

Pastoral Prayer

John 16:33 “I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

Brothers and sisters, this past week Satan brought the darkness of this world's sinfulness into our home. Praise be to God, the Berean family responded by bringing to bear the light of Jesus' gospel that vanquished our foe.

Even with this said, in times like these, we can not help but wonder why our loving God allows the darkness of sin to attack his people in such devastating ways. What possible good can come from bringing these horrible things into our lives? I believe we saw the “why” clearly on display, last Sunday night when the church came together.

It started with the Pastors bringing the matter into the light. This is a rare thing and is not often done, to the detriment of all involved. Left in the dark, sin lingers and festers and ultimately brings serious injury to individuals and the body of the church. By addressing the issue, all can deal with it quickly and avoid the malignant effect of sin.

We also saw that there was a time, for all concerned, to draw together and ask hard questions and express concerns. In doing so, trust was built through knowing that specific concerns were heard. There was also an affirmation of the importance of drawing together quickly and sharing the burdens of all affected.

Most importantly and most powerfully, we gathered together and prayed. There was a palpable presence of the leading of the Holy Spirit. It was a time of encouragement and brought a sense of peace as we poured out our prayers to our Heavenly Father.

God also allows these things to happen as a warning to us on a personal level. Satan is still a prowling lion looking for those he can attack. We are un-wise if we do not search our own lives for signs of sin. As it has been said, we are all only one second away from making a sinful decision that could destroy our testimony.

There is also the benefit of seeing that we will not be forsaken by our church family, should we stumble and fall. Hopefully, we will be encouraged to confess our sins and repent while the sin is still minor. With that said, if we see a brother

or sister veering toward the wide path we are commanded to come alongside and get them back on track. There is a great blessing in doing so.

Galatians 6:1 “Brothers, if someone is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual should restore such a person with a gentle spirit, watching out for yourselves so you also won’t be tempted.”

For all of The Father’s children, there is the promise that he will never allow us to fall completely, to the point of damnation.

Deuteronomy 31:6 “Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.” (Heb 13:5)

With this on our minds, I ask that we adopt this same attitude when coming alongside a sin-sick believer.

For there, but for the Grace of God, go I.

(If you're unaware of our urgent member's meeting last Sunday evening, please contact your Elder.)

Yours in Christ

Pastor Terry B