

River of Love

CROSS CREEK
BAPTIST MISSION
Moving Mountains!

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Pastor Ray Gurney

BUCKLE UP FOR 2023 by Pastor Ray

Welcome to 2023! It's almost here and I hope we're ready to serve the Lord in a new way this coming year.

Do you sense change creeping in behind your back in America? Fear is striking the hearts of people everywhere in the USA. You don't have to watch much news to see what is happening. I have often said that what is taking place in America has been a long-time, well-planned strategy to destroy America. Some people hate the freedom you and I have and intend to bring it down. The plan was implemented in the mid 50's to take down America. I recall the Russian Communist Party Leader, Nikita Khrushchev, making a threat against America, "We will take America without firing a shot." Well, there you have it America. They have been working inside like a cancer slowly eating away. Their plan, patience and persistence seemingly are paying off. While we have partied, acquired better paying jobs, built larger homes and drive fancier automobiles they have been at work behind the scenes taking away freedom a piece at a time.

Most of those on the opposing team are not afraid. They will make any sacrifice their leader requires and die if necessary. Much of the world is secretly joining forces with the god of this world - Satan. Perhaps your

neighbor or even a family member has decided that the pressure of the world makes it easier to give in and go along with the crowd. How great the pressure will be when the "system" requires the mark of the beast in order to do business.

We need to talk about truth. As you'll read in Chrissy's article, the joy of the Lord is our strength. With that in mind, and accepting that as truth, we must find that joy and get plugged into it if we are going to know the truth, speak the truth, be set free by the truth and be strong in the truth. I've been wondering what it's going to be like in the last days for the believer in Jesus Christ. We know at some point the Bride of Christ, the Church, will suddenly be snatched out of the world and caught up into the clouds to meet her Lord, and escape the final days of earth. I'm not sure when that event will happen but it will. The question I've struggled with for years is how much the church endures before the "Trumpet Sounds" to indicate the "End of Time" has started its seven-year countdown. Will the trumpet sound on a day when the stock market hits an all-time high, interest rates are low, store shelves are full, fuel prices fall below a dollar, every church house is full on Sundays and additional services are scheduled to keep up with

Volume 25, Issue 1

January 1, 2023

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Special points of interest:

- BlendWell Café/ Ladies Day Out
- Monday 10 AM Bible Study
- When You Need Strength, Pray For Joy

COLLECTING

Bibles

New or used, any translation, New Testaments or other portions, individual gospel booklets.

Reference Material

Dictionaries, Bible dictionaries, concordances, commentaries, etc.

Books

All Christian books – adult or children, non-fiction.

Magazines and Daily Devotionals

Any devotionals or magazine from a Christian publisher.

CDs, DVDs, BluRay

Music, movies, teaching from well known speakers (Billy Graham, Swindoll, etc.)

Tracts

All tracts

If you would like to give these items away to other Christians ministries bring them to Vickie's office before **January 4th**.

Ladies' Day Out event is **January 17, 2023**. Please make plans now to attend (unless the weather changes our minds). We will meet at 11:00 AM at the church and head to BlendWell/Community Café 10725 US 24 Hwy., Independence, MO.

If you have a friend and want to bring her with you, please do!

Dixie

BUCKLE UP FOR 2023...continued from page #1

baptisms? Who wants to leave under those conditions? Well, I'd like to experience that but on the other hand I'm ready to beam on up to meet the Lord in the sky under the best of circumstances. The other scenario might be the church pressured from the prince of this present darkness, the ruler of the air/world.

My contemporary hero preachers/authors all seem to agree the Lord is going to make that trumpet sound and rapture His church just as things are going along as usual. Even Dr. John MacArthur, the most conservative, Big Dog preacher today, believes the rapture is going to happen without warning. The Lord Jesus predicted in Matthew 24; *"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.*

We should all have an urgency to share the truth with others and pray they accept it and prepare for everything predicted to come. Welcome to 2023! Remember, the Joy of the Lord is our strength!

Good Boundaries and Goodbyes: Loving Others Without Losing the Best of Who You Are

Starting **January 9th** at 10:00 am Vickie will start the Monday Bible study. We'll be meeting in the fellowship room or you may attend via Livestreaming.

Is it unloving or selfish to set a boundary? And what does the Bible instruct us to do when a relationship is no longer safe or sustainable? **Lysa TerKeurst** has asked these hard questions in the midst of her own relational struggles. Good boundaries pave the road for the truest version of love to emerge within the relationships that make up so much of who we are and what we want the most. Video sessions include the following:

- Boundaries Aren't Just a Good Idea, They're a God Idea
- A Relationship Can Only Be as Healthy as the People in It
- Maybe We've Been Looking at Walls All Wrong
- Old Patterns, New Practices
- People in the Bible Who Had to Say Hard Goodbyes
- You're Going to Make It

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Men; you will have your monthly **Breakfast Saturday, January 14th, 2022 at 8:00 AM at Ihop**. It's a good time to fellowship with other men in our community.

2023 Focus: "WHEN YOU NEED STRENGTH, PRAY FOR JOY" by Chrissy

When life gets challenging we often ask God for strength to keep going. But instead of trying to muster up more capacity, energy, fortitude, or more of whatever it is we think will make us feel strong enough for this life, what if we asked the Holy Spirit to increase our joy?

"Shalom" is God's perfect peace. With peace comes the promise of joy - a promise for the future, but also for right now. If the Lord's joy were a house, we wouldn't just be welcomed in; it would be our house. (See John 15:10-11).

Biblical joy is different than what many people think. It's more than a simple emotion or a sense of overall cheerfulness. **Joy in Christ isn't dependent upon our situation or mood - it flows from our connection with the Lord and transcends our circumstances. Because of all He's done and continues to do, we can rejoice in Him no matter what happens.**

The Bible says "*And do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength*" (Nehemiah 8:10b). When we need more strength, let's ask Him for more joy! But what about that grieving part? Is it not okay to be sad or lament? Let's look at the context of our key

verse to gain a better understanding.

Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, and many Israelites returned to their homeland following the nation's 70-year exile in Babylon. It was the first day of their new year (the feast of trumpets), and the nation of Israel stood in the city square listening to Ezra the priest reading from the book of the Law given by God to Israel.

As they listened to God's Word, this errant nation realized how far they had wandered from their God. At first, they rejoiced and cried out "Amen! Amen!", but as Ezra continued reading the Scriptures, they realized how deeply they had fallen into sin and how far they had wandered away from God's truth. Men and women began to mourn and grieve deeply.

The people wept as they heard the Scriptures, acknowledging their sin. But governor Nehemiah reminded the people that this first day of the new year was a special feast day of the Lord. He comforted them, saying, "*Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved,*

WEDNESDAY NIGHT IS FAMILY NIGHT!**Wednesday night dinners begin at 6:00**

PM. The cost is \$6.00 a person for ages 7 years through adult. 6 years and under are \$3.00. The menu for the month is listed on the right.

Please sign-up on the list on the information table each week. If you are running late that night, please call the church so we can set aside the proper number of meals for you.

Jan 4, Breakfast Casserole, bacon, sausage, biscuits & gravy & fruit.

Jan 11, Chicken Enchilada Soup & Broccoli Cheese Soup, corn bread, cheese and crackers, fruit, salad & dessert

Jan 18, Roast Beef, mashed potatoes, gravy, carrots, cottage cheese, salad & dessert.

Jan 25, Chicken & Pork Burritos, Rice, Cheese Dip, chips, salad & dessert.

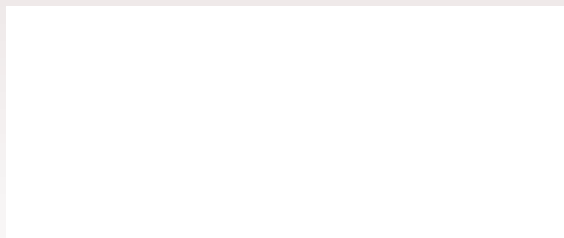
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JUST AS YOU RECEIVED CHRIST JESUS AS LORD, CONTINUE TO LIVE IN HIM. Colossians 2:6

2023 Focus: "WHEN YOU NEED STRENGTH, PRAY FOR JOY" by Chrissy Kirkman

Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

We, too, can wander far from the Lord. We can leave our first love and fall into foolish sin. We can buy into false teachings, live our lives in selfish pride, and keep the Lord Jesus standing outside the door of our hearts. Like Israel, today is a feast day for us, for Christ our Savior has redeemed us by His blood and we have been released from the bondage of slavery to sin into the freedom of Christ's saving grace.

As we enter this new year, let's strive to keep the Word of God fresh in our hearts each day. Let's recognize our faults and failings - without condemnation or shame - and confess our sins to our Father in Heaven. Let us

never forget that we are the people of God who have been purchased with the precious blood of Christ. And let us in everything, by prayer and praise, rejoice in the Lord and abide in His love, for the joy of the Lord is indeed our strength!

