

The Key That Unlocks It All by Gerrit Dawson, Senior Pastor

Have people ever said this to you? “Well, you know you can make the Bible say anything you want!” They have a point. People use the Bible to justify all kinds of unbiblical things. Both “liberals” and “conservatives” do this. We are all always looking for a Jesus more in our own image: he’s much safer that way!

So how do you know the correct way to interpret the Bible? What’s the key to faithful interpretation? How do you keep from going wrong when you read the Word?

These are actually very ancient questions. Already in the 2nd century, a group called the Valentinians was talking about the Christ within. They were claiming to be Christians even as they cut off the real Jesus from their very inward focused spirituality. And they quoted Scripture doing so! This was confusing “normal” Christians. Thankfully, a bishop named Irenaeus came to the rescue.

Irenaeus knew we need a key to unlock the Word. We need to find Scripture’s core story so we can understand all the other stories in the Bible. We need one true “rule of faith” that guides the way we read any and every verse.

Irenaeus knew this golden key, this secret code, was not hidden. It was right there in the preaching of the gospel. The key is simply the core story of the Triune God as he made himself known in Jesus Christ. Irenaeus wrote out the crucial formula of faith that resolves the meaning of all Scripture.

Now here’s the kicker. His rule of faith sounds almost identical to what came to be known as the Apostles’ Creed. The Creed gives the boundaries within which we can understand the Bible, and the God of the Bible, truly and rightly.

Wait, did I just hear you yawn? Did you just mutter, “The golden key is just that old dusty creed?” I know. The Creed is a bore if you don’t know what it is. I found that my love for the Apostles’ Creed transformed when I stopped thinking of it as a set of abstract principles and dry doctrinal statements. Instead, I see the Creed as a story. It’s the bones of the essential story of what the Triune God has done, is doing and will do in the creation and redemption of the world.

One core story is the key that unlocks the whole story. The Creed is the story that pulses with energy. It leads us to meet Jesus, the real Jesus of history, the one Redeemer and Lord of all.

This fall, we’ll be exploring this golden key in worship each week starting August 11. Don’t miss even one episode in the story that explains it all!

Should Boys See *The Lion King*?

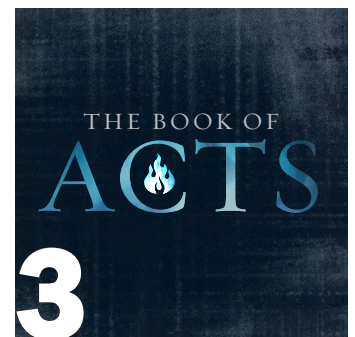
You bet! As I sat in the theatre with a four-year-old grandson nestled on my lap, I was struck anew by the positive power in this story of

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Three Service Schedule Resumes	Aug 4
Sunday Evening Prayer Resumes	Aug 4
Promotion Sunday	Aug 11
Couples' Workshop	Aug 16-17
Confirmation Lock In	Aug 16
LSU IFP Prayer Walk	Aug 17
Christmas Play Tryouts	Aug 18
Women's Fall Studies Begin	Aug 21
City Ministry Fair	Aug 25

ONGOING EVENTS

12 Steps with Christ Jesus, Weds. at noon

UPCOMING SEPT EVENTS

Combined 10.30 am Worship Sept 1

BIRTHS:

July 16, 2019
Sophia Elizabeth Comer
Parents are Amanda and Alan Comer

BAPTISMS:

July 7, 2019
Evangeline Azucena Boles
Parents are Lillian and Ethan Boles
Grandparents are Ashley and MacGregor Magruder

July 28, 2019
Zachary James Lofton
Parents are Michelle and Bart Lofton

MARRIAGES:

July 12, 2019
Allen Jenkins to Rebecca Laningham

IN MEMORIAM:

July 17, 2019
Louis Quinn

SANCTUARY FLOWERS

The flowers are placed in the Sanctuary to the glory of God and in loving memory of . . .

AUG 4 . . . Mr. and Mrs. Carlos Gustave Spaht and Mr. and Mrs. William Marshall Shaw, given by Mr. and Mrs. Richard P. Gill, Mr. William Marshall Shaw, Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Carlos Gustave Spaht II, and Mr. and Mrs. Paul Holden Spaht.

AUG 11 Open date

AUG 18 . . . Nora Will Diehl and Joan Diehl Smith, grandmother and mother of Cathy Pugsley, by David, Cathy and Catherine Pugsley.

AUG 25 . . . Annslee Laura Phillips by Lauren Teague Phillips and N. LaRon Phillips.

Closing a Chapter by Rebecca Lunceford Botros



It is bittersweet to share with you all that Nour and I have stepped down as missionaries with World Outreach. As we say goodbye to this chapter of our lives, I want to take this opportunity to extend my deepest thanks to all of you for the emotional, financial and spiritual support you've given so generously over the years.

First Presbyterian Church has, from the very beginning, always been a crucial part of our work in missions, and my personal journey even before I was with World Outreach, as a young post-grad going off to Egypt. I want to thank you all for the incredible support you've given over the last decade. I felt so loved and cared for having such a wonderful home church standing behind me, and with me. You all are just as passionate about missions as I was, and it was a joy for me to be a member of our church family as a "home-grown" missionary. Moving forward, I will have the joy of being in regular, weekly worship with you here in Baton Rouge.

I'd like to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to Missions Pastor Whitney Alexander and the entire Global Missions committee, especially committee leaders Jane Cooper and Chuck Barber, for your unwavering

encouragement and Christ-like love you've extended over the years. Thank you to the Elders, Deacons and Session for the support and care you've blessed us with throughout our time with World Outreach. Lastly, but most importantly, thank you to my parents, Cynthia and Lloyd Lunceford, for the countless and often never-seen or shared ways you've loved and supported me, and also made sacrifices yourselves, without ever asking for formal recognition or applause.

Our work over the last five years with Syrian refugees in Lebanon was remarkable. Not because of anything specific Nour or I did, but because it is an incredible time in history to be living and ministering to Muslims in Arab nations. We poured our hearts and souls out on the field, and now the seeds that we have sown together over the last few years are entrusted into God's hands and the Holy Spirit's continued work. This gives me peace as we close this chapter, and I pray it gives you peace also. We did faithful work, and we surrender it to him.

Thank you all for coming alongside Nour and me in love. The church's ongoing financial and spiritual support will not be forgotten. The church's generosity was such a blessing to us while we were on the field, and so we want to personally thank each of you as part of our church family for your role and part in sustaining us during that season. Thanks be to God.

City Ministry Presents Its 2019 Fair



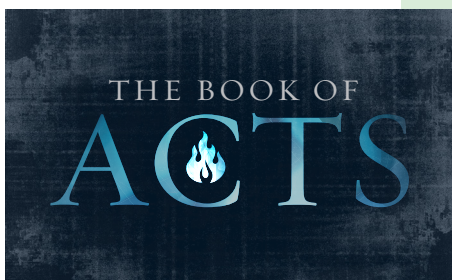
Our City Ministry Fair will be Sunday, August 25 in the Reception Room from 9 am to 12.30 pm. We want to highlight our local ministries and offer ways you can get involved in 2019-20 local missions. Interested in building a home? Our local schools? Habitat for Humanity, Gardere Community Christian School and Buchanan Elementary will be there. Or maybe serving the homeless is your calling? Pastor Moore with Open Air Ministries can answer your questions. This is an excellent opportunity to learn more about each local ministry FPC supports.

Christmas in July? *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* Tryouts

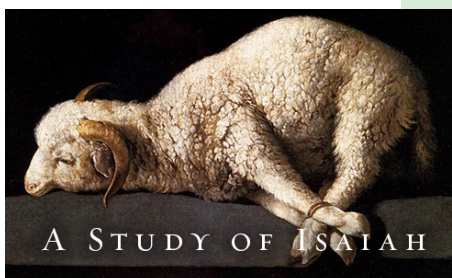
Attention all middle school students (6th, 7th and 8th graders). Tryouts for our Christmas play will be Sunday, August 18 (one day only) immediately after 9 am worship from 10.30 am - 1 pm in the choir room. Please come prepared with a one-minute monologue. It doesn't have to be memorized, but it helps!! You will also be asked to read scenes from the script. Please show up prepared for a 10-minute audition. Play performances are Friday, December 6 at 7 pm (Festival of Lights), and Sunday, December 8 at 4 pm.

Women's Fall Studies and Circles by Elizabeth Parker, Women's Ministry Director

What would you say if someone asked you, "How old is your church?" We may be tempted to answer proudly, "Close to 200 years old!" But a more accurate answer would be over 2,000 years old. This fall, we will travel back to the birth of our church history, rooted in God's promises from the beginning of time, as we spend a year studying through the book of Acts. Acts marks a pivotal turning point in our redemptive history, detailing the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and how that anticipated event enabled the ongoing ministry of the ascended Christ through the apostles. It shows us how the early church lived out the mission God gave it, to proclaim the gospel to all the nations, and how this mission continues with us 2,000 years later. Do we still proclaim the gospel to an unbelieving world in the way it was intended? Our churches should look less like the world outside of its doors, and more like the faith on which it was founded. Perhaps we should rediscover the doctrine, the spirit and the commitments of the early Christian community. May we seek to recapture the early church's confidence, enthusiasm, vision and power. May we be Christ's church, overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit, moving us deeper into the world.



Wednesday mornings offers a study of the "fifth gospel," Isaiah. We will take a methodical look at this amazing prophetic book, that covers a span of around 40 years of the history of Judah. In it, we have themes of God's judgment on his wayward people, their need for repentance and his brilliant plan for their salvation, both in that time and pointing forward to Christ's first and second coming. Isaiah is a prophet without equal, save for our Lord Jesus Christ. This promises to be a rich study and discussion and great way to start a Wednesday! All women are welcome!



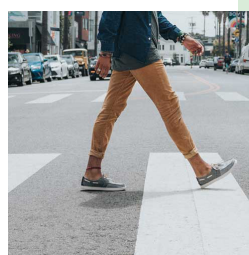
Wednesday Mornings (Isaiah): 6.30 am in the FPC Library	Wednesday Evenings (Acts): 6.30 pm in the Bride's Room
Wednesday Afternoons (Acts): 1.30 pm at the home of Sally Graves	Thursday Mornings (Acts): 9.30 am EB - Room 202 9.30 am EB - Room 301

Circles Begin Meeting in September

Women's Circles meet monthly for study, prayer and fellowship. Circles meet from September through May, and are offered at a wide variety of times and places. Each Circle has chosen one of two books to study in 2019-20. In "Reflections on the Psalms," C.S. Lewis explores the main themes that influenced the Psalm writers and exposes what the Psalms reveal about God. In "Liturgy of the Ordinary," Tish Harrison Warren takes the humdrum of day-to-day life and beautifully ties it to how we live for Christ each day, each hour, each minute.

LSU International Prayer Partners Walk, August 17

LSU will be home to close to 2,000 international students this 2019/2020 school year. Three quarters of them are graduate level students; the brightest and best from their countries. On Saturday, August 17 from 8-9.15 am International Friendship Partners will meet on the front steps of the LSU Union for a prayer walk. Please join the International Friendship Partners Initiative on the front steps of the LSU Union.



SUNDAY WORSHIP

7.45 Chapel Communion
9 am Contemporary
11 am Classic Reformed

AUGUST SERMON TEXTS

Texts are subject to change.

AUGUST 4, 2019
Psalm 32

AUGUST 11, 2019
Heb. 11: 6, Rom. 10: 17; John 20: 30-1;
Gal. 2: 20

AUGUST 18, 2019
Deut. 1: 30-31; Is. 64: 8; Mt. 7: 9-11;
James 1: 17

AUGUST 25, 2019
Gen. 1: 1; Ps. 139: 1-18

PASTORAL STAFF

GERRIT DAWSON
Senior Pastor

WHITNEY ALEXANDER
Associate Pastor of Missions

BARRY PHILLIPS
Ministry Executive

JIM SOLOMON
Associate Pastor for Pastoral Care & Prayer

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The Key That Unlocks It All *continued from page 1*

Simba the lion cub who learned to be king. In a world too often full of male-bashing, *The Lion King* offers a rousing view of what makes a strong man and why he's so needed.

Psychologists have identified essential tasks of fruitful manhood. They include being a warrior, a king, a lover and a sage. Simba learns that a realm only flourishes when the king serves a higher good than himself. He learns from his father that a king's job is not to take but to protect, to give and to serve the realm.

We know this is true whether the realm is a whole country or just a single life. A man is only a fruitful man when he knows he exists for a higher good than himself. When Simba grasps this, it makes him bold to be a warrior willing to defend his people and a husband willing to commit to his wife. He also learns to trust the sage baboon, to lean on the wise one as he seeks wisdom. The Pride Lands are only saved, the lions only rallied, when Simba takes up this servant leadership with great courage and willingness to risk.

Does the movie have all the Christian worldview I would like? Of course not. But by all means, every boy (and Dad) needs to see this lushly illustrated tale of what makes for genuine, life-giving manhood.



Worship Director Update

With the untimely departure of Steve Newman, we're so thankful Nancy Spiller has agreed to postpone her plans and serve as Interim Director of Contemporary Worship through December. Thanks Nancy! Meanwhile, the search revives and we ask for your prayers.

I love being your pastor, *Gene*