

MORE TO LIFE THROUGH GOD

Perception

by Mike Hanson

When is 25° different than 25°?

Do you remember that first night last fall when the temperature dropped to 25°? It felt so bitterly cold. You dug your winter coat out of the back of the closet and found your winter gloves and really bundled up. Now, compare that to going through three or four days of below zero weather and then suddenly the temperature warms to 25° (with no wind). Remember how "warm" that felt. You were tempted to go out with just a light jacket. What's the difference? The temperature is exactly the same. It's in our perception. After it's been warm, we bundle up. But if we're not careful, we can dress too warmly and be uncomfortable. Conversely, after it's been bitterly cold, we can under dress for the temperature and it won't take too long until we become uncomfortably cold.

Perceptions. Our whole life is based on perceptions. The way we view ourselves, the way we view others, the way we view our situations and others' situations. The way we view our God! What is your perception of Him? Is He a giant policeman with a big stick ready to blast you when you make a mistake? Is He a loving, merciful Savior ready with open arms to wrap you in His love? Is He really able to "provide all your need according to His riches in Glory?"

Mark 12:31 And the second is like this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these. What is your perception of yourself? It really is important to know who you are in God's eyes because this Scripture plainly shows that what we think of ourselves has a direct influence on how we interact with others.

2 Cor 13:1 I am coming to you this third *time*. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. How many times have we made an evaluation of a person or situation based on just one person's perception? Some of the finest people I have met were ones that the first person who ever said anything about them said something negative. If I had gone solely on that perception, I would never have known how wonderful that person really is.

This Scripture clearly teaches not to "judge" without a consensus. All our perceptions are formed by past relationships, experiences, what we are taught, our ingrained prejudices, and a myriad of other influences. Skewed perceptions are something we all struggle with and there are probably no easy answers. But the Bible (as usual) does have a solution: *James 1:19 Therefore, my beloved brothers, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.*

APRIL 2011



**PENTECOSTALS
OF BILLINGS**

SERVICE TIMES

SUNDAY- 10 AM
6 PM

WEDNESDAY- 7 PM

SATURDAY PRAYER-
7 PM

April 16th- 9 AM
Breakfast
&
Spring Cleaning

April 21st-22nd- Rev. Lee
Stoneking-Great Falls

**April 24th - 10 AM
Easter Service
(one service only)**

April 29th-30th- Section 4
Ladies Conference- Billings

2335 Lewis Ave
406-652-2443
www.pobmt.org



Even if It Means a Cross by Phil Ware



And he said to all, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake, he will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself?" (Luke 9:23-25 RSV)

We'd like to have a "Tinkerbelle Jesus" — a Jesus who can fix all our problems in our personal lives, then when we die at a ripe old age in our sleep, can sprinkle a little fairy dust on us so we can fly home to God and receive our eternal reward.

Now we really don't like to admit this truth, of course, at least not in those unvarnished and raw of terms. However, if we get really honest with our expectations, that's what we really want. We don't want to have to grow up and find a faith that sustains us through hard times because we live in a broken world where sin mars and bad things happen to perfectly good people. We love that Jesus is our Savior, Redeemer and Friend — and he is each of these and more! We just have a hard time with that "Jesus is Lord" part where the Cross became his destination and might possibly become our own!

We're not alone. Even Jesus' closest followers in the days of his earthly ministry, wouldn't hear his message of the cross before it happened. Even though Jesus warned them three times in clear language, most didn't get it. Sure, some were fearful at what awaited in Jerusalem that final trip. Some even realized that danger and death might be lurking. Something tells us, however, that they really didn't believe Jesus would let that happen.

As Jesus moved ever closer to entering the Holy City for that last time, they jockeyed for position. Some wanted to be on his right hand and left hand when he seized power. The crowds, who welcomed him with palm branches and shouts of triumph, were expecting the Kingdom of God to break forth at any moment. Jesus seemed to have even stoked the fires of anticipation and conflict as he entered the Temple, ran out the moneychangers, took on the religion scholars, and made his presence boldly known.

None of Jesus' followers anticipated that the crowds' shouts of triumph would turn into calls for his crucifixion by week's end. None expected that one of Jesus' closest followers would betray or that his most vocal follower would deny, with cursing, that he ever knew Jesus. None expected the rest to run away and hide in the room where they had just had the Last Supper with their Lord whom they believed to be the Messiah of Israel.

So it is not surprising to me today when folks want to hear the voice of the "Tinkerbelle Jesus" preachers who promise everything good and nothing bad. It's a watered-down Christianity without the Cross, an empty Easter without the Passion, and the promise of a Savior without the need to follow the Lord.

The Cross calls us to the life of Jesus.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's reminder of Jesus' words and Jesus' model sacrifice seem as drowned out today as they were in his own day — when the Nazi boot descended upon Germany and many of the religious leaders capitulated to Hitler's plans. Bonhoeffer said, "When Jesus calls a man, he calls a man to come and die." Ouch! Not a popular message in any era. Bonhoeffer's words were more than words: he proved he heard that call of the Cross in many ways, including his own martyrdom at the Nazi's hands. The Cross, in Jesus day, was an awful torture stick used by the ancient Romans to shame, wound, and kill through humiliation all in the name of preventative justice. Jesus' Cross, the real and awful Cross — not some token piece of jewelry or good look symbol — extends its shadow over this week and our lives because of the coming Easter weekend. That Cross reminds us that without dying with Jesus and sharing in his Cross, there is no resurrection to Jesus' life.

So as we journey to the joy, the victory and the assurance of this coming Sunday, let's not skip over the Cross which makes the resurrection so powerful, startling, and life-changing. There was an awful price paid by God to redeem us and bring us to glorious hope. As Jesus' words to his followers remind us, there is no shortcut for us around the Cross and there is no room for Christians who refuse to grow up, who want to cling to a Tinkerbelle Jesus instead of the Lamb who was slain, who is also the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

More than anything, the Western church needs to remember that shadow of the Cross calls us to the life of Jesus, the sacrifice of Jesus, and the integrity to stand up for those everyone else ignores ... no matter the cost to us personally. Only then will Resurrection Sunday dawn with hope for changing the world by the power of God's grace and love.

Up Coming Events:

April 16th - Breakfast & Spring Cleaning

April 21st-22nd- Rev. Lee Stoneking- Great Falls, MT

April 29th-30th- Ladies Conference- Billings

July 7th-9th- VARIETY- Rawlins, WY

August 1st-4th- Family Camp- Hungry Horse



SOLD OUT -YOUTH GROUP

We are the young army of God and we are **sold out** to Christ!

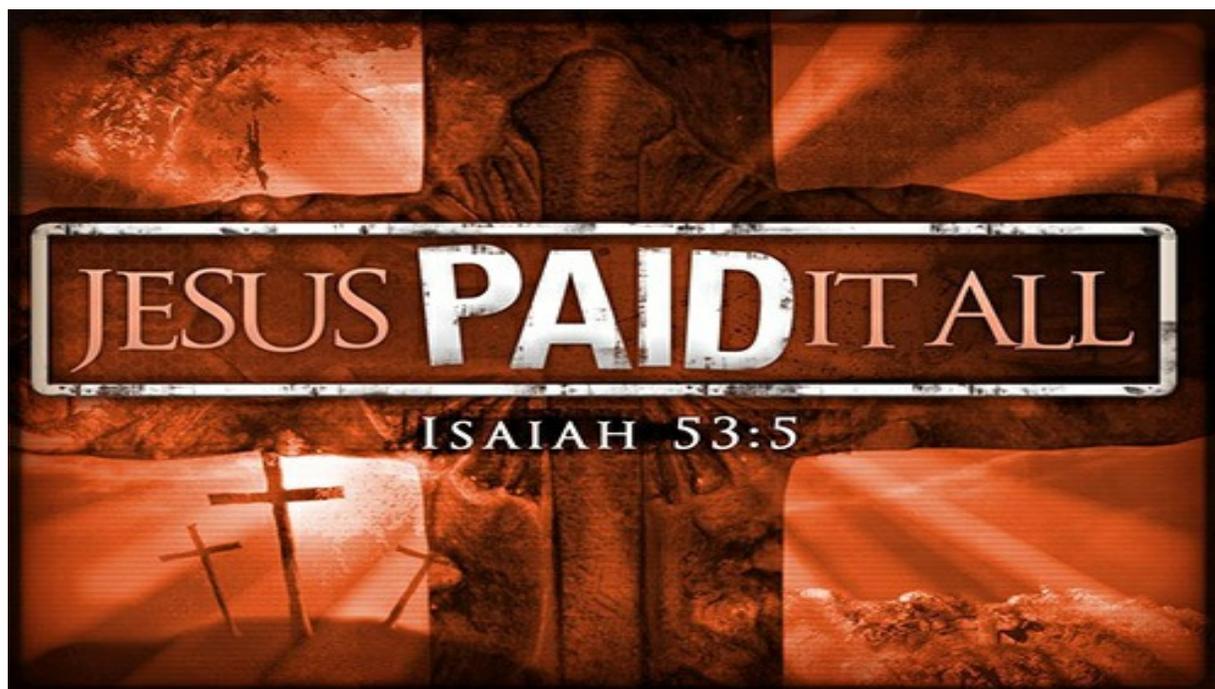
Come join the fellowship and fun nights on Friday nights at 7 pm and our Youth Service every Sunday morning at 10 am

Ages 12 + is welcome to come.

If you have questions please contact Alan or April Coonfare @ 855-6256

BROTHER LEE STONEKING

Coming to Great Falls
At the Convention Center
April 21st-22nd





April 2011

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**9 AM
Church
Breakfast
& Spring
Cleaning**

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Sunday
School
Coin
Offering

**Brother
Stoneking
Great Falls**

**Brother
Stoneking
Great Falls**

24

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**10 AM
Easter
Sunday**

**Ladies
Conference
In Billings**

**Ladies
Conference
In Billings**



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Chicken Marsala



Ingredients

- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour for coating
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - pounded 1/4 inch thick
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1/2 cup Marsala wine
- 1/4 cup cooking sherry

Directions

In a shallow dish or bowl, mix together the flour, salt, pepper and oregano. Coat chicken pieces in flour mixture.

In a large skillet, melt butter in oil over medium heat. Place chicken in the pan, and lightly brown.

Turn over chicken pieces, and add mushrooms. Pour in wine and sherry. Cover skillet; simmer chicken 10 minutes, turning once, until no longer pink and juices run clear.



CHURCH PRAYER REQUESTS



Dayn Leonardson
Tyler Sapp
John Bailey
Louie Dauenhauer
Michael Kruger
Medicine Crow Family
Marty McFate

Christian Parental Guidance

- Begin each day with prayer. We all need divine guidance as we take on the challenges each day brings. Let children know you'll be praying for them while they're away from home. Then do so, several times throughout the day.

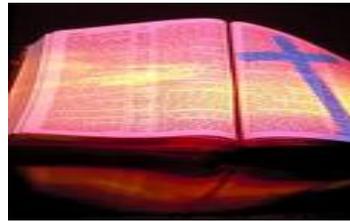
- Make children's daily homecoming a cheerful occasion. Listen carefully to their experiences. Affirm that you're proud of them and pleased to be their parent

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- Make home life joyful and memorable. Play games, tell funny stories, take walks and eat together. Build pleasant memories that kids will remember for a lifetime. Tell your children that you love them.

What is a Fool? By Fran Lane

April Fool's Day has passed us by once again. However, I want to talk to you a little on the subject.



What Is A Fool?

According to Encarta Dictionary (English—North America):

1. Unintelligent person: somebody considered to lack good sense or judgment
2. Ridiculous person: somebody considered to be or made to appear ridiculous
3. Court Entertainer: formerly, somebody employed to amuse a monarch or noble, usually by telling jokes, singing comical songs, or performing tricks.
4. Enthusiast: U.S. somebody who is talented at, interested in, or fond of a particular thing.
5. Offensive term: an offensive term for somebody with below-average intelligence or a psychiatric disorder

We are told in the Scriptures to call no man a fool—*Matthew 5:22* “*But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*”

The reason for this admonition is because in the vernacular of that day, (and actually is still so today) to say “You fool” was a sign of contempt and hatred. It was said with a murderous heart, which is why it immediately followed the condemnation of murder: “*You have heard that the Law of Moses says, 'Do not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.'*” (v. 21)

I know there are times when we joke around and call a person a fool or foolish, and I am not trying to be a prude here and say that you are going straight to hell if you should do so. **What God is trying to make us realize is that such things said with anger, hatred, and contempt is equivalent to murdering the person.**

Hatred and bitterness are cancers that grow within a person and can not only lead to killing those who it is aimed at, but also can kill the person who holds such feelings in their hearts.

What then is God's description of a fool?

Not knowing Him:

Jeremiah 4:22 “*For my people are foolish, they have not known me; they are sottish [an offensive term] children and they have none understanding: they are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge.*”

Seeking out “things” instead of God:

Matthew 12:20-21 “*But God said to him, 'You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get it all?'* ²¹*Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God.*”



SOLD OUT

What do you see when you look in the Mirror?

What do you see when you look at yourself in a mirror?

It can be incredibly startling when we take a good look at ourselves and see what we truly are.

Or at least, what we think we are.

The truth is that as teenagers (and let's be honest, adults too) when we take a good hard look at ourselves, we rarely like what we see looking back at us.

We look at ourselves and see the mistakes. The failures. The mess-ups. The accidents. The sin. The fear. The insecurity. The uncertainty.

It's easy to look at ourselves and get discouraged because we think that we are useless, that we can't do anything right and that God couldn't care less about us.

We look at the circumstances and situations in our lives and we think that God has left us, that He has kicked us to the curb and that there is no way that He can use us.

But nothing could be farther from the truth!

The mistake that we make a lot of times as teenagers, and as humans in general, is that we automatically assume that our perceptions of ourselves are the same perceptions that God has of us.

Totally not true.

When you're struggling with feelings of worthlessness, God looks at you as valuable.

When you're fighting doubts about whether or not you can reach your friends with His gospel, God looks at you as more than able.

When you feel you are not good enough to have Him listen when you pray, God is hanging on your every word.

When you are struggling to overcome that bad habit that causes you to get down on yourself, God looks at you with forgiveness.

When you look at other Students your age and feel like you pale in comparison to what they're doing for God, He looks at you as a World Changer.

When you view yourself as too ignorant to lead people to Jesus, God looks at you as the greatest Soul Winner your generation has ever seen.

When you find it the hardest to live a life of separation and dedication, He views you as more than strong enough to live a life of commitment.

Our perception of ourselves, more than anything else, has the ability to be our greatest motivator or our biggest deterrent to what God wants to accomplish both in us and through us.

God views you as:

A world changer

A difference maker

A soul winner

A prized possession

As forgiven

As incredible

As Awesome

As a key piece of what He wants to accomplish in this world

God's perception of you is much better than the perception you have of yourself and it is His perception of us that truly matters.

Now, go look in the mirror again, but this time, begin to view yourself as God sees you.

So tell me, what do you see now?





April

2-Gregory Knoble
3-Amanda Hanson
4-Ambrose Big Lake
9-Kathleen Welch
13-Nate Little Owl
22-Louie Dauenhauer
24-Charlotte Wilson
26-John Bailey
30-Ron & Vikki Hoerner

If you would like a private Bible study simply give us a call. In your bible we will show you the Lord's command and promises about being born again.



**Church Work Day
Saturday, April 16**

9:00 a.m.—List is done (following Breakfast)

Please come and help take care of the house of God
"...and we will not neglect the house of our God." Nehemiah 10:39
Lord, may we be faithful in taking care of your house, that it may be a place of blessing and refuge for others.

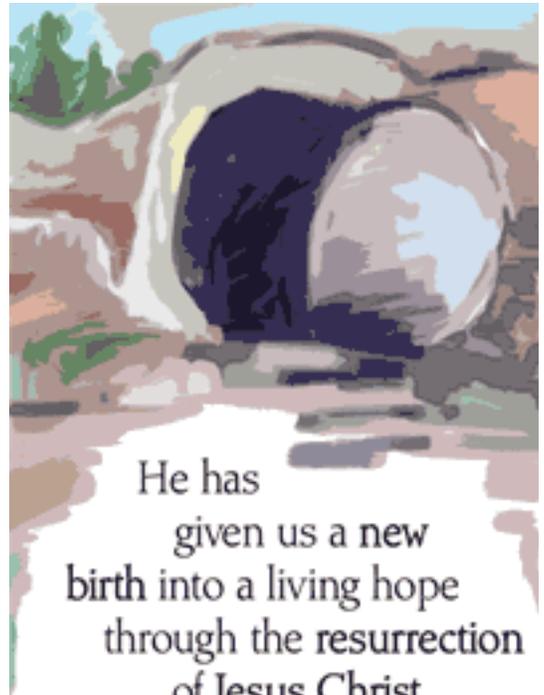
Ponder This...

= "In a world of this kind, a crossless Christian is a Christless Christian."

—E. Stanley Jones

= "The resurrection gives my life meaning and direction and the opportunity to start over no matter what my circumstances."

—Robert Flatt



He has
given us a new
birth into a living hope
through the resurrection
of Jesus Christ
from the dead.

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