

January Newsletter 2017

To Know Christ,
To Make Him Known,
To Build His Kingdom.

From The Pastor's Desk:

I love a clean Slate, a fresh start and so often we can see that happen for us in the New Year as we make Resolutions in the new year. These are the best thoughts I have ever come across on New Year's Resolutions. Many of these ideas were expressed during our study on the Ten Commandments. But, this is the perfect time to review them as we prepare to enter a new year.

New Year's Resolutions – why are we so persistent in making them? And why do so many lose the resolve so soon?

These questions are not exactly the great mysteries of the universe. But they do reflect on a much deeper issue that many are unwilling to face.

So – let's think about how this usually goes down: We recognize that something is not right, or is off-center, with our lives, our relationships or our bodies; We think we have a fix on where we want or ought to be; By some form of reasoning we develop a plan of action to affect the desired change; many times we even tell someone; We buy something, or we join something, or we simply layout a schedule to accomplish our plan.

Why then, after all this, do the vast majority of people fail to see success in their Resolutions?

In the first place most of us fail to determine the root cause of the problem we want to fix. For example, one of the most common resolutions is to lose a certain amount of weight. So we decide to eat less, or eat differently, and maybe begin an exercise regimen. However, there is always a deeper reason a person over eats. It may be

loneliness, or lack of self-esteem, or some other, less apparent, problem.

At this point we can say that this person has allowed something, some person, some desire or some goal to become so dominant in their life that it has control of them. We may want to call them something else, e.g. psychological problems, driven to success, desire for independence, and on and on. The reality, though, is that this one thing has become, as the Bible says, an idol.

An idol is nothing more than a “counterfeit god.”

A “counterfeit god is anything so central and essential to your life that, should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living.” - Timothy Keller. In our affluent, well-educated culture, we disavow the existence of ‘idols.’ We believe we each are the masters of our own destiny and can “fix” any issue.

“Whatever controls us is our lord. The person who seeks power is controlled by power. The person who seeks acceptance is controlled by the people he or she wants to please. We do not control ourselves. We are controlled by the lord of our lives”. -Rebecca Pippert.

Our Creator, however, has an infinite, unconditional love for each of us. He knows us intimately because He created us. There is nothing that we can put into our lives, or that we can do, that can even come close to the wholeness He freely offers us through Jesus. He shows us The Way to replace all our worldly desires with a singular focus on Him. Followers of **The Way** have the Spirit of God resident, and He provides all that we really seek:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.” Galatians 5:22

Jesus said, *“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise*

the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.” (Matthew 6:24)

Good things that can be a pleasure in our lives, when they become idols, drive us to destruction. Unfortunately, even many who claim Jesus as their Lord continue to battle these desires of this world. While our human nature fights the idea of humbling ourselves to anyone, we delude ourselves into believing those things which drive us are not idols. All the good things we seek come from God and are manifestly available to us – as long as they do not usurp the place of God in our lives.

*“. . . yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but **one Lord, Jesus Christ**, through whom all things came and through whom we live. (I Corinthians 8:6)*

So, to make your New Year’s Resolution something that brings about a positive change, for a better life, take some time to determine the base cause of the issue you’re concerned about. Honestly confront them. Then – consider the claims of Jesus. Submission to Him (peace with God) can bring about freedom from all the “idols” of the material world.

*Blessings and a Happy New Year
Pastor Jason*

Sunday Morning Schedule

Bible Studies and Sunday School at 9:30 am
In observance of the Holidays there will be
No Sunday School On 1-1-17

THE GOSPEL PROJECT

- *Children's Sunday School ~ Infants-6th grade
In the classrooms
- *Youth Bible Study 7th-12 grade
In the youth room
- *Adult Bible Study
In the front room in the parsonage

Worship Service

10:30 - 11:30

Fellowship following service

Wednesday Night Bible Study Bible Study does not meet on the first Wednesday of the month.

In the Sanctuary at 7:00 **A Study on the Book of Romans**. Join us for a time of prayer, singing, and bible study. Pastor Jason is teaching. Children’s Ministry in the fellowship hall classrooms, they are learning The Ten Commandments.

St. Paul Youth

Happy New Year! Hope everyone had a fantastic holiday season. We are excited about ideas for our young adults in the works for 2017. There will be opportunities to learn, grow and build friendships together. We’ll continue with our monthly gatherings and meet weekly on Sunday mornings for “The Gospel Project”. Also, we’ll look for new ways to grow in Bible Study and hang out in small groups. Finally, we’re gathering information about summer camps together and we’ll have a parent meeting toward the end of the month to discuss options. We have enjoyed getting to know you all in 2016 and we are excited what is in store for 2017. Blessings to you and our church in the new year.

*Warmest regards,
Stephanie Ford*

Upcoming Events

Women's Fellowship ~ In observance of The New Year, women’s fellowship will not meet in January. For more information, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

SPEC Supper Club ~ Wednesday, January 4th at 6:00 pm.

Ladies' Book Groups ~ Tuesday, January 3rd at 7 pm, at Emily Coffee, “Prayer.” For more information, please see Stephanie Ford.

Ladies' Book Groups ~ Wednesday, January 4th at 8 pm, at the Clemmensen home, "Treasuring Christ." For more information, please see Stephanie Ford.

Theology on tap ~ January 6th and 20th. For more information, contact Pastor Jason at 210- 382-6596. Locations to be announced soon.

Taking Down of the Greens

Saturday, January 7th, at 10 am. All are invited to come and help take down the Christmas decorations. Many hands make light work. For more information, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

The Sewing Sisters ~ January 12th and 26th. They meet on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month in the parsonage from 9-11 am. All are welcome to come and enjoy good fellowship and ministry. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

Council Meeting ~ Monday, January 16th at 7:00 pm.

Pinterest Night ~ Sunday, January 29th from 6pm-8pm. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share and come hang out together! Valentine Wreath. Please RSVP on or before January 22nd, so that we have enough supplies. We may even try our hand at a few of them and see how they turn out! For more information, please see Stephanie Ford.

Semi-Annual Meeting & Potluck Lunch
Sunday, January 29th. The semi-annual meeting will be to review and approve the 2017 proposed budget by the church council.

General Announcements

Thank You ~ The church would like to thank all those who participated in our Christmas season, either as a reader for the Advent candles, in decorating the church for the season, purchasing a poinsettia plant, sewing the quilts for the homebound, preparing and

delivering the gifts, donating to the sock & mitten tree to benefit Trulight127 Ministries, Cibolo, helping with the 12th Annual Christmas Community Breakfast, the children and youth Christmas program, participating in the Cibolo Christmas Parade, or in some other way. Thank you for your time & donations.

Church Offices Closed ~ In observance of the New Year the church offices will be closed Monday, January 2nd.

Flower Calendar/Fellowship Servers /

Ushers ~ For the 2017 year we have a sign-up sheet for each, flowers, fellowship serving and ushering. They are on the wall in the Fellowship Hall for your selection of a Sunday. Sign up early to choose the Sunday you prefer.

Offering Envelopes ~ Are on the table in the fellowship hall. They are labeled and arranged in alphabetical order.

Nursery Volunteers Needed ~ The church is in need of more nursery volunteers to assist in the nursery during the worship service. Please see Beth for more information.

Hymnals Available ~ The church has several hymnals that are available for free, there is a box in the fellowship hall.

St. Paul Logo Coffee Cups For Sale
\$5.00 each by the book table.

Liturgy Sign Up ~ If you would like to contribute to the worship service by reading the liturgy, there is a sign-up sheet on the table in the hallway.

Service Opportunity ~ If you are looking for a way to serve the church and like working with computers, we have the perfect spot for you. The A/V Team runs the computer and sound for the service on Sunday mornings. You would be able to serve the church and not miss worship. Please consider sitting upstairs for a Sunday or two, to find out what all is involved. For more information, please contact Beth Johnson at 210-658-5874 or by e-mail at BethJ@StPaulCibolo.com.

SPEC Supper Club ~ Community Outreach
Preparing and serving a meal for the needy of the community once a month on the first Wednesday. Your thoughts and prayers are appreciated as we attempt to help our brothers and sisters that may need a helping hand. Donations as well as volunteers are always welcome. Please see Rich A, Don & Marion D, or Willie & Ann S.

Women's Fellowship Recycled Card Program ~ In Support for St. Jude's Children's Homes ~ Used greeting cards, front cover only, can be dropped off in the designated box located in the Fellowship Hall. They will then be sent to St. Jude's Children's Home, for use by Kids' Corp. The children participate in making the new cards by attaching a new back and then selling them. For information on purchasing of cards go to http://www.stjudesranch.org/help_card.php. For more information, please contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

Prayer Team ~ If you are willing to receive e-mails or phone tree messages with prayer requests, please give Pastor Willie Stratemann your e-mail address or phone number.

Ushers and Greeters ~ If you can help usher on Sunday mornings, please sign up on the sheet in the Fellowship Hall or contact the church office at 210-658-5874.

Women's Fellowship Cookbooks Available
The cookbooks are available in the church office or after church in the Fellowship Hall. They are \$15.00 each and have over 800 recipes. They would make a wonderful gift for family and friends.

GREAT NEWS!! RACAP now has a new drop off location for nonperishable food donations!! What could be easier, as you leave our FM3009 HEB, than to swing by the Schertz Cibolo Emergency Clinic and drop off your donations of nonperishable foods for RACAP. Donation boxes are available in the lobby. The clinic is open, 24 Hours a Day, 7 Days a Week!! The clinic is located at 4825 FM 3009,

Ste. 200 Schertz, TX 78154, On 3009 next to Bush's Chicken.

R.A.C.A.P. Pantry Needs: URGENT NEED of the following items: Brown Paper Bags / Canned Soups / **MACARONI AND CHEESE** / Canned Pasta with Meat / Canned Fruits / Cereal / Canned Tomato products / Muffin Mixes

Reminder: Due to health regulations R.A.C.A.P. is not allowed to accept any donations that are not in their original container or have been opened.

Notification of Events - If you would like to be notified of St. Paul events, via Google calendar alerts, please send your e-mail to admin@stpaulcibolo.com with a notation for e-mail alerts.

If your church organization needs an announcement put into the Newsletter, the cutoff date is the 23rd of the month and if you need an announcement put into the bulletin, the cutoff date is Tuesday of that week at noon.

Church Office Hours ~ Monday - Friday
8:00 am to 12:00 pm

Heidelberg Catechism

94 Q. WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE IN THE FIRST COMMANDMENT?

A. That I, not wanting to endanger my very salvation, avoid and shun all idolatry, 1 magic, superstitious rites, and prayer to saints or to other creatures. That I sincerely acknowledge the only true God, trust him alone, look to him for every good thing humbly and patiently, love him, fear him, and honor him with all my heart. In short, that I give up anything rather than go against his will in any way.

95 Q. WHAT IS IDOLATRY?

A. Idolatry is having or inventing something in which one trusts in place of or alongside of the only true God, who has revealed himself in his Word.

LORD'S DAY 35

96 Q. WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR US IN THE SECOND COMMANDMENT?

A. That we in no way make any image of God nor worship him in any other way than he has commanded in his Word.

97 Q. MAY WE THEN NOT MAKE ANY IMAGE AT ALL?

A. God can not and may not be visibly portrayed in any way. Although creatures may be portrayed, yet God forbids making or having such images if one's intention is to worship them or to serve God through them.

98 Q. BUT MAY NOT IMAGES BE PERMITTED IN THE CHURCHES AS TEACHING AIDS FOR THE UNLEARNED?

A. No, we shouldn't try to be wiser than God. He wants his people instructed by the living preaching of his Word—not by idols that cannot even talk.

Read Through the Bible in a Year program
from Tabletalk daily devotional
(Tabletalk is \$23/year and can be ordered at 1-800-435-4343)

January

Old Testament: Genesis 3 – Exodus 28

New Testament: Matthew 2-21

February

Old Testament: Exodus 29 – Numbers 25

New Testament: Matthew 22 – Mark 8:21

St. Paul Staff

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Serving the Lord since 1876

A mission-focused, kingdom-building family of Christ-followers seeking to be faithful to
Jesus' Great Commission {Go and make disciples ...} Matthew 28:19 and
His Great Commandment {Love the Lord your God ... and your neighbor as yourself.}

Luke 10:27