

Connections

LAKEWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH September 2023 VOL XIII: ISSUE 9 LBCPC.org

JOIN US AS WE STUDY

The book of **COLOSSIANS**



SUNDAYS

8:45AM 11AM



A Message from Andrew Spires

LEAD PASTOR



Recently, in my personal study of God's Word, I was working through the familiar story of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection at the end of Matthew's Gospel. I was reminded of a Gospel detail that only Matthew records. Namely, at Jesus' death and resurrection, dead saints came back to life! *Matthew 27:50-53; "And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice He gave up His spirit. At that moment, the curtain (veil) of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many people."* Just so we are clear, there was a massive earthquake, and rocks split apart. As rocks were split tombs began to open. At Jesus' resurrection, "the bodies of many holy people (saints) were raised to life" and soon appeared to many in the city of Jerusalem. This is a story that gives many people pause. After all, it seems like something out of a Hollywood movie or TV show. Many people have dismissed this part of the story as some ad-lib by Matthew to bolster the claim that Jesus was indeed God in the flesh. That he needed to add some extra unbelievable element to the death and resurrection narrative to seal the deal. Is this a trustworthy story?

First, let me emphatically say, that I fully believe this is a statement of historical and factual events that God recorded for us in His Word. If you buy that Matthew needed to exaggerate the details of Christ then you are totally overlooking the greater miracle of the Resurrection itself. That a three-day-old dead man, by His own will (and the power of the Spirit), spontaneously regenerated back to life, rolled away a massive stone, scared guards speechless, and appears to hundreds

of eyewitnesses over the next forty days.

Second, since Matthew first writes a summary statement, and then unpacks the rest of the redemption story into chapter 28, let's make sure we get the order of events correct. The text in Matthew 27:50-53 should be correctly read and understood with the following timeline of events; Jesus died, a huge earthquake follows, tombs were opened, three days later Jesus was resurrected and His tomb opens, dead saints come back to life, and appear to many in Jerusalem. There is no doubt in my mind that Matthew is recording the facts on the ground at the time of Christ's burial and resurrection as an eyewitness. There's also no doubt in my mind that the Holy Spirit inspired Matthew to record these events in the Gospel that bears his name. So, why would dead saints come back to life?

Having clarified that these are actual events and sorting through the correct timeline, let's look at the why. Let's explore three important applications of this event. First, proper theology. God is the one acting in the death and resurrection of Christ. Mankind killed Jesus, but God was allowing it. God tore the veil in the Temple from top to bottom, God shook the earth, God opened graves, God raised Jesus from the dead, and God raised saints to new life. These references are all in the passive tense or voice. In other words, God is the actor doing the action, God accomplished these things. Just when it seemed like all hope was lost and Jesus was dead, God was still acting according to His will and purposes. Second, proper eschatology (last things). The sky grew dark, there was likely some form of an eclipse, and the earth shook violently. All these portend something of immense importance and upheaval is happening. Creation has murdered its Creator. If not for the grace of

God, that alone would've been the end of all things. Yet, this is just a small taste of the Day of the Lord (Judgment) that is to come. We read in the prophetic works in the Old Testament and in the book of Revelation, of the great upheaval in creation at the end of time. The events of the cross foreshadow a time when the world will be destroyed, the dead raised to new life, and restoration of all things will be achieved after "the great and dreadful Day of the Lord". Third, and finally, proper Christology. Jesus' death broke the tombs open. His life sets the captives held in death free! "O, death where is your sting? O, hell, where is your victory?" Jesus swallowed up the wages of sin (death) and freed those in bondage to it. When Jesus rose, we, the redeemed saints, essentially rose with Him. What we see in the saints who were given new life then was just another foretaste of what is done spiritually for the redeemed. Then, those saints then entered Jerusalem, called the Holy

City.

There, the veil had been torn, the separation between God and man was now bridged through the blood of the Lamb! They now had free and unfettered access to God, and so do we!

Now, do you see the symbolism behind such a minute detail of Matthew's Gospel? Not some salacious add-on to a miraculous story, but the deep truths that are contained inside God's Word. God wants all His people to understand that He is in control, that Jesus Christ is Lord. That He alone holds the whole world in His hand. He is a promise-keeping God and none of His promises will ever fail. And that He alone is working all things together toward their proper conclusion. Do you trust Him? You can, because He never fails!

God bless,
drew



GRIEF SHARE™

SUPPORT & ENCOURAGEMENT

for your grief journey

Classes begin September 11th

Monday Evenings @ 6pm in the conference room

Register @ GriefShare.com

Click on find a group & enter zip code 36867

Click on Lakewood Baptist Church and register

A Message from Israel Jane

INTERIM STUDENT & YOUNG ADULT PASTOR

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Hello Church Family,

I recall a pastor from the 90's who had a special saying he'd share every time he stood at the pulpit: "God is good, all the time. And all the time, God is good." This timeless truth resonates as powerfully today as it did back then. As we look back on the journey we've taken this year, our hearts overflow with gratitude for the unwavering love of God. He not only loves us but also desires to work through us, impacting the world around us.

These recent months have shown us God's remarkable hand at work in our endeavors. From the amazing missions trips to the fun we had at youth camp, from the inspiring experiences of D-Now's to the compassion we poured into serving the homeless, every step has been guided by the heart of a God who seeks to shine His light in a world that yearns for His presence.

As August draws to a close, let's pause and celebrate some incredible highlights. Our journey through the book of Revelation has unveiled deeper insights into God's majestic plan for the ages. We've also explored the realm of religious urban legends, separating fact from fiction. On Wednesday the 2nd, we gathered at the Parkmans' for an evening of fellowship, food, and fun. And who can forget the awesome back-to-school bash we shared with fellow believers from nearby churches? Our guest speaker, Gabriel Wright from Birmingham, illuminated God's purpose, plan, and power as we enter a new school year with determination.

Let's remember that we are vessels of God's boundless love and unwavering grace. He has positioned us for such a time as this – to make a difference, radiate His light, and spread His

love wherever we tread.

Esther 4:14 (NIV):

"For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?"

May we continue to seek Him, grow in His Word, and stand together on this remarkable journey of faith.

Stay connected, stay inspired, and keep shining brightly!

Blessings



WEDNESDAY

6-7:30

SEPTEMBER

6th

Awana Clubs

2 years old thru 6th grade

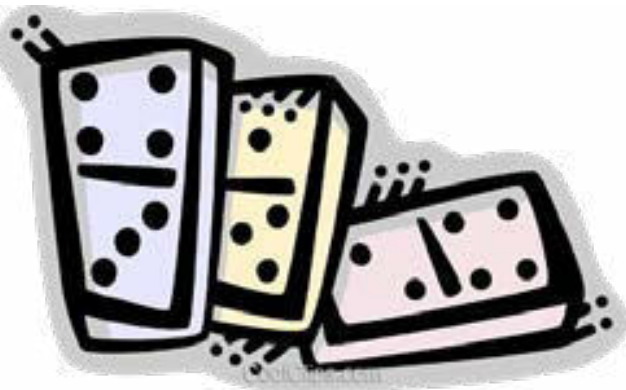


Cubbies

Sparks



Senior Game Night



September 8th @ 5:30pm in F/H

Sister 2 Sister

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S
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P
T.
11

At the home of Chi Chi Peak

*Bring food for the LOAF ministry



Church-wide Tailgate Party

September 23rd @ 6PM

Family Activities Center

Bring your fav tailgate
food to share

Ladies are providing meat

A Message from David Stephens

CHILDREN'S PASTOR



"Be Still and know that I am God"

Situation 1

The alarm clock goes off. We wake up to the promises of a new day. It's a new chance to impact a person or situation for good. God is large and in charge. Is your heart ready to be used for the kingdom? As your day begins you pause and reflect on the thought from Sunday's message; "Be Still and know that I am God."

Situation 2

The alarm goes off, you wake up in a stupor. You vaguely remember the dog barking at 2 in the morning. The child is sick, and now you are sick. You don't have time to be sick. The boss is breathing down your neck, deadlines are fast approaching. You drag yourselves to the coffee maker. At least this part of your new day is all muscle memory. You're really not sick. It's just a rough morning. You pause to spend a moment with your Savior reflecting on what the preacher spoke about a few days ago. "Be Still and Know that I am God." What does this mean? How do we do this well? It is important for us to remember that in all our circumstances God is present whether we feel it or not. God knows what type of morning we are having. Why is this such a challenge in the busy world we live in today?

- Angry customers - Be Still
- Cut off in Traffic - Be Still
- Lackluster Co Workers - Be Still
- Yelling, Crying Children - Be Still
- Burnt Dinner - Be Still
- Irritating family member - Be Still
- Chronic pain - Be Still
- Broken Heart - Be Still
- Cancer - Be Still
- Prodigal Child - Be Still

The list goes on and on. This challenge to "Be Still and Know" we must face and overcome every day. Granted, there are some days when it is easier to do than others. We must get to the point where we are able to just...be. This concept of "Being Still" must be birthed out of a heart that is filled with gratitude for the one who has saved us. God came to earth born as a baby, lived, was tempted in all forms, brutally died faultless on our behalf, conquered death, raised to life, ascended to heaven leaving his spirit to live inside the beloved who believe in His name. We are the "Beloved." You are the Beloved. The Holy Spirit resides in you, the redeemed. In order for us to understand and live out the concept of "Being" we must tap into this power. This power allows us to "Be Still" in ALL aspects of our life. It's not a matter of being still and stopping our physical movements, although sometimes that is helpful. It is a stillness of the heart. The stillness of the heart allows us to see through all the noise going on around us and truly

see Jesus in the busy. This stillness helps us to go into every situation and be what our Lord needs for us to be. You know what is really awesome about our God? He promises to always be with us. "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (NIV) Matthew 28:20. The presence of God is with you right now. Don't miss the blessing in knowing that God is much closer than we realize. It is very comforting for me to know that God is always at work, regardless of what I am doing; many times in spite of what I am doing. He is with us when we rise up in the morning and when we put our heads on our pillows at night. Are we filled with gratitude for every new day that we get to serve him? Are we allowing him into every aspect of our life? The willingness to be broken is a precursor to transformation. Are we being transformed? God is right here with us. Are we willing to open up the doors and put God on display? We must allow him to work through us for his glory, and we get the honor of giving back the glory for all he has done.

Prayer

God help us not to be afraid of conversations with our neighbors. Help us to see the opportunity to speak the truth and the wisdom to do it with love. Help us to care for the widow and the orphan. Help us to be a people who are not afraid of the messy. Give us patience and wisdom to understand the times we live in. Help us to disciple others while we are being discipled. Help us to raise our children to be passionate about you and your word. Help us as parents of the 2050 church as we are preparing our children to be resilient in their walk with God. We don't know what the future holds, but whatever comes our way help us to be prepared because you the God of the Bible are large and in charge of it all. Amen.

We are preparing for a great fall with our children. The team is excited about our Awana program kicking off in September. Please remember to pray for our kids and their families that come onto our campus each Wednesday night and Sunday morning. We get the opportunity to speak into their lives for 2hrs a week if we are lucky. There is evidence of growth in the lives of our kids and that is evidence that there are conversations happening in the home about the Gospel. Pray that our team will see and take the moments to look a child in the eyes and speak truth to the heart of the matter with patience and love. It is in this, we disciple the future leaders of the 2050 church.

Calendar:

Awana Starts | September 6.

We meet every Wednesday from 6PM- 7:30PM, and we follow the Phenix City School Calendar/Cancellation Schedule.

Lakewood Happenings

September 2023

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
					1	2
9:00am Bible Fellowship 10:30am Worship 3	Labor Day Office Closed 4	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 5	10:30am VK/WMU 6:00pm AWANA begins 6		5:30pm Senior Game Night 8	
4:00pm LTSP team meets 5:00pm Deacons Meeting SPST meets in FAC 10	10:30am Amen Choir 6:00pm Sister 2 Sister Chi Chi Peak 6:00pm GriefShare Class 11	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 12			Be Strong Men's Conference 15	Be Strong Men's Conference 16
Be Strong Men's Conference 5:00pm SPST meets 17	10:30am Amen Choir 6:00pm GriefShare Class 18		7:00pm Finance Meeting 20			6:00pm Church - wide Tailgate Party FAC 23
5:00pm SPST meets 24	10:30am Amen Choir 6:00pm GriefShare Class 25	6:15pm Alleluia Choir 26		6:30pm JEG/BW 28		11:00am Feed the Homeless 30

July Giving

	BUDGET	CTB	MISSIONS	OTHER	TOTAL
7/2	\$18,328.32	\$130.00	\$2,401.97	\$7,591.96	\$31,335.49
7/9	\$22,687.08	-	\$1,335.00	\$2,223.00	\$26,245.08
7/16	\$16,824.28	\$43.77	\$3,191.58	\$4,754.00	\$24,813.63
7/23	\$8,653.29	-	\$602.00	\$150.00	\$9,405.29
7/30	\$14,226.04	\$30.00	\$1,057.49	\$1,502.49	\$16,815.53

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

SUNDAY	
8:45am	Worship
10:00am	Bible Fellowship
11:00am	Worship
WEDNESDAY	
6:00pm	AWANA
6:00pm	Bible Study
6:30pm	Youth Worship

In Memory of:

Homer Gray
For Amen Choir
from Stephen & Nancy Stainsby

For LOAF
from Donnie & Tammy Smith

Lorene Parker
For Amen Choir
from Stephen & Nancy Stainsby

Pansy Slocumb
For LOAF
from Donnie & Tammy Smith

Ina Durham
For Operation Christmas
from Glenda Medley

Joann Young
For Homebound
from Brenda Evans

Pam Harris
For Amen Choir
from Glenda Medley

For Homeless
from Gail Brantley

For Student Missions
from Myra Currier

In Honor of:

Mary Alice Roney
For Amen Choir
from Stephen & Nancy Stainsby

**SENIOR
GAME NIGHT**

Friday | 9/8
5:30pm in F/H

MINISTERIAL STAFF

Andrew Spires
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**WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS**

Chris & Tammy
Woods

Join us on
Wednesday evening
as we study
What is the Gospel?

LAKWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH
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O: 334.298.6433
LBCPC.org
HOURS: M-TH 8:30AM-4:30PM
FRI 8:30AM-12PM