



The Anchor



A Publication of Vaughan Baptist Church

Christmas Issue

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast..." Hebrews 6:19

December 2011



From The Pastor's Desk Pastor Bill Adams



In this quarter's column, I want to write on a subject that we all struggle with at times in our Christian walk: the Lord's will and direction. The Shepherd's Psalm, Psalm

23, a beloved psalm of the redeemed, reminds us that as a good Shepherd, He leads us. How often we forget that He is there to lead us. Sometimes, we become impatient or dissatisfied and we either wander away or we try to lead Him into the paths that we want to go. My article is entitled: **"He leadeth me: His way."** How He leads is not always the way we think it will be.

NOT BECAUSE IT IS NEAREST

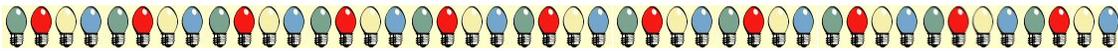
Exodus 13:17-18 says, "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea..." One way was shorter but God chose the longer route for His people. The Lord does not always lead

us because it is the nearest or easiest. For a number of years, I lived only about a half hour's drive from my wife, yet I never met her. Our paths never crossed. Later in life, unknown to me or her, the Lord moved both of us north where we met for the first time: an hour and twenty minutes apart. Why didn't we meet sooner and when we were closer? I was even praying for a wife then!

God's direction in our lives is not

always going to be because it is the way of least effort, unproblematic, or painless. In His perfect will, there are reasons, sometimes unknown to us, why it must be His way. It may be a job that would be close or a purchase that would make things easier, but the Lord leads another way. Physical healings are always the easier path to travel but, as you know and have experienced, they are not always the way He leads. Any church would agree that free, donated, properly zoned property would make things so simple and save so much ministry time that could be devoted to other spiritual duties, but the Lord seldom directs this way. Psalm 18:30 reminds us, "As for God, his way is perfect..." God's will





for us in a certain matter may be the farthest or the hardest, but in His will, His choice is always for our best and His glory!

NOT BECAUSE IT IS NATURAL

Many times we find God leading in our lives in ways that don't seem natural. As Samuel was seeking the Lord's anointed, he first looked upon what appeared as the natural choice, but God saw things differently, and He had chosen David (1 Samuel 16:6-7). In Paul, God had chosen a Christian-killer to be a church planting missionary; many of the Lord's Apostles were unlearned, unskilled and some were not liked (Matthew, the tax collector). These were ordinary men, not supermen. It seemed natural that God would hurry to Bethany to heal Lazarus, for Lazarus, Mary, and Martha were close friends of the Lord and labourers together with Him – but, in His perfect will, He delayed four days (John 11). It just seems natural that if you serve the Lord faithfully, that He would keep you healthy so that you could serve Him better and longer. But, to the contrary, we have sickly men like Job, Paul, Timothy and some great women warriors who, though widowed young, kept serving (Luke 2:36-37). Paul told the Corinthians, *“Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence”* (1 Cor.1:25-29). Many times God does not lead in that which is natural, but supernatural. Looking for labourers in ministry, the Lord doesn't direct those who are necessarily the biggest or best, but those who are most humble and holy. As you seek the Lord's will and direction in matters of your life, don't



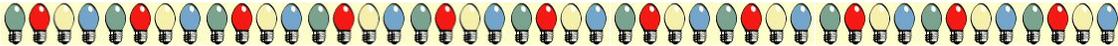
always look for the Lord's leading in that which seems likely or normal. Expect the unexpected and you may well see His hand.

NOT BECAUSE OF THE NUMBER

God's leading in your life has nothing to do with numbers. Many take the road traveled by the majority. In a sense, they take a poll and follow the crowd. People seem to choose a “religion” to follow based on what the multitudes are doing. Bible-practicing churches can get caught up in the numbers game where “more” means “right.” But, I believe, God may lead and direct you into a place or position where you are outnumbered or maybe even alone. You may have to make God-directed decisions based on what is right, not whether others join in or approve of it. At times, you find Paul alone (2 Tim.4:16); Job alone (Job 2:9); David alone (Psalm 142:4) – all the while God is working and leading in their lives. God does some of His best directing when He leads you to places where you are alone or have to leave safe havens: Paul in Arabia (Gal.1:17-18); Daniel (Dan.1:1-6); Abraham (Gen.12:1); Gideon (Judges 7:7); Jonathan (1 Sam.14:6). In these places, you learn of God's unfailing sustenance and presence. Whether it is to a

foreign mission field, or a new job, in His will, God may lead you to make decisions that will take you out of a safe environment, put you in the minority, or cause you to be alone. From my own salvation experience to the Lord's directing me to Canada, it has been the “alone” leadings where I have learned the most of God's faithfulness and purposes. When we are stranded on God's omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence, we are in the safest place in this world.

Because we cannot see ahead, we need the Lord's leading in our lives. Isaiah 55:8-9 says, *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”* We cannot be led by our emotions, feelings, or experiences. Proverbs 14:12 says, *“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”* Abraham sent his servant out to find a wife for Isaac of their brethren. The servant asked for God's leading and stated in Genesis 24:27, *“I being in the way, the LORD led me to the house of my master's brethren.”* As we are in God's way, He will lead us. His way may not always be the nearest, the natural, or with the most numbers, but



it will always be the perfect way. One of my favourite hymns and most meaningful to me through the years is "He Leadeth Me." The chorus says, "His faithful follower I would be, for by His hand He leadeth me." He leads, we follow - that will always get us where He wants us, at the right time, to see and do the things He wants accomplished for our good and His glory!

Fear Not

Blair Cassidy

Genesis 15:1 says, "After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, fear not Abram: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward." A profound truth here is related to Abram from the LORD. He did not have to fear; the LORD was his shield and exceeding great reward. Abram (who would later be renamed Abraham by God) had, just previous to this vision, executed a successful rescue mission delivering his wayward nephew Lot. Lot and all he owned were taken captive by the 4 Kings who had just pillaged Sodom, Gomorrah, and their surrounding cities. With 318 armed and trained servants from his own household Abraham wrought a great victory over those who had taken his brothers son. Military excellence and skill was implemented in order to save Lot and his goods. Subsequent to this great victory, Abraham was met by the King of Salem, priest of the most high God. The pleasures of bread and wine were enjoyed by Abraham at the provision of the King of Melchizedek. This King of peace asserted a great blessing upon Abraham. The above mentioned

events are the "things" referred to in Genesis 15:1 (After these things) that were then followed by this amazing vision to Abraham from the LORD. This vision begins with God "saying, fear not Abram: I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward."

He did not have to Fear

Why did God need to remind Abraham of this reality? Abraham had just laid his life on the line and the life of many of his servants in the valley of death. He had just fought victoriously over his enemies and escaped triumphantly with Lot and Lot's goods safe in hand. Seemingly Abraham had nothing to fear yet he is reminded by God to "fear not." Abraham was able to face this foe with unwavering bravery. However, when Abraham entered into Egypt (Gen 12:10-20), he told his wife to say that she was only his sister in order to save his life from the hand of those who would kill him in order to take her. He employed the same technique with Abimelech, king of Gerar, apparently once again motivated by fear (Gen 20.) We also can have great confidence in many areas of our lives yet be fearful in other aspects. Maybe we can get up and sing in front of the Church with assurance but do we fear when it comes to sharing the Gospel publicly? We are able to live by faith and trust God for our daily bread but do we fear when pressed by the Spirit to give cheerfully and generously to God's work with our finances? We are able to be faithful to God's Church and live for God around other believers but do we fear the reaction of the world if we pray or read our Bibles in the presence of the lost? We can live joyfully when we

have our health, but can we live without fear when faced with death? Job 13:15, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." The LORD wanted Abraham, as he does us to trust in Him and fear not. 2 Tim 1:7, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

The LORD was his Shield and Exceeding Great Reward

The LORD was revealing to Abraham that He was his Shield and Exceeding Great Reward not Abraham's own devices or particular situation. God would protect and keep Abraham from harm; God would be his Shield and Exceeding Great Reward. In our own lives we all at times try to take hold of circumstances and control our own environment in order to feel secure and protected. God wants us to have the blessing of trusting in Him as our Shield and Exceeding Great Reward so that we can say with the apostle Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil 4:13).

The LORD promised Abraham in Genesis 12 that he would make of him a great nation and that all families of the earth would be blessed in him. Here, in verses 15:2 and 3, Abraham is concerned about going childless. God assures Abraham that He would not allow him to go without seed or inheritance. That Abraham's descendants would be as the stars in the sky were God's comforting words to bring Abraham assurance. The LORD would be his Exceeding Great Reward. Abraham believed God and his faith was counted for righteousness. Abraham's belief here is given as the great example of saving faith in Christ

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THE VBC PICTURE



GALLERY





(Continued from page 3)
in Romans 4:1-25.

This did not mean that Abraham always walked in victorious faith. In Genesis 16 he heeded the advice of his wife to bring about this promise by their own device. Instead of waiting on the LORD Abraham went another direction in order to obtain children as God had declared. Too often God promises to do something for us and then we think that He needs our help to do something that is completely beyond our control. These situations will vary from person to person; however, we all need to learn, as did the Psalmist, to wait upon the LORD. "Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed... for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day" (Psalm 25:4, 5). The things that are beyond our control could be a wife, a husband, children, the right job, the right house and so forth. In any of these situations we can have contentment knowing that the LORD is our Shield and Exceeding Great Reward.

What is our reward in life, a car, a house, a career, winning the lotto, retirement? Jesus Himself made a staggering comparison of the eternal and of the temporary, of a life which seeks a reward with God or a life which takes its reward in this world. Mar 8:36, 37 "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Nothing in this life can be compared with knowing God and having the LORD as our Shield and exceeding Great reward. "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" 2 Corinthians 9:15.

As God said to Abraham, so He says to us "Fear not"! The LORD desires to teach us and to remove fear from our lives. "The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?" Psa 118:6. What more could motivate us to live without fear than to know that the LORD is our Shield and Exceeding Great Reward!

A Woman's Window

Mrs. Debbie Adams

Ornaments of Grace

This time of year is wonderful. It's an opportunity to contemplate our Lord's birth for the purpose that He could be the Saviour of mankind. People often have traditions that they like to practice each Christmas. Besides getting together with family and friends, you will often find the lady of the house doing lots of extra baking of cakes and cookies and special foods. Some send out Christmas cards. Many buy gifts to pass out. I remember my mother buying each one of us children a Christmas Advent Calendar. As we counted down each day to Christmas, we'd open a little door and behind it would be a little picture or sometimes a chocolate treat. Other folks like to deck their homes with wreaths and garlands and lights. Pine branches and spray snow are among the favourites of adornments. And, there's nothing like a Nativity Scene displayed, especially when you have children in the home. It helps them to remember Christmas' true meaning. Then, there are ornaments. They come in all kinds of lovely colours and are very decorative and ornate. Many are fragile. They are beautiful. They stand out. You can't miss them. They are something you enjoy looking at. So much so, they are brought out every Christmas.

I recently read in Proverbs 4:5-9 a portion advising us to get wisdom

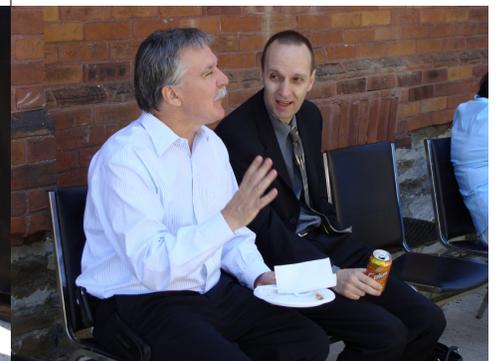
and that if we did attain it, she (wisdom) would place on our heads an ornament of grace: a crown of glory she would deliver to us. If we can gain wisdom as Proverbs compels us to, we'll have right understanding and follow spiritual truth. When we gain wisdom, we gain understanding. Without wisdom in life we would walk as a fool and make choices based on feelings. Wisdom honours our Lord. The more we obey God and walk with Him, the more wisdom we attain, and the more grace and beauty adorns our lives. The reason we can have such an ornament of grace is all due to our Lord and Saviour. Colossians 2:3 says, "In whom (Christ) are hid (stored away) all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Really knowing Christ is where every bit of wisdom we ever could be adorned with comes from. And, it truly is an ornament of grace, a beauty that people can see that is not from within us. It's a distinctive, which He gives, as we are totally following and obeying Him. This is Wisdom's ornament of grace upon our heads, our crown of glory. This kind of ornament that wisdom gives us is far better than any ornament we could ever deck our hall with. Merry Christmas!

YOUTH CORNER

Pastor James Hird

Immanuel: God With Us

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14) This Christmas, God is giving my family a special gift. We have a new baby arriving just before Christmas. As





I contemplate how I am feeling, I wonder how Mary and Joseph felt knowing that the baby that Mary was giving birth to would be the Saviour of the world. The Bible is not clear if Mary and Joseph fully understood why Jesus came, but it seems very clear that the people in the town Bethlehem and the rest of the world did not understand what began on the night that Christ was born.

The people around this glorious birth did not understand a few things about this birth. They did not understand how miraculous this birth was. A virgin could not physically have a baby, but because of the Holy Ghost was upon her, she was able to give birth. They did not understand how marvellous this birth was. This birth meant that God the Son came here to earth. He was born to live among men and then die for them. This was all unclear. Paul explains to us in I Corinthians 13:12, *“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.”* All the people in Bethlehem and Judaea should have known the prophecies of the Old Testament. Scripture is clear of the Messiah would come. The only ones who seem to understand the birth of Christ were the shepherds and the wise men.

Although the people closest to Christ did not understand why He came, we know why He came. Isaiah wrote in chapter 53:5, *“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”* He came for our salvation. He brought the greatest gift of all to us. This Christmas Season, as you are out purchasing gifts, as you are receiving gifts, think about the greatest gift that has been given to us – Immanuel, God with us.

TESTIMONY

A Personal Testament

Lolita Mora

I was born and raised in the Philippines. My parents are members of the Aglipayan Church, basically an offshoot of the Roman Catholic Church minus the celibacy of the priests and the confessionals.

When I was in high school, my mother volunteered me to dress up the statues in the Aglipayan chapel every Saturday afternoon. It would have been fun dressing up these statues if they were as small as dolls, but these things were huge and they have eyes that seemed to follow me wherever I go! They scared me! I started hating this volunteer job, and wondered why it had to be done -- by me! Then, one Sunday, in a mass, the priest told of a story of a debate involving a Roman Catholic priest, an Aglipayan priest, and a Protestant minister. The debate was to determine who among these three religious leaders, knew more Bible. The Protestant came out first, the Aglipayan came second, and the Catholic priest last. The story stuck in my mind. I don't want to be second best. I questioned why we have to follow a religion that does not teach us a lot. My parents' answer was that they were born into this.

One stormy night, a fire broke out in the neighbourhood. The fire was three houses away from ours, but because it was windy and dark, everyone was in a panic. We took with us anything we could carry and headed out for safety. My mother told me to carry her personal statue of the child Jesus. This really bothered me. Why do I have to carry this “god” to safety, when it should have been the one protecting me?

In June 1979, while attending a university in Manila, a Campus Crusade for Christ staff shared me the “Four Spiritual Laws”. She told me I was a sinner; I need to ask Jesus to be my Saviour and led me to prayer. This first meeting was followed by regular Bible studies to help me with the assurance of salvation. She also gave me a New Testament Bible and told me to read the Gospel of John first. I had no

problem turning my back on my old religion and embracing this new one, for after all, isn't this what I wanted, to learn more about God and not settle for a second best?

My university years came to an end; I lost contact with my Bible study group. I went to pursue Medicine in another school, stayed in the dorm, and went home only on weekends. This time, my only contact with the Christian world was through a Christian radio ministry of the Far East Broadcasting Company. One day, I heard from a radio preacher that a Christian should go to church. I decided one Wednesday afternoon to look for a church. I went to a neo-Evangelical Church near my school. The doors were closed. No service. Then I remembered that on my way to school, I always pass by a Bible Baptist Church. I went there; they were having a prayer meeting. The people seemed nice and friendly. I went back the following Sunday. The Pastor preached on Acts 8, where an Ethiopian Eunuch met Philip; my heart was pounding. This was only my second time in this church but it seemed that the Pastor knew all about me and was trying to single me out in his preaching! At the end, he asked “here is water, what hindereth thee to be baptized?” I knew I was saved, and now learned that the next step was to follow Christ in waters baptism. I went forward. I thank God for saving me and putting me in a church that preaches the Bible. I also learned from this church that I should be using the King James Version only.

Years later, I went back to Manila to write the licensure exams. I visited the Lighthouse Bible Baptist Church where I met Raffy. I did not live a life of drinking and vices, but God saved me from a false religion and idolatry. I once was so blind, but now I see. Repenting of your sins and asking Jesus to be your Saviour will make one a Christian, but being a part of a Bible-believing church will challenge one to become an obedient Christian.





Announcements and Events

On Sunday, December 4th, we held our annual Christmas Cantata, "The Greatest Gift," with over 200 in attendance. This year's production cast involved over 50 participants including choir members, play participants, and sound men. We were once again reminded of our Lord's birth, life, and afterlife and His unspeakable gift to mankind!

Separate Men's & Women's Bible Studies
Wednesday, December 14 and 21
7:00 PM

Singspiration
Sunday, December 18th
6:00 PM

Christmas Day Service
Sunday, December 25th
11:00 AM only
(No Sunday School & Evening Service)

Mid-Week Service
Wednesday, December 28th
7:00 PM—All Pastor Adams' Kids Here

VBC Vision 2012
Sunday, January 1st
10AM Sunday School & 11AM Worship

Annual Church Worker's Banquet
Saturday, January 7th

Marriage Enrichment Fellowship
Saturday, February 4th

Keep fasting and praying for open doors in our new property search!



Our Schedule of Services

MINISTRIES ON SUNDAY

Sunday School
for all ages 10:00 am
Morning Worship 11:00 am
Evening Service 6:00 pm
We have fully staffed and supervised nurseries at all services.

MINISTRIES ON WEDNESDAY

Bible Study and
Prayer Meeting 7:00 pm

We are an Independent Fundamental Baptist Church, located in the heart of Woodbridge, Ontario, Canada. The Church is located 5 minutes north of Metropolitan Toronto and 20 minutes from Toronto Pearson International Airport, and only a 40 minute drive from downtown Toronto.

William E. Adams, D.Min.,
Senior Pastor
James Hird, B.Th.,
Youth Pastor

THE ANCHOR

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Would you like to share your testimony? Do you have a special story, event, prayer request or any other information you would like to share with your church family? Please contact us at the church office by phone or email.

Vaughan Baptist Christian Academy (VBCA)

I am humbled and happy to announce to you that the congregation of the Vaughan Baptist Church has been led by the Lord to begin a Christian school ministry. We undertake this move with godly fear and sobriety! It has been a prayer and burden of our church family for a number of years and we believe that the Lord's timing has arrived. As a ministry of our church, this traditional school will seek to evangelize, edify, and equip students to be God-honouring servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. In reaching out into our surrounding communities, we will endeavour to prepare young people spiritually, scholastically, and socially to live out their lives in the will of God to His good pleasure.

Brother Daniel Bousquet has been hired as the Principal of VBCA and will arrive here this summer. The school will start in September, 2013 and this will give Brother Bousquet a year to make all the necessary preparations. God has blessed and prepared him both academically and practically. He has a B.A. in English and a Master's degree in Christian School Administration from Pensacola Christian College (PCC). After working as a teacher for several years at Liberty Baptist Christian Academy (LBCA) in Florida, he became the Principal there where he has served in that role the past five years. The school has a current enrolment of 490. His wife is my daughter Jennifer and she has a Master's degree in English from PCC and teaches at LBCA.

We covet your prayers as we are already very busy with preliminary matters related to the school. If you have children who you would prayerfully consider placing in the school, please let us know. Though it is very early, we will be making a list of interested parents so they can be kept informed as things progress.

