

## Pastor’s Perspective

I am the product of a father and mother who both have “can do” attitudes. We lived 45 miles from the nearest Wal-Mart and had to be self-reliant. As a boy I viewed my dad as professional tractor driver, master carpenter, plumber, mechanic, electrician, cattleman, and physician. On top of that, he still had time to beat me in tennis and to help teach me baseball and football. As a result I was raised learning various odds and ends, tricks of the trade, and ways to fix things; lots of things. In a society that champions concepts such as “self-confidence,” “self-sufficiency,” and maybe the culture’s favorite, “self-esteem,” one can see why I thought self-reliance to be a very good thing. How can self-reliance be a bad thing? From an early age we are taught to be self-reliant and we continue to rely on ourselves more as we develop. In fact, by adolescence independence is valued as one of the greatest virtues. “We eventually become convinced that ideally we shouldn’t rely on anything or anyone other than ourselves- that whatever strength we need may be found within ourselves if we dig deep enough. Parents, siblings, friends, teachers, coaches, and even many preachers declare and sometimes literally shout this message. And it’s constantly reinforced by television shows, movies, advertising, novels, self-help books, magazines, lyrics, motivational seminars” and the like. Our society prompts us to consider self-reliance to be a good thing, very good. However, what seems right to the world is not always best. As I held my attitude of self-reliance up to the gospel, I realized that my self-reliance was actually an enemy to the gospel. Through no fault of my parents, my reliance on myself and confidence I could handle any task, hindered my understanding of the gospel. If we are encouraged to be self-reliant in all that we do, it is also very easy to think we should be self-reliant when it comes to the gospel.

The Christian life is spiritual life lived in a spiritual world. “Our human strength, be it physical power or willpower, is inadequate. We need divine strength that comes from a divine source- the Spirit of God.” When we try to rely on ourselves in our Christian lives, we tend toward legalism, pride, frustration, or ungodly living. This is a gospel enemy we should be very cautious of. This is one that we can fall prey to everyday. In fact, it is a fight to remain reliant on the Spirit of God.

Let’s consider Paul. Paul certainly had a “can do” attitude and was a very competent person. Think of his letter to the Philippians, particularly 4:13. This is one of the more ‘taken out of context’ verses in the Bible. Philippians 4:13 states, “For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.” Taken out of context it sounds very inclusive: “I can do everything.” However, Paul adds a huge qualifier, “through Christ, who gives me strength.”

Where does your strength come from? Is it your experience, your passion, your knowledge? Or do you seek your strength from Christ. Please rely on Christ for your strength, not yourself. Self-reliance is a tenacious enemy of the gospel. It will stop at nothing to weaken the gospel by screaming, “you are all you need.” You are not all you need! We need more; we need something greater than our self-esteem, self-confidence, or self-reliance. Understanding that you are a needy person is a good thing. We need Jesus, we need the spirit, and we need the Father. Please resist the temptation to be self-reliant when it comes to the gospel.

For the Kingdom,

Richard

## News from the Mission Field

### Carl & Becky Chaplin, MTW Riga Latvia

Summer arrived this week-end 5/21/2011.

IT ALL BEGINS--- on Mon. (5/23) with the arrival of DR. MARK BOLYARD from Union Univ., Jackson, TN. He will have talks on Faith & Science to teens, young adults, and medical students (both in Latvia & Lithuania). There will be discussion times, prayer walks, and other interaction in both Riga & Kaunas, Lithuania

BRAD & CALEB arrive May 28<sup>th</sup>

SO much is planned for them they (& we) really need your prayers. Brad & Caleb’s main responsibility will be discipling our present teens & young adults and involving them in outreach to others.

REV. RON & GAYLE CLEGG are to be here June 22 – 28 to speak at the church’s Family Camp in Latvia and a 2-day conference in Lithuania for seminary students. Ron is pastor of Parkview Presbyterian in Lilburn, Georgia.

~Family Camp for the Reformed churches is always great with over 100 attending. It is over some the longest days of the year (& believe us these are long days!), so plenty of time for teaching and activities (who sleeps?).

FAMILIES & MOMS’ GROUP - Hard to have Moms’ group during the summer when Moms need to be with children, BUT plans are moving forward for a series of Parenting Seminars this fall. PRAISE God for our wonderful team of 4 couples who are working to get details ready. PLEASE PRAY that all the talks can be translated and we will find a “good voice” to record them.

Baltic Reformed Theological Seminary will continue with courses in June. Dr. Mark Vanderhart will have an intensive course on “Post-Exilic Prophets.” PLUS he is offering a 6-week Greek class for those interested (thru middle of July). Please pray for these courses.

Truly a very packed next 6 weeks. We pray for grace, wisdom, strength and God to work mightily. *“Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit.” Say the Lord Almighty. Zechariah 4:6*

**Prayer List** – Please pray for the following: Neil, Allison and Cole Pillow and family, Bettye Jim Morgan, the Pastor Search Committee, Deb Ray, Gene Stansel, Guy Robertson (Keith’s father), Patricia Hodges (Channing’s mother), Jane Morgan, Mary Lou Robertson (Mary Elizabeth Makamson’s mother), Louise Fraiser (Johnny Smith’s aunt), Mary Nell Downs, McKee Guenther, Georgia Seale (Georgeanne Smith’s mother), John Sharp Pillow, MEM and Bobby Morton, Bettye and Bill Montgomery, JoAnn Woody, Ann-McKeel Durham, Jean and Harris Coleman and our expectant mothers, Anne Marie Owens, Joie Blount, Suzanne Shaw, and Amber Joiner,.

**Best Wishes and Congratulations** – We want to celebrate with John Coleman and Jennifer Fratello who will be married on Sunday, July 3 on Long Island, New York. Also, we celebrate with Blake Ware and Kathryn Lee Isaacson who will be married on Saturday, July 9 in Boone, NC. Congratulations to both couples.

## A Christian Book Review

By Brady Warren

“Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” This Proverb begins J.C. Ryle’s writing of The Duties of Parents. He states that this is a subject that all should take interest in. As Christians, we have all taken a vow to assist parents in the rearing of children. We all have an interest in the souls of the Church’s children. I will be honest with you. This subject strikes fear in my heart because I see daily how far I fall short in my child rearing duties. I am not able to perform these duties on my own accord and Ryle reminds the reader that it’s only through the grace of our Lord that we are able to fulfill them.

J.C. Ryle was born in 1816 and died in 1900. He was a Victorian and was the son of a wealthy banker. During his early-mid twenties, his father went bankrupt and this had a lasting impact on his life. He claims that he probably otherwise wouldn’t have gone into ministry. Even though the ministry brought him great joy, he says he carried the pain of his father losing everything all of his life. Ryle speaks boldly and plainly the duties of Christian parents in this treatise. But he does so in a manner that reveals the grace and love of God that we are drawn to step forward in the way of holy living.

Listed below are the 17 points Ryle gives for raising children:

- I. Train your children in the way they should go, and not in the way they would.
- II. Train up your child with all tenderness, affection, and patience.
- III. Train your children with an abiding persuasion on your mind that much depends on the parent.
- IV. Train with this thought continually before your eyes—that the soul of your child is the first thing to be considered.
- V. Train your child to a knowledge of the Bible.
- VI. Train them to a habit of prayer.
- VII. Train them to habits of diligence, and regularity about public means of grace.
- VIII. Train them to a habit of faith.
- IX. Train them to a habit of obedience.
- X. Train them to a habit of always speaking the truth.
- XI. Train them to a habit of always redeeming the time.
- XII. Train them with a constant fear of overindulgence.
- XIII. Train them remembering continually how God trains his children.
- XIV. Train them remembering continually the influence of your own example.
- XV. Train them remembering continually the power of sin.
- XVI. Train them remembering continually the promises of Scripture.
- XVII. Train them, lastly, with continual prayer for a blessing on all you do.

Each one of these points Ryle expounds beautifully. A few books that I have looked at in the past give a lot of tips but many have seemed very abstract. Ryle goes right to the scriptures to reveal how we can use the tools, namely the Word and prayer, to raise our children.

**Vacation Bible School Report** - Vacation Bible School has come to a close yet again, but with no less energy and gospel than before. "Gold Rush" was a great week for the children and adults involved. After weeks of preparation, it is always amazing to see how the wheels roll into motion the Monday morning of VBS. When 8am came around on the 13th, everyone took their places, the children arrived, and the "mining for true gold" began! The children experienced five days of authentic Old West, hilarious skits, exciting music, yummy snacks, creative crafts, rip-roaring recreation, purposeful service projects, and well taught lessons all to bring them Jesus, their One true God and Savior. This is the prayer for "Gold Rush" and all VBS in the past... for God to work His wonders through our feeble hands. There were so many hands, many seasoned but many brand new, present throughout the week of VBS. Thank you all! I know I can speak for the other adults when I say we were blessed as much if not more than the children. As Friday comes around, we are all exhausted no doubt; but the first hug, the first thank you, the first "I love you Mrs...." makes it so worth it. The children do love the week, and they do see Jesus whether they realize it or not. Let's continue to pray for the children of VBS! AND...mark your calendars for **VBS 2012, JUNE 11-15th!**

In Christ alone, Allison Pillow

**Wednesday Night Youth Meals** – The youth group wants to thank all who have volunteered to help feed them on Wednesday nights. Those who have volunteered to provide supper for the youth for the month of July are July 6 – Lori Smith, July 13 – No Youth Meeting, July 20 – Vicky Patridge, and July 27 – Stacey Hall.

**Ushers** – We want to thank each member of the usher team that serves the congregation so diligently and faithfully every month.

The July team is Gary and Kathryn Dyksterhouse (Head), Michael and Cathy Adams, Lou Adams, Rob and Amber Joiner, John and Tracy Patridge, and Alex and Meredith Fletcher.

The August team is Kim and Mary Elizabeth Makamson (Head), Hal and Kathy Coleman, Watson D. Pillow, Chris and Suzanne Shaw and Dustin and Joie Blount.

#### Happy Birthday Wishes

July 2 – David Hey, Sr.	July 23 – Ted MacIntosh
July 2 – T Mac Howard	July 23 – Bettye Montgomery
July 4 – Margaret Allen	July 23 – Ben Myers
July 6 – Brooke Boyd	July 25 – Jeff Moses
July 7 – Maggie Hall	July 27 – Bubba Nause
July 8 – Bob Morgan	July 29 – Johnny Nichols
July 8 – Georgia Hart Smith	July 29 – Amy Coleman
July 10 – Paul Franks	July 30 – Channing Hodges
July 14 – Walker Coleman	July 31 – Lee Houston
July 17 – Amber Joiner	July 31 – Kathryn Dyksterhouse
July 23 – John Downs	

#### Happy Anniversary

July 3 – Mike and Elizabeth Barth  
 July 3 – Chris and Suzanne Shaw  
 July 11 – Dustin and Joie Blount  
 July 14 – Johnny and Robbie Nichols  
 July 19 – Marion and Betty Boyd  
 July 21 – Joe and Margie Makamson  
 July 24 – Gene and Jere Stansel  
 July 28 – Bubba and Selena Nause

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### July, 2011

#### Summer Choir Rehearsal

Due to so many of our choir members being out of town during July, the choir **will not** rehearse the rest of the summer. Solos and small ensembles will sing the special music and if there are any non-choir members, who would like to participate in the special music, please call Andrew. Sometime in mid-August, when school resumes, choir will begin rehearsing again so they can start preparing for Christmas.

#### Sunday, July 10

We invite everyone to stay for the covered dish luncheon immediately following the worship service on July 10. All Sunday school classes will resume the following Sunday, July 17.

#### Monday, July 11 – Friday, July 15 – GoldRush

GoldRush is a summer youth conference hosted by Perimeter Presbyterian Church in Duluth, GA. GoldRush is unique in that it is 100% student led. The music, seminars, speakers, mission projects, and activities are all lead by the students in leadership roles at Perimeter Church. This enables this conference to be extremely relevant to the lives of youth. GoldRush has a mission's emphasis. One day we will be participating in a "Freeze" to help promote awareness of human trafficking and another day we will be serving meals at a homeless shelter in downtown Atlanta. We are very excited about the opportunity to attend this conference. The Senior High students will attend GoldRush July 11-15. Please be in prayer for the youth group during this time.

#### Friday, October 7 – Sunday October 9 - Amazing Grace 360 Women In the Church International Conference - Ladies, it is time for a road trip.

The Women in the Church International Conference has been scheduled for **October 7-9 in Atlanta**. The theme this year is **Whole Gospel-Whole Life-Whole World**. As usual, it will be an extraordinary opportunity to worship, learn and fellowship with 4000 of our sisters. Nancy Guthrie, Brian Habig, Kevin Twit along with countless others will be participating this year.

If interested, contact Cyndi Savage at 662-299-7976 or the church office (453-7608). Also visit the conference website [amazinggrace360.com](http://amazinggrace360.com).