

vise & shine

march 2012

from the pastor's study...

suffering servant

"He was despised and rejected by men." Isaiah 53:3 (ESV)

Why was Jesus hated so much? When we look at the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, we see words speaking of the suffering servant. We also see in the book of Acts, that Philip upon speaking to the Ethiopian Eunuch, shares that this suffering servant is Jesus Christ. The Gospel writer Matthew also quotes Isaiah when he speaks of the healing done by Jesus when he says, "He (Jesus) took our illnesses and bore our diseases." Jesus came here to do one very important thing and that was to save us. How did we respond? - with utter hatred. Thus we have the words written above, "He was despised and rejected by men."

When we look at our world today we see too much hatred. When we don't understand something, we often respond with hatred. Why? Well let's look first at how we look at things. When something arises that is different or new, how do we respond to it? We began by questioning it and discussing the differences that have arisen since the new thing happened. This often includes words such as: "I do not like it" or "I do not understand it." We, like so many before us, are not willing to change. Our Savior desires a very direct change in our lives - less me and a lot more of Him.

What does this mean? When Jesus came He ministered to people like us who often get in the way of sharing the Gospel. What is the Gospel? The words and actions of Jesus Christ, including His death and resurrection. If He came and lived

such an amazing life, why do we despise and reject Him? The Suffering Servant came here to save us from sin and primarily from ourselves. We alone are to blame for our sin and time and time again we try to point at others as the guilty party rather than admit that we are wrong. Christ Jesus needed to die in order for us to understand that we are dead in our own trespasses.

In Isaiah, he goes on to say that this suffering servant, "was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." The reality of this rejection is unfathomable but what joy He shares with those who believe and recognize this forgiveness.

Do we find joy in this life because of Jesus Christ or do we experience a lack of joy because our eyes are not focused on His redemptive work? For the first part He died but also for the second part He died as well so that we might see the hope that comes through repentance. If we are struggling with some sin or some grief beyond understanding it is time to cry out to God for His restoration. Confess what needs to be confessed and pray for restoration where things needed. Only Jesus can fill the void. "He was despised and rejected by men." Through Jesus, the Suffering Servant, we are forgiven and made complete.

May the Lord bless you and yours through this season of Lent and Easter.

-Pastor Charles Bergstedt

*inspiring you
to "get up and
get going" in
your daily walk
with christ*

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abandoned to god

The Life Story of the Author of My Utmost for His Highest



Editor's Note: This is the first in a two-part series on a biography of Oswald Chambers, as reviewed by Susan Baker. The PALC library does have a copy of My Utmost for His Highest. Someone just purchased the Oswald Chambers biography Abandoned to God and Cynthia Aho is in the process of cataloguing it for the PALC library. On page three, you will find samples of Chambers' devotions.

Reading the biography Oswald Chambers: *Abandoned to God – The Life Story of the Author of My Utmost for His Highest* by David McCasland affected me deeply. I would like to share some of it with you.

Before reading this book, the only thing I knew about Oswald Chambers was that he was the author of the famous and well-loved devotional *My Utmost for His Highest*. I enjoy reading biographies of great Christians since their lives can be encouragements for us Christians living today. This book took me into the lives of Oswald Chambers, his parents and siblings, his wife, his child, and his many friends living for Christ in another time and place. He and his wife "Biddy" (Gertrude) were godly real life examples of Christians who lived and died within the past century. Oswald died in 1917 in World War I at the age of 43. His wife Biddy died in 1966.

He lived a life full of the Holy Spirit, which was the source of his joyful service. He refused to worry. He lived a "restlessly restful" life, as he liked to say. He did not value mere money and personal influence. Christ was his life, as the Apostle Paul said of himself.

Oswald was born in 1874 in England to a loving Christian family in which his father was a pastor and later, an evangelist, and his mother always cheerfully trusted God to work out whatever difficulties came to them. Oswald spent most of his happy boyhood in Scotland, but the family moved back to England later. Oswald gave his heart to Jesus Christ at age sixteen and grew in faith and service to his Lord. His schooling and career path was unclear for a number of years, as he was initially interested in serving God through art. He had

a gift of art and music. His father favored more practical pursuits for Oswald, but Oswald did have two years of art schooling. He was also an astute learner of literature, philosophy, and history. Although he was offered a scholarship to continue his study of art, he decided not to accept it, as he observed moral problems with the study of art. Through various people, he felt God was leading him into the ministry of teaching God's Word. Over time, he taught at three theological or Bible training schools, as well as teaching through Bible training correspondence courses. Part of his gift of teaching was his own "insatiable hunger for knowledge."

Oswald had a spiritual "crisis of surrender" for four years from the ages of 23 to 27 (years 1897 – 1901). According to what I understand from this book, the crisis was due to the fact that he had not fully given himself to the Lord and had been relying on man's high esteem of him and his obvious gifts in teaching and preaching God's Word. Though on the outside, he seemed to be his usual likeable and outgoing self, inside he knew his sin and he struggled with it greatly. It seemed to me that he was trying to get closer to God, but was relying on his own efforts to do so. The praise of men kept him from God. Finally, he gave up his fear of what people would think of him and humbly repented and asked God to live in him. Clinging to the verse Luke 11:13 ("If ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him."), he asked the Holy Spirit to live in his life.

This spiritual breakthrough in 1901 changed his life forever. Though many aspects of his life appeared the same on the outside, one difference that some noticed was that before, on occasion, he could be caustic and bitter. He didn't always accept criticism without defending himself. After this spiritual crisis, he was able to hear criticism without defending himself. Also, afterward, he exhibited tact, compassion, and love to a much greater degree. This was the time at which he put

himself fully in God's hands and trusted Him for his future in however God wanted to use him. One of his mottos was to "Trust God and do the next thing". He felt that the one great crime for a disciple of Christ was worry. "Whenever we begin to calculate without God, we commit sin". Instead of worry, his practice was to bathe the entire situation in prayer and then wait to see what God would do.

He was blessed with a pleasant personality and he loved people. People were drawn to him. He wrote, "Ever since I learned not to teach any consciously as an aim, men seem to come in many ways to me." He was a man with "an energetic, inspiring personality". He prayed every morning for others and prayed for an anointing from God. This gave him "such a skillful touch with souls". The author wrote, "He was such a gloriously unconventional man."

Besides teaching at the theological training school and the other Bible training colleges, he worked under the auspices of the Pentecostal League of Prayer. In exercising his duties and calling, he would travel to various parts of the world (England, Scotland, Japan, and America) and preach and teach God's Word. Oswald led many people to Christ.

On May 25, 1910, he married Gertrude ("Biddy") Hobbs, whom he had met at his brother Arthur's church five years previously and then got reacquainted with her 2-1/2 years later when her mother asked him to look after her on the ship they both were taking to America. At this time, he wrote, "Life was always interesting in the providence of God." In marriage, Oswald and Biddy were united in service to the Lord and in love for each other. They trusted God to lead them and to provide for them. A blessing to so many students, they opened their hearts and home to everyone in hospitality. They gave to anyone who asked for help. On May 24, 1913, their daughter Kathleen was born. What a blessing she was to them and all the students at the Bible college!

continued in the next issue

my utmost devotions

June 25

John 12:27, 28 ...what shall I say? "Father, save Me from this hour"? But for this purpose I came to this hour. "Father, glorify Your name!"

As a saint of God, my attitude toward sorrow and difficulty should not be to ask that they be prevented, but to ask that God protect me so that I may remain what He created me to be, in spite of all my fires of sorrow. The only way to find yourself is in the fires of sorrow. If you will receive yourself in the fires of sorrow, God will make you nourishment for other people.

June 30

Matthew 5:25 Agree with your adversary quickly...

Wanting to make sure that my adversary gives me all my rights is a natural thing. From our

Lord's standpoint it doesn't matter whether I am cheated or not, but what does matter is that I don't cheat someone else. Have you suddenly reached a certain place in your relationship with someone only to find that you have anger in your heart? Confess it quickly — make it right before God. Be reconciled to that person — do it now!

July 4

Psalm 37:8 Do not fret — it only causes harm.

Resting in the Lord is not dependent on your external circumstances at all, but on your relationship with God Himself. Deliberately tell God that you will not fret about whatever concerns you. All our fretting and worrying is caused by planning without God.

cooks from page 4

question I heard.

Cooking class apparently was a success that day.

Hubby has used the kitchen to his advantage too, only in the area of preparing venison on the days when Mom is gone. He had all four boys grinding deer meat with an antique hand-crank grinder and packaging it into 3-pound freezer bags to use later for venison burgers or jerky. Making jerky was panned, er, delegated to the boys, who mixed up the seasoning packets into the ground meat by hand, rolled it out to the right thickness, cut the strips and placed them into the dehydrator. Somehow hubby seemed to have failed to get his hands very dirty with that project. The end result apparently was edible, but I'm taking their word for it because I'm not a fan of venison.

One boy wants to be a chef someday, but he has flat out admitted that the only reason he does is so that he doesn't ever have to do the dishes. Apparently he's seen enough cooking shows on TV to know that some other peon

does the cleanup, not the cook. The other boys I think would live on cold cereal if they had the choice, mainly because there are fewer dishes.

I supposed in many ways they are typical of most humans. They enjoy the fun parts of cooking: the tasting, the nibbling, browning hamburger, using a hand mixer, licking spoons, dumping in spices and of course the eating. But they do not like the cleanup and inevitably someone will complain about how many dishes a certain other someone used while they were cooking. And the boy whose chore it is to clean up the table gets upset because of the onion skins or potato peels that get dribbled all over.

The only one who doesn't complain is Dad, because we made a deal when we first got married - whoever cooks doesn't have to clean up - and now he's somehow getting out of all of it.

Turns out he may be smarter (or sneakier) than all the rest of us put together. Wonder how long it'll take before the boys catch on.

on the calendar...

sunday mornings

10:15 a.m. - Prayer time; 10:30 a.m. - Worship Service; 11:30 a.m. - Coffee/Fellowship

first Sunday of the month - Healing Prayer Service, 11:30 a.m. (if desired)
third Sunday of the month - Worship Service with Holy Communion

wednesday mornings

Men's Bible study meets on the second, third and fourth Wednesdays, 9:30 am; Women's Bible Study is held at 9:15 am. (No study on April 1.)

wednesday evenings

Lenten services at 7 pm. Wednesday evening activities will resume on April 11 with dinner at 5:45 pm.

the month of march

Please bring food shelf donations to the church throughout the entire month.

sunday, april 1

Palm Sunday service, 10:30 am.

easter services

Maundy Thursday service at PALC with Grace Free Lutheran Church, 6:30 pm; Good Friday service, 7 pm; Easter Sunday celebration - Choir Cantata followed by breakfast, 9 am. No Sunday School.

tuesday, april 10

Foreign Missions Meeting, 5:45 pm; Board of Trustees meeting, 6:30 pm.

wednesday, april 18

Night of Music, 7 pm.

saturday, april 28

Biblical Womanhood Bible Study at PALC - Women and their sisters, 9 am.

spring 2012 youth rally

PALC is hosting the Spring Youth Rally on May 4-6, 2012. The theme is "It's Not About Me" based on Philippians 2:3-5. Volunteers are needed to house kids and adults.

from the editor's desk...

how many cooks in the kitchen?

Because we hope they can eventually function on their own someday (and not die of starvation), we've been slowly attempting to teach the boys to cook.

It has been an experiment with mixed results. Most meals have been edible, but their appearances may leave some room for improvement. Chili was interesting with very strangely shaped (and very large) chopped onions and celery.

Tomato soup and grilled cheese sandwiches were a success but the cook that night was very frugal with the cheese, never guessing that his mother uses at least six slices per sandwich. I doubt he'll forget that next time; the astounded look on his face that he could use THAT many was priceless.

The main specialty of at least three of the boys is eggs. (The youngest still isn't allowed near hot pans, even though he insists he's old

enough to fry his own.) They have mastered frying both hard and soft eggs (many preferences within this household - from yolks running all over the place to smashed as hard as possible). They've managed omelets, but again the chopped veggie thing tends to be a problem. Someone taught them that eggs on peanut butter toast was a good meal, so that's been the go-to breakfast for awhile, much to Mom's repulsion. And they do extremely well in the fine art of hard-boiled eggs - even getting the timing down just right so the yolks don't turn greyish.

Awhile ago, two boys wanted to know what a poached egg was, which made for the perfect opportunity for a cooking lesson. Here's what I heard during the process: "Oh sheesh, that's gross!" "Oh sheesh, that's crazy!" "Wow!" "Are they good, Mom?" "Don't know, never had one." "How long does it need to cook?" "Don't know, never made one."

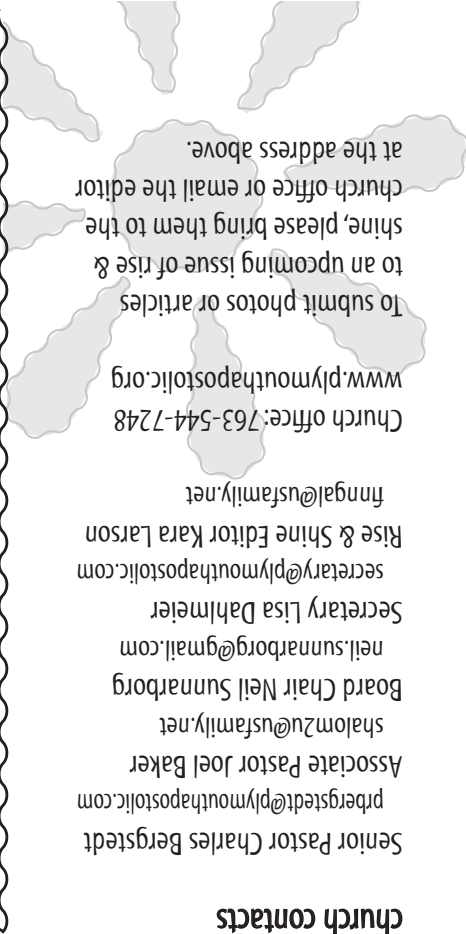
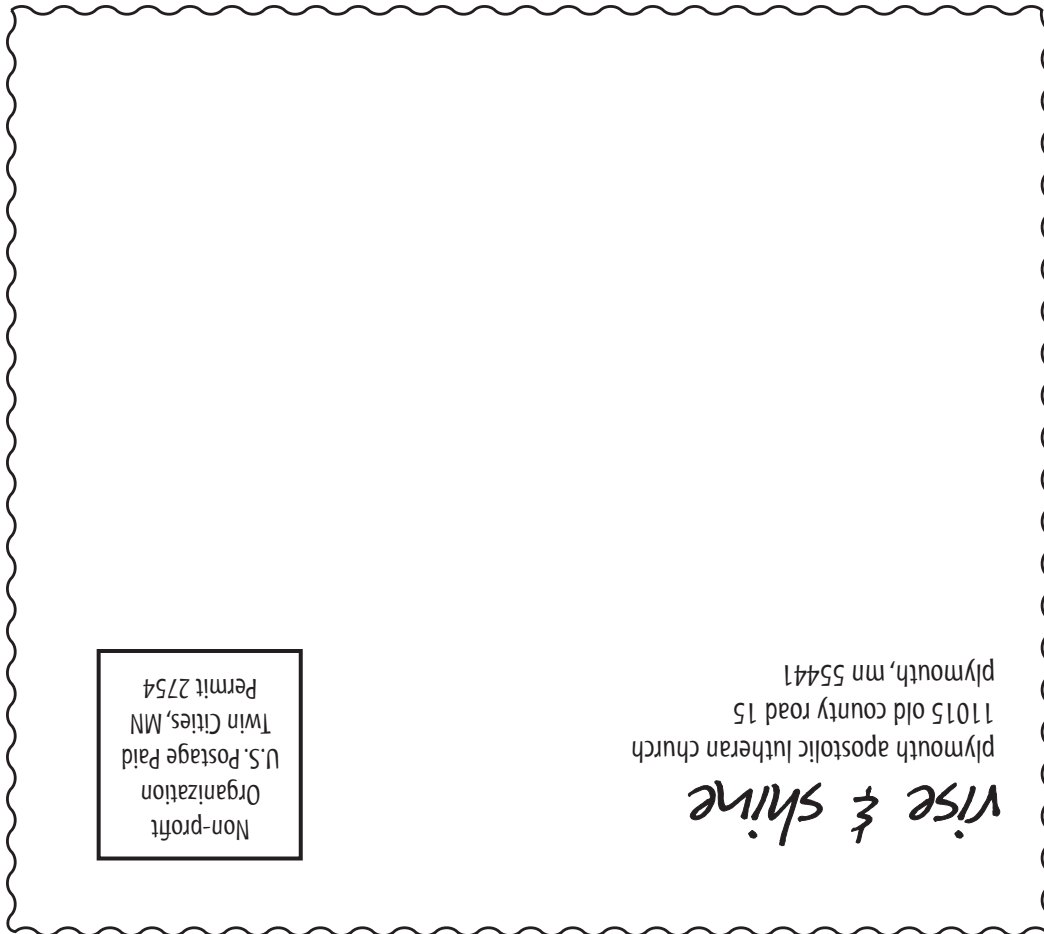
They figured out that they had to keep the water boiling or the egg will stick to the bottom of the pot and that they didn't add enough water either.

When the egg was done: "Why are you putting it on the stove?" "Why not?" "Where else would I put it?" "On a plate?" (I think Mom's sarcasm gene was inherited by this one.) "Why would I do that - it's more work!" (This come from the one whose chore was dishes that week.)

After making them eat the egg, they concluded it was much better than a hard-boiled egg, because the yolk doesn't get stuck in their throats. (Go figure.) Then it was off to brag to their brothers that they got to crack an egg into boiling water.

"When can we do it again?" was the last

continued on page 3



church contacts