



“Thank Goodness It’s Not Me!”

Sitting in a dentist’s waiting room is not one of the ways I’d choose to spend a gloomy upper northwest morning, but it’s the way I’m spending this one. It could be worse though, if I were waiting to have my own root canal, and not here to give moral support to my son-in-law.

Scene two: I’m in an examining room with my nurse son at my side, daughter and son-in-law in the waiting room, and an earnest doctor of oncology passing on news that causes me to ask, “Why me, Lord, why me?”

Such exclamations and questions may sneak into everyones musings on occasion--I suspect it’s only human nature to express them, but, as I am currently learning, the question mark is the hard one to live with.

When I was a kid one of the hymnal songs that I’d often request on the fifth Sunday night of the month, came to my mind the other day after my doctor’s visit. The chorus sings like this:

But I know whom I have believed,
And am persuaded that He is able
To keep that which I’ve committed
Unto Him against that day.

“That day” for me will be/was Monday, February 22. But not for surgery alone, but for the whole rest of my life. By the way, that gospel song is based on 2 Timothy 1:12. Read it for yourself. Then make sure that your commitment is current. Pmm

Overheard in the Foyer

“What’s this about senior adults organizing?”

“Didn’t you get an invite to their Valentine Gathering?”

“I’m too young.”

“Well, try to make it to their St. Patty Gathering on March 18.”

“Don’t have anything green.”

“It’s at Kay Patterson’s; details on page 3.”

“Will I need a birth certificate?”

“Just some snack food will do, thank you.”



Did You Know That. . .

“More things are solved by prayer than this old world dreams of.”

OHNaz Prayer Gathering
Sunday, February 21st, 5:00 p.m.

PB's

Current



SIGHT VERSUS INSIGHT...OR ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK

The narrative of Mark, like that of all the gospels, climaxes with the cross and resurrection, but we should not speed toward the conclusion with such haste that we overlook the gospel's centerpiece, the pivot around which the revelation of the central character turns. That centerpiece is Mark 8:22-10:52. It is framed by two healings of blind men, the only such healings in Mark, and within that frame is a threefold prediction of Jesus' death and resurrection.

Jesus encounters the first blind man in Bethsaida, just north of the Sea of Galilee (Mark 8:22-26). Perhaps the most memorable part of that story is the two-phase healing of the man. A first touch from Jesus results in blurry vision: the man sees people, but they look like trees walking. A second application of Jesus' hands yields clear vision. Anyone who has had an eye exam knows the refrain, "Better first? Better second?" when the optometrist is clicking through various lenses to find the best correction for one's vision. The blind man of Bethsaida opted for "Better second."

Immediately following the healing, the scene shifts to Caesarea Philippi and Peter's declaration of Jesus as the Messiah. A story of sight is followed by a story of insight; physical vision by spiritual vision. The blind man eventually saw clearly. It remains to be seen just how clear Peter's spiritual vision is.

What follows for the next two chapters is an assortment of revelatory events, like the transfiguration, and teaching moments on topics like Elijah, divorce, and riches. But the structure of this centerpiece is a threefold pattern repeated three times. There are three predictions of Jesus' death and resurrection, immediately followed by three

blundering missteps by the disciples, culminating in three repetitious lessons by Jesus.

The overall picture is depressing ... perhaps depressingly familiar. The disciples take two steps forward, one step back. A board game that was popular decades ago and can still be purchased is called "Chutes and Ladders." Players roll the dice and advance around the board hoping to land on a ladder and quickly ascend toward the finish, while avoiding the chutes, which send the player sliding back down to a lower level. It is a child's game but also a metaphor for life, and sometimes for Christian discipleship.

A moment of revelation and insight is followed by a tragic slide into darkness and failure. Anyone who has struggled with habitual sin or substance abuse knows the pattern. In Mark's centerpiece it is a struggle for understanding, to see Jesus as he is, not as we would remake or distort him for our own purposes. Flashes of insight come, but a dark pattern of corrupting self-interest returns. Two steps forward, one step back.

What made the difference between Mark chapter 8 and chapter 10? Perhaps Jesus is getting better with practice? Or perhaps Mark is talking about more than one kind of blindness and one kind of sight! The disciples, represented by Peter in 8:29, had figured out that Jesus was the Messiah, but in their blurry vision they still thought the Messiah couldn't suffer and die, would certainly want a hierarchy of assistants, and would indulge their cravings for prestige and privilege. But they couldn't tell the Messiah from a tree walking. Only with a second touch, with further instruction, and especially with the example of Jesus' own suffering and death, could the disciples gain clear vision and follow Jesus in the way.

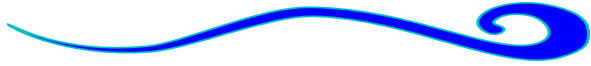
PRAYER OF THE DAY—Lord Jesus, it was hard for your disciples to hear that they would have to suffer in order to follow you. Give us faith and courage to follow you when following is painful or frightening. Amen.

HYMNS—I'm so glad Jesus lifted me

Remember, you are loved! See you soon!

Pastor Ben

JUST BLEW IN . . .



News from the pews

An Apology. Yes, this editor is fully aware that your February newsletter is a few weeks late. Please accept my apology. So far, this has been an extremely jam-packed month. (Almost all good stuff.) Promise I'll do better come March. Pmm

BAG Was a Big Success. The 40 or so OHNazers who gathered at Jim Creek Lodge and Campground February 12-14 agree that other than rain-scuttled activities, like the traditional faith walk, everything met everyone's expectation—especially the **Todd and Annie Martin** food: "Loved the stuffed pork chops," "Who knew a sloppy joe could be so good?"

Speaker **Dr. Fred Fullerton** of Northwest Nazarene University provided words of biblical wisdom that spoke to the heart, as well as the intellect. The real guy-athletes played Frisbee golf in the pouring rain, the **Liggetts/Wafford** musicians played their hearts out ("Well, it was Valentine's Day"), and the scavenger hunt "was a hoot."

For those not in the know, BAG stands for Break Away with God.

Senior Adults Get Organized. Well, it's about time! It took four seniors (**Kay Patterson, Marian Smith, Karl Steele, and Pmm**) to decide that OHNaz should organize and support a senior adult fellowship and activity ministry for any of us who don't mind being considered *mature* adults in years and experience, not necessarily brain power.

On Friday, February 12 the group had it's first Senior Friendship Gathering—a dinner at China City. The thirteen gathered in the restaurant's private

dining room thoroughly enjoyed getting acquainted, laughing, playing a ridiculous game, eating plenty of sodium glutamate, and sharing some heart-felt needs. Besides the four mentioned above, present were **JoAnne Sherrod, Joe/Shirley Racette, Marie Hamilton, Chuck/Jacque Fye, Skip Townsend, Fred/June Forester.**

Next month's Friendship Gathering will be a 7:00 pm game night at the Kay Paterson home (443 SW 10th). Let Kay know you'll be there (675-4875). Bring a favorite table game, some munchables, and in honor of St. Patrick (one day late), some canned green veggies for Help House.

Did You Know That . . . The **Jim & Sandi Murdy's** are in Japan visiting daughter Jessie, whose Air Force husband Willie is stationed there? . . . Speaking of Japan, sort-of-new OHNazers **Fred & June Forster** served the church as missionaries in the Land of the Rising Sun for 30 years. It was there they worked with **Ivan & Virginia Lathrop**. You can find the Forsters in Coupeville at 1203 NE Parker Rd, 98239; Phone 360-678-2190. . . . Another BAG report: **J.D. & Kendra Richter** didn't let rain stop them from fishing in Jim Creek. They caught nothing, except, maybe, a cold. . . .



BAG Group Photo 2016 Jim Creek WA

For Your Quiet Time

The A B C's of the Word

Consider these 26 scripture verses.

Look them up and make them a part of your life.

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| A. John 15:4 | B. Romans 1:7 |
| C. Psalm 55:22 | D. Psalm 37:4 |
| E. Psalm 63:1 | F. Mark 11:22 |
| G. Psalm 87:3 | H. James 4:10 |
| I. Luke 17:5 | J. Isaiah 45:21 |
| K. Psalm 34:13 | L. 1 Corinthians 13:8 |
| M. Psalm 100:1 | N. Matthew 7:14 |
| O. Psalm 27:4 | P. John 14:27 |
| Q. 1Thess. 5:19 | R. Psalm 33:1 |
| S. Matthew 6:33 | T. 2Corinthians |
| U. Psalm 127:1 | V. Ecclesiastes 1;2 |
| W. Romans 6:23 | X (ex) Zechariah 7:9 |
| Y John 3:7 | Z Haggai 2:23. |

March Birthday's

- 2nd Nicole & Lindsey Laxton
- 5th Alex Murdy
- 6th Brandon Randall
- 7th Brenda Hattaway
- 8th Emily Hills
- 9th Josh Ford Jr.
- 10th Rickie Higbee
- 10th Heidi Kuzina
- 12th Jim Murdy
- 14th Chris Chastain
- 19th Sarah Eisner
- 21st Chelsee Walden
- 28th Sarah Randall
- 29th Morgan Hamilton
- 30th Gavin Harasti



**Fred & Karen
Fullerton, NNU
BAG Speaker**

March Anniversaries:

- 15th Tony & Kay Winterrowd
- 29th Brian & Joyce Wafford

**Sandi Murdy has
another question
about the game.
PB patiently
answers her.**



**Amazing food!
Thank you
Todd & Ann!**

**OHNaz Online!
For Sunday Sermons & Info
www.ohnaz.com**

**Getting ready to
worship. Dennis
& Jerry, part of
the band.**

