



The E-Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Winona, Mississippi

FIRST PRESS

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 6

FRIDAY, AUGUST 30, 2013

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Sept. 4, 5 p.m.

Prayer meeting and Bible Study resumes at FPCW in the Pastor's Study.

Sept 8, 4 p.m.

An informal Sunday Night Study at the Pastor's home. We will be discussing the book *In Christ Alone* by Sinclair Ferguson.

Sept. 21, 4 p.m.

Please join us for a church picnic at the Manse. We will also celebrate Mrs. Barnett's birthday.



www.facebook.com/FPCWWinona

From the Pastor's Pen...

Last week I told you a little bit about the Ladies Circle Bible Study that is starting up this fall; if you haven't signed up for a book already, please do so soon!

This week I want to share with you some of the other things that will be starting up this Fall at FPC.

On Wednesday we'll resume our weekly prayer meeting. As a preparation for prayer we'll begin with a Bible Study, and the topic will be the *Apostles Creed*.

You may have the Apostles Creed memorized; every Lord's Day we say the Apostle's Creed together, yet how many of us actually consider

what it means? This Fall in prayer meeting we'll have the opportunity to do just that - together as a church.

The Apostles Creed is an ancient text that provides a very basic summary about what Christians believe about God. Each week we'll take one article of the creed and look at it more closely.

Each of the articles teaches us something about God and exalts our God in some unique way. I hope this study will motivate us all the more in prayer.

Last time, I briefly mentioned the Sunday Night study at the manse. I do hope that you'll make time to close

out the Lord's Day with us. What a fitting way to end God's Day by coming together again with His people to study His word!

Our study will focus on *who* Jesus is and some of the implications of that we may not have considered before.

I also want you to know about the new church website that I hope will debut in mid-September.

It is our goal that the new website will be more helpful to members and prospective visitors alike. The new website will host sermon audio and other resources for members and visitors and those looking for a church.

Westminster Shorter Catechism Meditation

Last week, we considered the all-important truth that there is only one God. Next, the Catechism briefly takes up the issue of the Trinity in WSC6:

Q6. *How many persons are there in the Godhead?*

A. There are three persons in the Godhead: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

The Trinity is a difficult concept to grasp, and nearly every heresy begins with a false-view of the Trinity! And so we must be careful as we consider it.

Sometimes people try to explain the Trinity by arguing that God has expressed Himself in different ways at different times, but this is to miss Scripture's teaching that the three persons of the Trinity have always existed.

Moreover, the Bible teaches that each person of the Trinity is "equal" and "fully God." If that were not the case, we could never be saved!

Each person of the Trinity (sometimes referred to as *the Godhead*) has a distinct role to play in our salvation, in the salvation of the saints.

Eph. 1:3-14 provides a superb summary of the work that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit each do in salvation.

It was the Father who "chose" us before the Foundation of the world to be adopted as sons.

It is the Son, Jesus Christ, in whom we have forgiveness of sins and redemption by His blood.

It is the Holy Spirit who seals God's people and is the "down payment" in this life of the inheritance that is promised to God's people in the New Jerusalem.

> 1 Peter 1, John 17, Psalms 45

Sermon Series : Where are We Going from Here?

God willing, this Lord's Day we will bring our study of Ruth to a conclusion. We will see how God has been working in the background and in the lives of these two women for the glory of His name.

In Ruth we gain a glimpse how God works all things for the good of His people because He is orchestrating everything for His own glory.

God worked in the lives of Naomi and Ruth not for their short-term happiness, but for their eternal security as well as our own. That brings us to the end of Ruth.

Our next sermon series will be in Psalm 22, which we will study until the end of the month.

Psalm 22 is sometimes referred to as the "Psalm of the Cross" because it was quoted a number of times by Christ as He was on the cross or by



the Gospel writers to explain the Sacrifice of the Lord on the Cross.

The psalm "anticipates" much of what Christ experienced on Calvary: His cry of abandonment (Matt. 27:46), the mocking he received

(Luke 23:35), the thirst and pain he endured (John 19:28), His hands and feet being pierced as well as the dividing of his garments by the soldiers (John 19:23).

I hope you will pray with me that as we work our way through this psalm over the next few weeks we will grow to better understand the sacrifice of Christ on our behalf.

In October we will begin a longer series that will take us into next year. We'll look together at the First Letter the Corinthians.

I'll say more about our series in Corinthians as we get closer, but for now I look forward to worshipping and considering this psalm *with* you.

Sermon Snapshot: "The Law and Legalism"

Last Lord's Day, we marveled at how Boaz used God's law to serve Ruth and Naomi as well as show God's grace to them in Ruth 4:1-12.

This serves to complement what we considered here last week, "Is this God's way of doing things?" We saw that Naomi's plan in the dark of night was not God's way of doing things, yet God worked through Naomi's rashness.

By contrast, Boaz shows his delight to do things God's way. God gave His Law to His people not to deprive them of happiness or joy or "fun," but rather so that we better know His grace.

Boaz was very strict in his submission to, application of, and abiding by the Law of God here.

As we have seen throughout this summer, **Boaz is a man who loves God and lives by not only the Law's strict application, but also its spirit** - sometimes going beyond the precise letter and minimum of the law to bless others abundantly.

Boaz had come to understand that the Law of God reveals God's character, it reveals what God is like. With the Holy Spirit's help, we come to realize and embrace that truth and learn to love the Law of God.

The Law teaches us not only about God's holiness and His justice, but it also teaches us about His compassion and concern for the least in society.

Far from using God's law to justify himself before God, Boaz understood that living by God's law he is

able to bless others. Boaz shows us that He knows the salvation and the grace of God in the way that He goes out of his way to show grace and compassion to others.

I imagine that the nameless, nearer redeemer might have accused Boaz of being a "legalist" in his application and insisting on strictness in Ruth's case.

People in our day often accuse those who try to obey God's law of being "legalists." Yet that is not legalism at all; we must never mistake *obedience* for *legalism*. **Legalism is adding to God's law, which is what the Pharisees did. Obedience is simply following what God teaches in His word.**

Obedience is what *all* Christians are called to. It is impossible to have Christ as your Saviour if you do not also have Him as your Lord and King.

Though our salvation is by grace and free, there is a cost to be borne for following Christ.

This world is actively in rebellion against God's Law, and as such God's people will get in "trouble" for obeying God's words instead of cultural norms.

Some of us will know this cost more severely than others, but for all Christians there is a price to be paid for turning to God from Sin.

For those who are in Christ Jesus, the cost of godliness is hardly worth comparing to the reward God offers!

