



First Edition

February

2016



First Baptist Church of San Mateo 2801 Alameda de las Pulgas San Mateo, CA 94403 650-345-1965 www.fbcsanmateo.org

Tough Discipline, Fervent Devotion

By Pastor Marc Heinz

When you hear the word puritan, what comes to mind? Is it a word that evokes positive or negative feelings? What would you think if someone called you a puritan? Would you consider it an insult? Would you like the implications of that title? Puritans have typically been seen in a negative light for many years and as a result have had a great deal of mud slung in their direction. In fact most peoples' understanding or image of Puritanism is incorrect and as a result the Puritans have been greatly misunderstood and maligned.

The name "Puritan" was fabricated in the early 1560's, and it was always a satirical, derogatory word "implying peevishness, faultfinding, conceit, and a measure of hypocrisy. Its primary reference was to a movement that was viewed as an unusual or odd form of Protestant religion in England, which sought further reformation and renewal in the church of England during the sixteenth and seventeenth century.

The Puritans lost, more or less, every public battle they fought. Those who stayed in England didn't change the church the way they had hoped, nor did they ever gain much of a following, and eventually they were driven out of the Anglican church. So why write an article about the Puritans?

Over the last fifty years, scholars and church historians have been wiping away the mud from the conventional image of the Puritans. As a result, they are no longer seen as odd social extremists or religious fanatics. But rather as folks of principle who were devoted, determined, and disciplined; excelling in domestic virtues, preaching, and per-

sonal piety. It is now clear that Puritanism lead to the overthrow of the English government and would later play a key role in shaping and defining America in many areas. Even more significantly, over time, the Puritans remolded and changed their society from being one that was symbol oriented to one oriented around God's Word. The Puritans were great people serving a great God; and they have much to teach us about spiritual maturity, Christian living and devotion to God and that is why I chose to write about them.

Puritanism was at heart a spiritual movement, passionately concerned with God and Christ centered living. Inherent in this movement was the desire for a vibrant, and more intimate relationship with God. The Puritans believed that every home should be like a church with the head of the home as its minister and leader. They recognized the need for strong leadership within the home. They recommended that the entire family meet together twice a day to read God's Word and to pray together. In addition, family members were taught how to encourage one another in the way of God daily.

The Puritans combined tough discipline with fervent devotion. Every area of life came under the influence of God and the guidance of His Word. Each day began and ended with devout personal and family prayer. Every task, whether professional or personal was done for the glory of God, and relationships were also governed by spiritual principles. For the Puritans the pursuit of godliness dominated their free time, ambitions and energy.

The Puritans believed that godliness was a matter of glorifying God through humble dependence and thankful obedience. This meant acknowledging one's complete dependence upon God, for life and health, grace and glory; by loving, praising and serving Him for all that He freely gives. So true piety was a realized communion with God through Jesus Christ, brought into being by the Holy Spirit and expressed in responsive affection and activities.

When the Puritan movement began the average life expectancy was 29 years old and death constantly tore families apart. So they developed counseling programs for families, placing a great deal of emphasis on teaching families how to prepare for death. Puritan pastors spent much time counseling broken families and dealing with the issues of remarriage and blended families. The Puritans had a profound effect on the family and they paid more attention to the family than any other Christian group in history. They highly valued the home and marriage; teaching that marriage was good and purposeful and a key part of God's design. The Puritans reintroduced the idea of romance and they also liberated women, teaching that they were very important and ought to be treated with respect. While none of this may seem unusual to you, you need to understand that the Puritan position on marriage, women and the family, as well as many other areas, represented a radical break from the teaching of the early and medieval church. Which in part explains why the Puritans were often maligned and slandered.

You know, in many ways the Puri-

tans succeeded in achieving holiness and piety where other religious movements failed. Why? Because they embodied what they believed, they became visible, they practiced what they preached and walked the talk making the Lord visible in a harsh world. The Puritans worked within society, seeking to do God's work in the world. Placing tremendous value on living life and persevering and growing through whatever the Lord allowed to happen.

I heartily encourage you to read some of the Puritan writers, if you do, you will discover that the Puritans have so much to teach us about how we should be using this precious gift of life! They devoted themselves to God, not self and their focus was on building His kingdom not their own and as a result God used them to impact the world tremendously.

I wonder; what might God do with us both individually and corporately if we were totally surrendered to Him? It seems to me that we are living in a community that would surely benefit from having a group of believers living amongst them who embody what they believe and allow their light to shine in such a way that they may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven!

A Letter from Ron Walters, Senior Vice President, Ministry Relations, Salem Media Group

To an eagle, timing is everything -- there's a time to build a nest, a time to hatch an egg, a time to feed the baby eaglet, and a time to teach this young feathered couch-potato how to fly!

Flight school in the eagle family is a big deal. The fun begins as mother eagle helicopters above her unsuspecting freeloader, and then carefully wraps her mighty talons around him for his first lift-off from the safety of the nest. At this point, she spirals up into the clouds about a mile, then two miles high, allowing her horrified baggage to get his first look at the world far below.

When the time is right, mother eagle retracts her muscular claws and the young eaglet is on his own—free-falling, tumbling, screaming, and facing certain death as the ground quickly approaches.

But, at the precise moment, the ever-watching mother tucks her wings and makes a beeline for the panicky kid. As she approaches the tumbling feather-ball, she zooms right past, leaving the tumbling eaglet confused and even more panicky.

At about 500 feet from the ground, she levels off, spreads her mighty wings, and catches her youngster on her back. This routine is rehearsed over and over until ... mother gets tired.

As she retreats to the comfort of the nest, father eagle is waiting his turn. In essence he says, "Well son, are you ready?" Then dad grabs the horrified kid and up they go, one mile, two miles, as the drop-catch routine is repeated over and over ... until finally, junior eagle learns to fly.

Using this illustration, God reminded Moses, "I've held you up on eagles' wings and brought you to myself."

What's true about the eagle is true about God – timing is everything.

God's precise moves, though often questioned, are always calculated. And whereas He's an omnipotent God, and can do anything at any time for anyone He wants, one truth remains—God is never in a hurry. His creation serves as evidence; ancient redwoods, blue-ice glaciers, our sun's fuel tank—all speak of a creator who bides His time.

God is simply not in a hurry.

It's not as though God can't go faster. After all, it took Him only six days to create an entire universe. But God's dealings with mankind have always

been in real time. And, in some cases, real slow time. For example:

- God's building project for Noah took 100 years to complete.
- God's promise to give Abraham and Sarah a child took 25 years to fulfill.
- God waited 400 years before He sprung His suffering children from Egypt.
- Even Jesus' three years of ministry were prefaced by three decades of preparation.

No, God will not be rushed. He even uses a different calendar: "One day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." In other words, He's timeless.

Meanwhile, we pastors try to set a fire under God's throne, as though He needs prompting. We see issues that can't wait—a long illness, a smoldering church feud, or a wayward child. We want help with pew-sitting dragons, undisciplined disciples, and divisive staff members. We want to know why our church hasn't blossomed the way other churches have. We've got questions, and the answers are slow in coming.

Sound familiar?

From the patriarchs of old, to the pastors of today, God's leaders have always asked the same questions; "When?" and "Why not now?" Yet, to paraphrase His answer to Isaiah, "My timing is not your timing, neither are your deadlines My deadlines."

And yet, His unusual timing is the very thing we boast about most:

- Abraham was resigned to kill Isaac when, just in the nick of time, God provided a ram substitute.
- Joseph was on death row, with no hope of parole, when, at the perfect time, God orchestrated his promotion to Prime Minister of Egypt.
- Moses sat between Pharaoh's hard-charging army and an impassable Red Sea. Then, God did what He does best. He made a way where there was no way.
- And, "When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son..."

Timing is everything. Our timing is best when we wait on Him. And, like the parent eagle, God may let us free-fall, but He's never lost one of His kids yet.

Many Blessings on a New Year.

© Copyright 2016 by Ron Walters



FB
Consummate Man

Men's Monthly Breakfast is February 6, 8:30 a.m.

Leadership offerings for the month of February will go to Jews for Jesus.

FBC Women's Winter Retreat

February 26, 27, & 28, 2016



Title:

“Going Deeper with God” **A Journey Through the Psalms**



Beautiful surroundings



**Wonderful
food and
fellowship
And a
fun time
for all!**

To register, see Sandy Murray or Sheryn Cockett.

**Deadline for Registration is Wednesday,
February 24.**

Over the last few weeks passages about fruitfulness have continued to pop up in my daily devotionals. Whether it's in one of my Bible readings, Daily Bread, Face-to-Face, Daily Light on the Daily Path, an on-line devotional, CH Spurgoen, etc. Through this the Lord has continued to remind me that it's true fruitfulness that He is seeking. He desires for His disciples to bear fruit. This is an important key characteristic of a disciple.

There are several passages that speak to the fruitfulness of the true disciple in the New Testament: Matt 3:8, 10; 7:15-20; 12:33; Luke 6:43-44; Rom. 7:4-5; Gal 5:22; Col 1:10.

The main teaching from Jesus on this comes from John 15.

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing." John 15:5

I've heard many try to discuss what Jesus meant by fruit in this passage. What they say is that fruit is: making more disciples, or it's the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5, or even that it is just spiritual qualities within a person. A deeper study can reveal much about the nature and type of fruit that Jesus is seeking to produce in His abiding disciples.

This is where I always seem to be so hard on myself. I so often take a look at the outward appearance of things in ministry and conclude, that I'm not being very fruitful. I struggle with finding my identity in the outward results of things seen. This is something that the Lord is continually disciplining me to let go of. In this last year God has been showing me how often I try to build things on my own, in His Name, without even realizing it. Ideas come or I gain some insight from scripture and off I go on a new direction... my own direction. Whether it's ministry or relationships, for so long I've been operating in a way that is not continually and totally relying on the Spirit to truly create, guide, inform, build,

develop, and grow. It's been a hard habit to break. But He's been showing me that this can only change as my entire life changes. He wants all of my life, so that He can powerfully change, heal, grow, and accomplish all that He has for His Kingdom and glory and my good. And it has been His word that the Holy Spirit is making what He wants clear. He wants me! You have to love that. We have a God that doesn't want us for what we can do, or provide, or accomplish. We have a Heavenly Father, Son and Spirit that just loves His children and desires to be with us. John Piper captured this well:

"Christ did not die to forgive sinners who go on treasuring anything above seeing and savoring God. And people who would be happy in heaven if Christ were not there, will not be there. The gospel is not a way to get people to heaven; it's the way of getting people to God. It is the way of overcoming every obstacle to everlasting joy in God. If we don't want God above all things, we have not been converted by the gospel."

The #1 priority for God is to be with me. Jesus didn't die to just take away my sins and to give me a new outlook on life. He came that I would have life; abundant life, real life in Him... **NOW**. (John 10:10) and that life can only happen when I'm abiding in Him.

When we take an honest look at John 15, the emphasis in this passage is clearly not on the definition of fruit and production of fruit in the life of a believer, though it is there and it is desired. Jesus places the emphasis on Himself, the "true vine" (15:1). The point He makes is that it is only with respect to the relationship between the Vine (Jesus) and the branches (us) that fruitfulness occurs. If we are abiding in Jesus, then fruit will be produced. If not, then fruit does not happen. And whatever that fruit may look like, based on whatever season of life we

are in (bearing or pruning), Jesus is the one producing the fruit in and through us. It is His life that courses through and into the connected branches that enables life and subsequently, fruit. All we need be concerned with is staying connected to Him. Remaining in Him! Abiding!

More and more what I'm seeking to do in my devotional time and in various prayer times throughout the day is just be with Him. Where I used to approach my devotionals with an agenda to gain vision, direction, insight (which are all good things). Now I'm just seeking to be with Him in His presence, knowing and trusting that He will reveal what He wants to in His time and His way. The result has been far more than I anticipated and He has much to say about my inner struggles and barriers to faith and obedience in Him that exist in my heart. He is truly remarkable.

Can you relate? Is this your daily struggle? Then take a new approach in your time with the Lord. Just come into His presence with reverence, awe, and humility with only one goal in mind. **Be with Him!**

A Quote from Mark Batterson's Book: *If*:

"It was Fredrick Douglas who said, "One and God make a majority" I would add a little amendment . . . one and God make a supermajority! If God is for us, nothing can stop us!

There are no odds He cannot overcome.

There is no obstacle He cannot overwhelm.

. . . The Issue is not whether or not God is on our side. That question was answered at the cross! God is for us. The only question that remains is this one: Are we on His side? . . .




God is for you -- no ifs, ands, or buts about it.

The only question is: Are you for God?

.....

What if you were more afraid of missing opportunities than making mistakes?

February 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 7pm AI-Anon 7pm C.A.D.	3 6:30 pm Midweek Bible Study 6:30 pm AWANAS 8pm Worship Rehearsal	4 3pm Youth Band Reh. 7pm TNT	5	6 8:30am Men's Breakfast
7 Scout Sunday	8	9 7pm AI-Anon 7pm C.A.D.	10 6:30 pm Midweek Bible Study 6:30 pm AWANAS 8pm Worship Rehearsal	11 3pm Youth Band Reh. 7pm TNT	12	13
14 12:30pm Children's Ministry Meeting	15  Church Office Closed	16 7pm AI-Anon 7pm C.A.D.	17 6:30 pm Midweek Bible Study 6:30 pm AWANAS 8pm Worship Rehearsal	18 3pm Youth Band Reh. 7pm TNT	19	20
21	22	23 7pm AI-Anon 7pm C.A.D.	24 6:30 pm Midweek Bible Study 6:30 pm AWANAS 8pm Worship Rehearsal	25 3pm Youth Band Reh. 7pm TNT	26	27
28 	29	SUNDAY MORNINGS: 9:30am Bible Studies for Children and Adults 11:00am Contemporary Style Worship 11:00am Bible Studies for Adults and All Youth Classical Style Worship				Women's Ministry Winter Retreat 
					All Events Are Subject to Change.	



First Baptist Church
 2801 Alameda de las Pulgas
 San Mateo, California 94403

Daily Bible Readings

The following Bible readings
 are provided by
biblegateway.com

February

Mon.	1	Leviticus 7-9
Tues.	2	Leviticus 10-12
Wed.	3	Leviticus 13-15
Thurs.	4	Leviticus 16-18
Fri.	5	Leviticus 19-21
Sat.	6	Leviticus 22-24
Sun.	7	Leviticus 25-27
Mon.	8	Numbers 1-3
Tues.	9	Numbers 4-6
Wed.	10	Numbers 7-9
Thurs.	11	Numbers 10-12
Fri.	12	Numbers 13-15
Sat.	13	Numbers 16-18
Sun.	14	Numbers 19-21
Mon.	15	Numbers 22-24
Tues.	16	Numbers 25-27
Wed.	17	Numbers 28-30
Thurs.	18	Numbers 31-33
Fri.	19	Numbers 34-36
Sat.	20	Deuteronomy 1-3
Sun.	21	Deuteronomy 4-6
Mon.	22	Deuteronomy 7-9
Tues.	23	Deuteronomy 10-12
Wed.	24	Deuteronomy 13-15
Thurs.	25	Deuteronomy 16-18
Fri.	26	Deuteronomy 19-21
Sat.	27	Deuteronomy 22-24
Sun.	28	Deuteronomy 25-27
Mon.	29	Deuteronomy 28

*Do you have a prayer
 request?*

*The Prayer Box is available
 in the narthex.*

The Pastoral staff will pray for you.



*Have you ever considered honoring
 a loved one by providing a bouquet of
 flowers for the sanctuary? Several dates
 are available. Sign up in the notebook on
 the counter in the narthex. We ask and
 appreciate a \$40 gift for each arrangement.*

*The office staff will order your bouquet
 to be delivered -- so convenient, and so
 appreciated by your loved ones.*