



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH FAIRDALE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2025



Have you ever noticed that the Bible speaks of salvation in several different ways? Sometimes (as in Eph. 2:8-9) we are told that we *have been saved*. If we have trusted in Jesus and repented of our sins, we can have confidence that God has saved us. This is what we call justification. This is the moment that God declares us to be righteous and not guilty because of what Jesus has done for us.

The Bible also says that we *will be saved* in the future (Rom. 5:9-10). This is what we call glorification - when we experience the fullness of salvation and sin is completely forever done away with. This happens at the moment we die or at the moment when Jesus returns.

Finally, in many places, the Bible says that we *are being saved* (as in 2 Cor. 2:15). There is an ongoing aspect to salvation as well. The time between our justification and our glorification is called sanctification. This is a process that happens over time during which we mature in our faith and become more and more like Jesus.

How does this process of sanctification work? What role do good works and obedience play in the life of a believer? What role do they play in our salvation? Should Christians be trying to keep the commandments in the Bible? If we are saved by faith alone, does it really matter how we live? Can't we just go to God for forgiveness no matter what? How should believers think about ongoing sin in our lives?

We want to address these questions and others in this year's Focus in February series. Make plans to join us the next three Sunday nights. On Feb. 9, we will think about the role that obedience and good works have in our salvation. On Feb. 16, we will think about how believers should deal with ongoing sin in our lives. Finally, we will end the series on Feb. 23 with a time set aside for all four of your pastors to take questions about these topics directly from you.

We are looking forward to this study. Whether you have specific questions you want answered or just see the importance of thinking through this significant issue, we hope that all of you will commit to being present over the next several weeks.

Examine Your Hearts: Growing in Faith

Jake Beattie | Pastor

The Beattie family is in the thick of what we refer to as “birthday season.” Graham, Charlie, and Jack all have birthdays in February, all within a 10 day window. It makes for a lot of celebration in our house during these days. The first up is Jack whose birthday is the 5th (the day this newsletter comes out!).

Just the other day I was looking at Jack’s newborn photos with him and I was telling him how how fast he has grown up and how he’s becoming such a big kid. It’s amazing how fast that happens. Our church has been filled with lots of children in the past few years. It seems like there are always new babies being born. As that continues to happen, they keep growing and getting bigger and more mature.

I’ve been studying 1 Corinthians with my Sunday School class and in chapter three Paul tells the believers that he could not address them as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. Paul is not using cute, endearing language to talk to these believers; he is rebuking them.

Paul had spent 18 months in Corinth and started the church. We don’t know exactly how much time has passed between Paul leaving Corinth and writing this letter, but in that time Paul has anticipated the church growing in maturity as believers, and he’s disappointed to learn that has not been the case. We all have a general idea of what is a normal maturation process for children. There is variation from child to child, but overall if we don’t see children growing and maturing it raises red flags that something may be wrong.

Paul has the same idea in mind for believers’ spiritual growth. We know not every-

one grows and matures spiritually at the same pace, but there should be steady and regular growth nonetheless. Now is a good time to take a step back and take a good honest look at your spiritual life. Are you growing spiritually? Do you love God more now than you did at this time last year? Do you read your Bible more than you did last year? Do you pray more than you did last year? Are you fighting sin more than you did last year? These are some basic questions we should be asking ourselves every so often. These questions are just a starting point to get us observing our own hearts to see if we are moving in the direction of maturing or moving in the direction of being more like an infant in Christ.

At the end of his second letter to the church at Corinth, in 2 Corinthians 13:5, Paul writes, “Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves.” We need to heed these words and regularly examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith. Don’t rely on a moment in the past when you prayed a prayer or walked an aisle. Examine your heart regularly to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourself.

Growing, Learning, & Serving in Youth Ministry

Garth Farmer | Minister of Youth

2025 is here and we are already a month in! It feels like each year goes by quicker than the last. Our student ministry experienced a lot of growth and change in 2024 and we praise God for that! In moments like this I strive to remember that faithful student ministry is a marathon and not a sprint. The years may go by quickly, but we know that God is working in the hearts and lives our students each and every week. With each year we pray that God is growing our students in faith and maturity. May we be found faithful in the daily & weekly tasks we've been given, knowing that God is working.

Back in October we had our Fall Retreat Weekend. This is a fun getaway opportunity for our students to enjoy time together and hear the word of God preached. This year our very own Pastor Jake Beattie taught our students. I'm always so encouraged that our students have the blessing of hearing faithful preaching from several people in our church. Not every church is blessed with as many gifted and faithful preachers as ours. What a blessing!

Not too long ago we concluded a sermon series on the Book of Genesis. While this was certainly a long series, it was incredibly fruitful for us to consider the work of God in creation, his grace in the fall of sinful man, and his faithfulness from Abraham to Joseph. God has given his people many promises, and none larger than his promise to rescue humanity in Gen. 3:15. God is faithful and saves his people in sending Jesus. He kept his promise and he still does. What a great reminder for all of us.

Coming up this Sunday is our annual Chili Cook-Off. This will be our 8th Chili Cook-Off! This is such a fun event that I have come

to love. Our church gets the opportunity to participate in a friendly competition, we get the opportunity to raise money for our student camp, and our students get a very unique opportunity to serve our church. This event always reminds me about how important the action of serving is in the life of the church. There are so many events or ministries that simply wouldn't exist if it weren't for the faithful service of our church members. I am so grateful to be a part of a church that doesn't merely serve one another, but loves to do so. My prayer is that our students are learning how to be faithful servants of our church. Serving isn't exactly something that comes natural to us. It can be hard and draining. But this is a characteristic of our church that God uses to glorify himself and draw people to Christ. I pray that our students would clearly see that and adopt it as a part of who they desire to be in Christ.

“Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

1 Peter 4:8-11