



HILLSIDE MONTHLY DISPATCH

Hillside Baptist Church, Pembroke, NH

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Modeling the Truth of God's Word

January 2023

Lukewarm or Fervent for Christ?

From the Pastor's Desk

Fervency For Christ

Revelation 3:15-16

Several years ago I added to my Bible study and prayer time a few minutes to read from an old book I received from someone previously. It was one of those books that sat on my shelf unread for a couple of years and for the most part I did not know I even had it. This book had caught my attention when I was looking for something different to read and at that time I was surprised it did not catch my attention a little sooner than then.

The book by Charles H. Spurgeon was entitled "Flashes of Thought." There are one thousand little quips and statements of thought regarding various aspects of life. I had started out with aggressively reading ten a day, but I soon learned that after reading five flashes of thoughts I began to have flashes of memory loss and I began to forget what I read, so I reduced the amount to five in the hopes that I could retain more than I was losing. It had slowed the pace of finishing the book, which is something I really aim at when I pick up any book to read, but I found that I remembered more and forgot less by adjusting my approach.

Within the book I encroached upon the subject of enthusiasm and the need to be more fervent for the things of Christ. In it Spurgeon sited early Christianity and in particular the Apostle Paul's desire to share the Gospel of Christ to the known Roman world. He wrote:

"There was a trumpet ring in ancient Christian testimony which startled the old world which was lying in a deep sleep, dreaming filthy dreams; that

Upcoming Events and Meetings

Jan. nn, 10:45 a.m. – Lord's Supper

Jan. 14 – March for Life, Concord, NH

Weekly:

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. – Sunday School and Bible Discussion

Sundays at 10:45 a.m. – Worship Service

Tuesdays, 7:00 p.m. – Weekly Bible Study on hold; start date TBD

world loved not to be so aroused, and turning over in its sleep, muttered curses deep and many, and vowed revenge against the disturber who dared break its horrible repose. Meanwhile believers in Jesus were not satisfied with witnessing by their lives, and testifying by their tongues, in the places where their lot was cast, but were continually commissioning fresh bands of missionaries to carry the word into other districts.

It was not enough for Paul to preach the gospel at Jerusalem or Damascus; he must needs journey into Pisidia and Pamphylia, he must journey to the utmost verge of Asia Minor; and then so full of Christ is he, that he dreams of eternal life, and when he falls asleep, he hears in a vision a man of Macedonia across the blue Aegean sea, entreating him, "Come over and help us."

And with morning light Paul rises, fully resolved to take ship and preach the gospel among the Gentiles. Having preached Christ throughout all

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On the web at <http://www.hillside-sbc.org>

Pastor's Desk (from p. 1)

Greece, he passed over to Italy, and though chained, he entered as God's ambassador within the walls of the imperial city of Rome; and it is believed that after that, his sacredly restless spirit was not satisfied with preaching throughout Italy, but he must needs cross into Spain, and it is said even into Britain itself.

The ambition of the Christian for Christ was boundless; beyond the pillars of Hercules, to the utmost islands of the sea, believers in Jesus carried the news of a Saviour born for the sons of men. Those were days of ardour. I fear these are days of lukewarmness. Those were times when the flame was like coals of juniper, which have a most vehement heat, and neither shipwreck, nor peril by robbers, nor peril by rivers, nor peril by false brethren, nor the sword itself, could stay the enthusiasm of the saints, for they believed, and therefore spake; they loved, and therefore served, even to the death." (Charles Spurgeon "Flashes of Thought" #253 *Early Saints, Enthusiasm of, Passmore & Alabaster, London 1880*)

What I found most intriguing about this statement of lukewarmness is that it was obviously prevalent in his day, a day in which many Christian today look back as a time of greater faith and Christianity within the church.

This of course reminded me of the passage in Revelation 3:15-16 in which John the Apostle writes Jesus saying to the church of Laodicea, "I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth." Jesus tells the church of Laodicea this because they had lost their fervency for Him as their Savior. The world had crept in around them and they began to do some fence sitting.

The problem is when someone sits on the fence he or she does not choose sides, but instead try to balance themselves in the middle. Well the church of Laodicea was doing just that and Jesus called them lukewarm, because they allowed themselves to get to that point of ineffectiveness He could not tolerate them anymore. He could not let them go on being called a church of His and so He stated

clearly that He was going to spew them out for their lukewarmness.

As in the time of Spurgeon, many Christians today are lukewarm. The cares of the world, the desires of the flesh, the needs of the hubris, the pressures of family, and the demands of society entice many to sit on the fence and not make a stance. The battle gets too difficult and instead of standing on the rock of Christ and His word, they opt for the fence post in the middle because it is easier, less painful, or less demanding.

Yet the nature of man has not changed in the last few thousand years. Jesus spoke against the sterility of his church, Spurgeon spoke against the impotence of the church in his day, and it is obvious to any devoted Christian that we are in a time of compromise as well. Lukewarmness is all around us. Maybe it can be seen in your children. Possibly you see it in co-workers who claim to be Christian. Maybe your spouse is not living up to the standard of God's word. Possibly even you.

The real question to ask oneself is not what others are doing or not doing for Christ, but instead what am I doing? What needs to be asked is what am I willing to do for my Savior? Am I lukewarm? Am I fence sitting? Am I stagnant in my faith? Such questions should illicit a response in your heart, it is a gut check to put it in the modern vernacular. It is time to stop and assess if you are lukewarm in your faith or if you are fervent.

Let me encourage you to take some time to pray about it. Think it over. If you find yourself among those who are mediocre in the faith then repent and start picking up your cross and sharing the Gospel to all who will listen. For we are called to carry our cross for Christ and to pick up where the last faithful generation of Christians left off before us. In short, we are called to be fervent for Him in all we do.

✠ Pastor Jim

Property and Space Patrol

There is not much to report this month. The weather has been above normal for the past few weeks.

It was even a "Brown" Christmas due to the lack of snow. The first light snow was on Jan. 6th.

✠ Pastor Al

Finishing Strong

The following devotional excerpt is from the last reading of the year, from December 31, 2022. The scripture is from 2 Timothy 4:1-8, which scholars believe was Paul's last letter while in a Roman prison. Particularly poignant is verse 7: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

Read the passage and then contemplate on this story by Our Daily Bread writer Winn Collier.

At the age of 103, a woman named Man Kaur competed as India's oldest female athlete during the 2019 World Masters Athletic Championship in Poland. Remarkably, Kaur won gold in four events (javelin throw, shot put, 60-meter dash, and 200-meter run). But most astounding was that she ran faster than she ran in the 2017 championship. A great-grandmother running into her second century, Kaur showed how to finish strong.

The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, a younger disciple, of how he'd entered his concluding years. "The time for my departure is near," Paul wrote (2 Timothy 4:6). Reflecting on his life, he confidently believed he was finishing strong. "I have fought the good fight," Paul said. "I have finished the race" (v. 7). He wasn't confident because he'd calculated his impressive accomplishments or surveyed his vast impact (though they were immense). Rather, he knew he'd "kept the faith" (v. 7).

The apostle had remained loyal to Jesus. Through sorrows and joys, he'd followed the One who had rescued him from ruin. And he knew that Jesus stood ready with a "crown of righteousness," the joyful finale to his faithful life (v. 8).

Paul insists that this crown isn't for an elite few but for "all who have longed for [Christ's] appearing" (v. 8). As we head into a new year, let's remember that Jesus is eager to crown all who've loved Him. May we live to finish strong.

Birthdays and Anniversaries



Hillside wishes a happy, happy birthday to these people who celebrate another orbit around the Sun:

1/10 Peter Jenkins

1/11 Pastor Jim Robertson



Hillside also wishes God's blessing on the following people who celebrate a wedding anniversary this month:

1/4 Justin & Robyn King (who incidentally were married at Hillside)

Prayer Requests

If you need us to pray for a physical, spiritual, financial, marital, or other need, contact Pastor Jim, Pastor Al, or Michael Frascinella and they will get the word out to the membership. It is our duty and privilege to lift you up in prayer to Jesus Christ our Lord.

Tune in to Gospel Radio

In the Concord area, get more of God's Word by tuning into New Hampshire Gospel Radio at 99.1 FM or 104.3 FM.

For example, on Saturday mornings at 6:30 a.m., enjoy "The Brinkman Adventures," a lively well-done radio drama. In the wee hours of Saturday and Sunday mornings, if you can't sleep, tune in to Praise & Worship music.

During the week, tune into well known speakers such as Alistair Begg, Chuck Swindoll, Dr. David Jeremiah, and Dr. Jim Daly. In the evenings catch the latest episode of "Adventures in Odyssey."

Learn more at <http://www.nhgr.org/>.

Hillside on the Web

Go to the Hillside web site <http://www.hillside-sbc.org/> for more information about our fellowship, including this newsletter in PDF format.

Sermons are also recorded weekly and published on the web site as podcasts in mp3 format.

Submissions for Next Issue

Deadline is Jan. 25. Send news items to News Wrangler and Editor, Michael Frascinella, mfrascinella at comcast dot net.



Hillside Baptist Church is a member of the Baptist Convention of New Hampshire, part of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Hillside Baptist Church
547 Pembroke St.
Pembroke, NH 03275

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