

Peniel Postings

PENIEL HOLINESS ASSOCIATION · CONNEAUTVILLE, PA



So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared." - GENESIS 32:30

FAITH OVER FEAR

President's Message by Dan Segool



Hello friends and campers. Last fall, we shared some thoughts in an article titled, "The Rise of the Angry Christian." We discussed the rising anger that we have observed in the Christian community. We compared this with the apostles in Acts, who demonstrated joy even in the midst of very unjust persecution. We wondered why things seem to be so different in our reactions today. The main reason that we came up with this is FEAR. We discussed several different fears we all face, such as the

fear of failure, political fear, and generational fear. As we concluded, the idea of putting Faith over Fear was presented as something we would look into deeper in this edition of *The Postings*.

Let's start by acknowledging that fear is an emotion that is very common to humanity. In fact, we all have fears. If we say we don't, then we are lying. That is why almost every time God comes into the scene or dispatches an angel to interact with humanity, the first thing said is along the lines of, "Do not be afraid." There can be no doubt; God knows we are prone to fear (see Luke 1:13 and 30). When the disciples were wondering about reports of an empty tomb, Jesus appears amongst them. His first words were, "Peace be with you" (John 20:19).

Song writers know it too. Just do a search on "Christian Songs about Fear" and you will come up with quite a list. There are a lot of my favorites on that list. One of them is "Fear is a Liar," by Zach Williams. Lest you think that the topic of fear is only a contemporary one, consider some of the sacred hymns of the church - "It is Well with my Soul," by Horatio Spafford and "A Mighty Fortress is our God," by Martin Luther. I don't have the space here to share lyrics, but I would encourage you to look up and read the lyrics to these songs.

So, we know all too well our propensity to fear. How exactly do we go about putting Faith over Fear? Is it an angry reaction where we simply refuse to give in to fear? I've seen plenty of that, but something tells me that the anger itself is driven by fear. That can't be it.

I think it is instructive to actually look what our faith is in. It is not "our" faith that overcomes fear. Rather, it is WHO our faith is in. Jesus overcomes the fear. Our faith is not in ourselves or our ability to believe or trust. It's all Jesus. We really can't take any credit for it.

So, when we face fearful situations in our lives, we can give that fear over to Jesus. That doesn't mean that we aren't concerned or that we don't take something seriously; it just means we can have peace in the midst of a storm. The COVID 19 situation is a good example of this. The virus has the potential to cause considerable sickness and in some cases, even kill us. We can take it seriously and take reasonable precautions against it, but we don't have to be afraid. The reason we don't have to be afraid isn't because of our medical advances or our natural abilities to fight it off. Rather, it is because we can trust Jesus. Even if the virus were to take our lives, it cannot take us away from Jesus. We are safe with him. One day, we will all die from something. Now, I don't know about you, but I am not particularly looking forward to that. So, I try to take care of this body God has given me, and I try not to take foolish risks. Yet, I don't dwell on the fact of my own mortality. I don't need to fear it; I know that Jesus is waiting on the other side (Luke 12:4).

Fear can do such great damage. But, how do we go about living in and ministering to a world full of fear? There is a great Old Testament example of this found in Numbers. My next column will be for our May campfolder, but Lord willing my fall column will pick up on this subject as we take a look at the story of Joshua and Caleb titled, "Persevering through Fear."

125TH ENCAMPMENT IS ON!

As you know, our 125th encampment, originally scheduled for summer 2020, was postponed due to the pandemic situation. It was one of the hardest and most heartbreaking decisions our Trustee Board has ever made. As we survey the situation in March 2021, we are very excited about moving forward with the intention to hold a full encampment, as scheduled for July 15 – 25, 2021. We are encouraged by the improving numbers and are praying for continued progress during the next four months leading up to camp. We ask for all of our camp family to join us in asking for this blessing from God that we be able to gather together once again this summer. We will continue to stay in touch with the PA Department of Health as well as with local partners in the surrounding community as we make plans for a safe and healthy encampment. Take care of yourselves, stay healthy and strong, and plan to come to Peniel this summer!



PENIEL PLANS NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH CWCF



As this edition of *The Postings* is going into production, Peniel is in discussions with Construction Workers Christian Fellowship (CWCF) to bring a team to Peniel. CWCF, also known

as "Hard Hats for Christ" is a Christian organization, composed of mostly retired couples, who take on construction and repair projects for churches, camps, and other Christian ministries throughout our nation. Information about the composition of the team and the projects they will take on at Peniel are still in the planning process. Please stay tuned to our Facebook page and blast email list for updates. If you are not on our email list, just email president@penielholinesscamp.com to be added. We will need the support of our camp family to assist the construction team and to provide hospitality services for them during their stay, which is likely to be in June.

Top Photo: The renovation of the South Row picnic shelter is one of the projects in planning with CWCF. With the demolition of the South Row cottages, there is currently a clear view of the Tabernacle. If you look closely, you can see the foundation for the new South Row.

WHY PREACH HOLINESS?

By Evangelist Dr. Ron Smith



As a former seminary president, an ordained minister of more than 40 years, and current President of the Francis Asbury Society, I have frequently been asked the question, “What is the big deal about spreading holiness or preaching holiness?” So here is a basic answer for me.

1) Since the Apostle said, “We preach not ourselves,” we recognize that our agenda is to preach the Scriptures, and God in the person of Christ is the direct object of the Scriptures. We preach Christ, who alone is holy. Remember Simon Peter’s quote of the priestly record of God’s revelation that He is holy? In short, the Divine Nature of God is holy. So to proclaim Good News about Him is to proclaim holiness.

2) The divine plan of Christ for His life is to share Himself so that we may be like Him. That was Christ’s high priestly prayer for all who believe—that we may be in Him just as He is in the Father and the Father is in Him. So Christ shares with us His very Spirit to live in us. The book of Romans says the one who does not have His Spirit does not belong to Him. And, the name of that Spirit is Holy (the Holy Spirit). We see then that holiness is the nature of God, and holiness is the plan of God for our lives, accomplished in us by the Spirit of God who is holy. Without that we do not belong to God.

3) The blood of Christ cleanses us from sin and makes us holy. The book of Hebrews says that Christ suffered outside of the gate (on that “old, rugged cross”) so that He might sanctify us, meaning “to make holy,” with His own blood. We learn from this that the very blood of Jesus shed on Calvary for all who believe makes us holy.

4) Finally, the Word of God is given to us to make us holy. In John, chapter 17, Jesus prayed: “Sanctify them in truth, your Word is truth.” Since we preach the revealed Word of God, and it is the only God revealed standard through which Christians practice faith, we ascertain through Jesus that it is through this revealed word we are made holy.

These are the four pillars of Christian faith: the nature of Christ, the plan of Christ for His people, the shed blood of Christ, and the Word of Christ—the Scriptures. And all are given to make us holy. Therefore, we are told in the book of Hebrews “without holiness no one will see the Lord.” So when we are together, we mustn’t miss Him! See you in the summer!

Note: Dr. Smith will be joining us as an evangelist during our encampment this summer!

BRING THE YOUTH!

By Evangelist Ray LaSalle



While pastoring in Bucyrus, Ohio, for 28 years, a few observations have passed my way. I never had a youth pastor on staff for the first 10 years.

Up to that point, the youth would attend the youth programs under supervision of local parents. Other than the youth group, they did not connect with the rest of church. Upon graduation from high school, they would go off to college and others would find jobs. I was keenly aware that for the most part, we never kept them in the church. They simply fell through the cracks.

When a youth pastor was hired full-time, we had someone that could take our youth to camp meeting. They returned that first year from camp, and every one of them returned having given their hearts to God and 75% had received a call to ministry.

Five are now senior pastors, while four are music ministers. Three are on the mission fields and six are youth ministers.

Getting our youth off to camp meeting is of highest priority now. The church subsidizes the cost and underwrites the travel. Every year now, we’re selling the new youth on going away to camp. And every year, more of our youth are returning with the call of God on their lives.

I’m inviting all the YOUTH from every church to make camp meeting a priority this year. I look forward to meeting you.

Note: Ray LaSalle will be joining us as an evangelist during our encampment this summer!

SPRING WORKDAYS PLANNED

In order to host the team from CWCF, we are planning several workdays in late April and throughout May to prepare the campus for their arrival. Please mark your calendars for the following dates:

Saturday, April 24th

Saturday, May 1st

Saturday, May 22nd

Friday/Saturday, July 9-10
(Final Prep for Camp)

There will also be opportunities during the weekdays. We will share more details on workdays via Facebook and email as the season approaches. Our plan for June will be announced once we firm up details with CWCF.

THE MILES I DIDN'T WALK

By Lora Campbell, One Mission Society

I love chocolate. I also love the sense of accomplishment I feel when competing in something challenging. Combine that with my love for the outdoors, and it made signing up for the Hot Chocolate 15K seem like a fun event for 2020.

Since it was a virtual race, we decided to make the outdoor adventure part of an anniversary trip. Jason and I made our reservations and mapped out a 9.3-mile trail. The night before we were to leave, we packed, being sure to include chocolate for the finish line!

At 5 a.m., I was startled awake, not by my alarm, but by my sister’s call. She was calling from my parent’s house right next door to tell us that Dad had fallen, and an ambulance was on its way. Jason and I scrambled to put on shoes and sprinted across the front lawn.

It was apparent that the situation was serious. Once at the hospital, details began to unfold. As we sat outside the emergency room, we canceled our weekend reservations.

When Dad was strong enough to talk on the phone, he chided us because he did not want us to miss our trip on his account. We assured him that as much as I loved chocolate, we loved him more.

Due to hospital restrictions with the pandemic, only my mom could see him. On the second day, my dad worked his charm and convinced the nursing staff to allow us to be together for a quick family visit. I had no way of knowing that this would be the last time I would see him on this side of heaven.

Over the next 29 days, my dad battled intense and complicated effects of COVID-19, and on November 5, he completed his own race. He crossed the finish line to hear the Lord say, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.”

While these were the hardest miles I have ever walked, as I reflect on them and on the other unexpected miles in 2020, God’s faithfulness is seen through it all.

I didn’t walk a 15K, but God directed my steps and gave me the infinitely greater gift of time with my dad.

In ministry, we also had miles we didn’t walk.

We were scheduled at camps and churches last summer, but due to the pandemic, we were unable to meet in person. God redirected and enabled us to build a mini-recording studio in our garage. This allowed us to host virtual programs to train kids around the world to share the Gospel, reaching farther than we ever imagined.

This space allows us to continue to serve alongside families, churches, and ministry leaders, here, there, and everywhere, proving once again, the steps of God’s children are ordered by the Lord.

More often than not, like my 15K, the races we run are not like the ones we map out, but in obedience, we press on, trusting the One at the finish line to direct our steps. When we do, there is always something far sweeter waiting for us on the other side.

