language in the passage comes next: **“Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?”** Here, James draws on the Old Testament prophetic tradition, where Israel’s unfaithfulness to God is often described as adultery (for example, Hosea 1-3). The charge is not of physical infidelity but of spiritual betrayal. The term “friendship” (philia) suggests affection, loyalty, and alignment. The “world” (kosmos) refers not to creation itself but to the system of values opposed to God—marked by pride, self-sufficiency, and moral compromise.

Being a “friend of the world” means adopting its priorities and standards, which puts one in opposition to God. Augustine famously said, “Two loves have made two cities: the love



of self unto contempt of God, and the love of God unto contempt of self.”⁴ James’s warning echoes this same division. A divided heart—one that desires both God and the world—cannot remain faithful. As Craig Blomberg points out, “Spiritual adultery occurs whenever believers claim allegiance to God but live according to the values of the surrounding culture.”⁵

This diagnosis is both sobering and illuminating. The tension and mistrust among believers are not mainly caused by doctrinal differences, personality conflicts, or external pressures. Instead, they originate from a deeper problem: a divided and disordered heart. When desires are misaligned, when prayer becomes self-focused, and when loyalty is divided between God and the world, conflict becomes unavoidable. The church, which

is meant to be a community of peace and unity, instead reflects the fragmentation of the world it inhabits.

The early church fathers recognized this dynamic as well. John Chrysostom, in his homilies, warned that “nothing so alienates men from one another as the love of self; for where this is, there is no room for charity.”⁶ Self-love, when disordered, disrupts the very foundation of Christian community. For we are called to love God and others. Similarly, Gregory the Great observed that “from pride arises envy, from envy hatred, and from hatred strife.”⁷ These insights align closely with James’s argument, demonstrating that the problem he addresses was not limited to one generation but is a recurring challenge in the life of the church.

Yet James’s message is not just

diagnostic—it is also implicitly redemptive. By revealing the root of conflict, he points toward the possibility of Gospel and cultural renewal. If the problem resides in the heart, then the solution must start there. Reordering desires, purifying motives, and wholehearted devotion to God are crucial for restoring peace among believers. As Calvin further states, “It is only when men renounce themselves that they are prepared to cultivate peace with others.”⁸

“Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (James 4:1-4).

These verses offers a timeless and penetrating analysis of conflict within the church, and sadly, not much has changed. So, it challenges believers to look beyond surface-level explanations and to confront the deeper spiritual realities that shape their relationships. The tension and mistrust we observe today are not new; they are rooted in the same human tendencies that James addressed centuries ago. Yet the hope remains for when hearts are aligned with God, desires are brought under His authority, and when loyalty is undivided, the church can begin to reflect the unity and peace it is called to embody.

“Therefore, let us love one another and keep our hearts with all diligence, for out of our hearts spring the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23).

⁴ Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. Henry Bettenson (London: Penguin, 2003), XIV.28.

⁵ Craig L. Blomberg and Mariam J. Kamell, *James*, Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 173.

⁶ John Chrysostom, Homilies on the Gospel of Matthew, Homily 15.

⁷ Gregory the Great, *Moralia in the Job Book XXXI*

⁸ Calvin, *Commentaries on the Catholic Epistles*, 296.

Living WATER

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Mondays at 10:30am

Tune in weekly to learn about the ways scriptures connect.



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 10 AM

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UPCOMING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- MAY 1 **Ladies Night Out** - 7:00pm / Fellowship Hall
- MAY 2 **Brothers Breakfast** - 8:00am / Fellowship Hall
- MAY 2 & 3 **Baptism Weekend** - All Services
- MAY 24 **Coffee with the Pastor** - 1:00pm / Homestead
- MAY 25 **Church Office Closed in Observance of Memorial Day**
- MAY 27 **Awana Awards Night** - 7:00pm / Sanctuary
Worship Service - Online Only
- JUN 28 **VBS Extreme Forged** - Register @ watersprings.net
- JUL 26 **VBS Emerald Crossing** - Register @ watersprings.net

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