



From The Pastor's Pen...

March 3, 2010

For 16 months Benjamin Weir faced one of the most difficult trials imaginable. Weir found himself held as a political hostage in Beirut, Lebanon, separated from family, denied any kind of contact with the outside world, and left only with long, lonely days of isolation.

Amazingly, Weir found a strategy—a transformation of attitude—that enabled him not only to survive but to grow.

“I began to realize there were two different ways to regard the passage of time”, says Weir. “One was to regret each day as freedom lost, twenty-four hours of life spent without profit.”

He found, however, that kind of thinking only resulted in more frustration and depression. So he turned another direction.

“I chose to add up the days with a sense of achievement...at day's end I would say to myself, ‘well, you made it through another day. Now you must have strength for the next one.’”

That attitude allowed Weir to turn his energy toward productive pursuits. He exercised. He did his daily Bible “reading”, which was constructing passages of the Scriptures from memory. He studied the Word and meditated upon it, applying it to his life in captivity.

Apart from giving His Son for us, God has given us no greater gift than the gift of time. What we do with that gift is entirely up to us. We can allow the circumstances of the day to control us or we can take control of the circumstances.

Paul understood this principle. “Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel.” (Philippians 1:12) Paul saw the circumstances of his day as something he could turn to his advantage. Paul would quickly agree with the adage, “That which does not kill me only makes me stronger”.

How about you? Are you controlling your days or are your days controlling you? Are you—by the leading of the Spirit of God—using the circumstances of life to make you a better person? Are you allowing God to use the trials and testings of life to make you stronger and deeper?

Paul did. Benjamin Weir did. You can, too!

Pastor Ron

“UNLOCKING THE BIBLE STORY”... This week will be our final week in the book of Romans as we continue to march through “Unlocking the Bible Story”. Our theme for this week is “Heirs” focusing in Romans 8. Please read, study, and pray in preparation.

OUR BUILDING PROJECT... Warmer temperatures and melting snow can only mean one thing; spring is right around the corner. As soon as weather cooperates, we will be breaking ground on our building addition. Keep watching as we will be giving you updates on our progress.

LADIES BIBLE STUDY ... The Ladies Bible study will begin next Tuesday, March 9th at the home of Carol Franks. If you need directions, contact Carol, Lori, or Meri.

MISSIONS SPOTLIGHT... Leslie Wilkens is in the Dominican Republic and hard at work. If you would like to read her updates, please go to the church web site www.erieefree.org or www.erieefree.com Click on the Misions Blogs page, then below the heading click on "Comments". You can also register and leave a comment for Leslie.

NEW MEMBERS DINNER ... We will be welcoming five new members (Jim & Ashley Thicksten, Dave & Gail Gibson, and Susie Knickel) into our Erie E. Free church family this coming Sunday, March 7th. We will celebrate their membership with a Pot Luck Dinner immediately following Sunday School. Please plan on joining us.

PRAYER CONCERNS...

- Continue to pray for Sam Melton
- Prayer for our expectant mom, Julie Norman.
- Pray for Leslie Wilkens as she ministers in the Dominican Republic (Feb. 27 – Mar. 7)
- Continued prayer for Dorothy and Kerry Slayden.
- Pray for Walt and Bev Watts ministering in Clairmont, Florida.
- Pray for Lori Norman's mom, Shirley.
- Pray for our servicemen and servicewoman all around the world.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT... "When skill and love work together, expect a masterpiece."

John Ruskin

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, & EVENTS ...

- * TODAY Mar. 3rd... **NO Awana** / KFC – 6:30-8:00 pm / H.S. Youth – 7:30-9:00
- * Sun. Mar. 7th ... Our Communion Celebration (9:00 am) Sunday School (10:30 am)
New Members Potluck Dinner @ Noon
- * Tues. Mar. 9th ... First Ladies Study @ Carol Franks' Home – 6:30-8:00 pm
- * Wed. Mar. 10th... Awana – KFC – H.S. Youth Ministries

*** Please note that the Executive Board Meeting has been changed to Mon, March 15th.

SERVANT SCHEDULE FOR SUNDAY, March 7th ...

- * Nursery Carol Franks
- * Greeters Joan Seger
- * Fellowship Ashley Thicksten
- * Scripture Frankie Wilkens

- * Pot Luck Committee: Scott & Meri Hammer, Jim & Ashley Thicksten, Kirk & Mary Wellman