

February March 2020



## Freedom From a Troubled Mind

by Pastor Mike Ennis

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness “One in five U.S. adults experience mental illness each year. One in twenty-five U.S. adults experience serious mental illness each year, one in six youth aged seven to seventeen experience a mental health disorder each



year. 50% of all lifetime mental illness begins by age fourteen, and 75% by age twenty-four. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among people aged ten to thirty-four.”

(<https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-By-the-Numbers>.)The term “mental illness” is a big umbrella. It is used for everything from a serious biological problem with the brain to the failure to deal with the stresses of life in a way that produces peace in our minds. While acknowledging that some of the things that fall under the umbrella of mental illness are caused by organic problems, a lot are not. It is the result of two things in our lives. First, no relationship, or a weak relationship to our creator God and second, what one Bible teacher calls “stinking thinking.” As Americans become increasingly secular in their world view, that is the thinking that there is no God or at least He is not relevant to my life, we are left to deal with stresses and problems in life on our own. The truth is we are not equipped to do that. For us to fix everything in our lives we would have to be in control. If life teaches us anything it teaches us this, we are not in control. Stuff happens, a lot of stuff, and most of it you cannot

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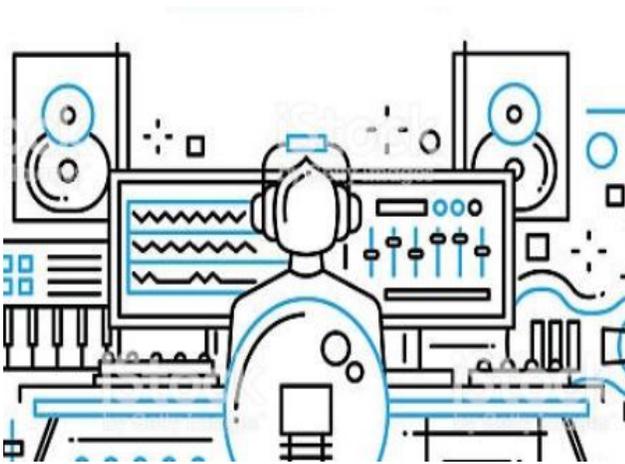
Morris Starkey - Editor

Landon Bagley – Associate Pastor

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### Show Up and Watch By A Mattingly

Arriving forty-five minutes early, I turn on the lights and head for the AV booth. I should be the only one here for a while. Plenty of time to make final adjustments to the audio/visual program for today's worship service. Before I know it, the early birds start filing in two and three at a time. They quietly scatter to their customary seats as I continue working.



“Hello, Ava. Will we be singing upbeat hymns with plenty of rhythms today?” interrupts Cora Beth in a loud but cheerful voice. I give her a thumbs up and head nod, barely in time for her to see before jetting off to greet everyone else in her path.

My eyes follow Cora Beth. As expected, she slides in next to Jane, who is seated in front of the sound booth. These two ladies are a hoot to watch. They remind me of Clairee and Ouiser from “Steel Magnolias.” I continue to watch as Cora Beth looks to find Jane scrolling down her phone, eyes fixed on the screen.

“What kind of juicy stuff are you reading now?” Cora Beth asks.

“Oh, hush. This isn't social media. I'm searching for an answer.”

“What's the question?” Cora Beth's voice still a little teasing.

I hear Jane reply with a serious voice, “I'm doing a search on ‘How does a nation turn back to God?’” From the corner of my eye, I catch a softening in Cora Beth's expression as she watches Jane hard at work.

“I'm not finding the answer here anywhere. My google search just brought up a whole string of articles about how to recognize ‘when’ a nation is turning away from God. It's evident from the news and politics that we've got that part down. But how do we get our country to turn back to God? I'm not finding any answers here.”

Curiosity piqued, my eyes turn to see how Cora Beth will respond.

“It's no longer a matter of being a good example to our fellow co-workers or a stranger in the store. A simple smile or ‘How can I help?’ isn't going to cut it anymore. Our situation is too far gone for one person to make a difference...” Jane stops mid-sentence and looks up from her screen when Cora Beth touches her on the shoulder.

“What's that book on the back of the pew, Jane?”

“The Bible,” Jane sarcastically replied with a questioning look.

“That's where you need to be looking. Do a God search, not a Google search.”

I had to chuckle when I saw the look Jane gave Cora Beth.

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control. So, we must look to one who is in control. We must look to the creator God who made this world and certainly knows how to make it work. Jesus promises us peace. This peace is not the absence of external turmoil but rather an inward peace of mind. John 14:27 (ESV)

**27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.**

The first step towards peace of mind, then, is peace with God. But there is another kind of peace in our relationship with God. It is called “the peace of God.” This is not automatic. You, as a Christian, can have peace with God and still not have the peace of God. The peace of God is available to all who place their faith in Christ, but you must appropriate what God offers. Isaiah 26:3 (ESV) <sup>3</sup> You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Verse 4 goes on to say: Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock. One reason that many believers struggle to have a sound mind is that they are minding everything but God! Philippians 3:19 (ESV) <sup>19</sup> Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, **with minds set on earthly things**. Listen, if you are fixing your mind on things other than God you will not have the peace of God! If you are minding earthly things you will not have

the peace of God in your mind! What you will have is worry and anxiety and wrong decisions in life Philippians 4:6–7 (ESV) <sup>6</sup> do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. A peace filled heart begins and ends with God! Romans 8:6 (ESV) <sup>6</sup> For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. Most Christians that are struggling with life are leaving God out of the equation; they are leaving God out of their life. They are conducting their life as if He did not even exist. They do not make Him the center of their life, they do not care what His will is, they do not seek directive from His Word, and they pay little or no attention to Him. They are professing believers but practicing atheist! Without a God focus even believers will be plagued by a lack of peace in their heart. God is to be the focus of our life.

We can help. We have a Wednesday night program that is part of our Faith and Freedom ministry. We meet from 7-9 p.m. with teaching with an emphasis on how to have peace of mind. We do not have all the answers, but we know one who does. Join us as we journey to a peace filled life with God. <>

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### (Show Up from Page 2)

“You’re looking for a people answer to a God-size problem. There’s a Bible story where a small army is going up against several larger armies, a losing situation. God told them to show up, stand firm, and watch Him work. This was not their fight. The small army arrived at the battlefield to find everyone dead. Let me do a search for that passage. Here it is. 2 Chronicles 20:1-30.”

Jane flips to the passage. I jot it down as I watch one friend comfort the other through her knowledge of the Bible. Cora Beth is right. We should be communicating our concerns to God through prayer instead of googling for answers.

“Jane, did you hear about the governor allowing Bible study in public schools, and another declaring an annual day of prayer and fasting? What about the young man forgiving his brother’s killer? He asked the Judge multiple times from the witness stand if he could step down and hug the woman. Later, that same Judge gave the convicted woman a hug she requested and a Bible from her chambers to read while in prison. Individuals, powerful witnesses, that showed up.”

“No, but I did hear about a rapper who stunned his fans with the release of a Christian album. And about the high school students all saying the Lord’s Prayer in the stands before a football game despite a warning from an atheist group.” Jane paused. “Last week, our marketing group president opened the monthly meeting with a prayer.”

“Individually, these are drops in a bucket. But Jane, if we all show up and stand together, it could start a downpour.”

I adjust the mics. Taking one last glance at the ladies, I see Cora Beth playfully slap Jane on the thigh with the back of her hand when the organist begins playing ‘Stand up, Stand up for Jesus’. (Via Free Share)

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**NEW SUNDAY SERVICE  
SCHEDULE**

**Prayer Time 9:00 am**  
**Sunday School 10:00 am**  
**Worship Hour 11:00 am**  
(Early Worship is at 10:00 am)

**Come out, bring your friends  
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Lord with the people at Victory!**

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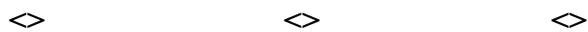
**Mike Ennis – Senior Pastor**

**Morris Starkey - Editor**

**Landon Bagley – Associate Pastor**



**Faith & Freedom meets every Wednesday and Friday evening at 7:00 pm. Wednesday evening sessions are on dealing with a troubled soul and how it impacts wrong behavior. Friday evening sessions deal with addictions and how to deal with them from a Biblical perspective and find victory and freedom in Christ.**



### Finding My Life by Losing It -

Robert Schaetzle

People struggle to find peace in their daily purpose as God desires. To live a Spirit-controlled life and recognize His leading. Consider life today, with all the turmoil, indifference, and contention. We're challenged each day in this ever-changing world of despair.

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.”  
Mathew 16:24-25 NASB

But Jesus tells us we can find real-life by losing it. Looking around, it appears that most have already lost their life is the mess. Much of the world doesn't know where they're going. Nor do they have any idea what, if anything, brings significance to their life? Can they lose their life anymore? What's our Lord talking about?

He is talking about losing our life for Him. We do this by letting go of our selfish aspirations, and instead, making His priorities our priorities. Going forward we walk and live by faith, eyes on the big eternal picture.



Since making this decision, I purpose daily to recognize His abiding Spirit within, and His wisdom to discern what matters most. This has removed the blinders, and I am no longer deceived by sight in this temporary world. Instead, by faith, I focus on things of eternal importance. With this focus, I've come to recognize; I'm tethered to Jesus and want Christ to be honored more than the edification of self.

Leaning heavily on the power of His presence has revealed my life and true identity in Him. It has given me the strength to deal with this world and the weakness of my flesh. In Him, I have found my life, and it is producing spiritual fruit.



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**Don't Overlook the Little Things  
(Zech. 4: 10)**

**By Doug Laird**

Like a drop in the bucket or single brick among many in a large wall, the individual significance of each one can be lost when looking at the big picture.



Without each and every one, the bucket would never be full and the wall wouldn't even exist.

To the observant eye and the sensitive heart, is it not the missing tooth or the empty seat that draws the attention?

Just as there is a place and a function for each every brick in the wall or drop in the bucket, the plan of God has a specific place (1Cor. 12: 18) and a specific function (1Cor. 12: 11) for each and every born again believer of the Church Age.

While some of the parts receive more of the attention, without the contribution that each one makes, the productivity would be greatly reduced and may even cease to exist.

If the \$2.00 valve stems on an \$80,000 automobile were to fail, the proud owner would come out only to find four flats and a vehicle that he cannot use.

The place and function that God has in mind for each one of us is not primarily for our own benefit, but for the benefit of others (1Cor. 12: 7).

These others are the ones whose paths, by divine appointment, that we cross each and every day.

In the case of the unbelievers whose paths we cross, we possess the Gospel Message that they need to hear in order for them to have the opportunity to be saved.

In the case of fellow-believers whose paths we cross, they and we have principles of doctrine that they and we need to hear for our mutual edification and encouragement.

In both scenarios, there is always a need for some type of practical service (Matt. 25: 36/James 2: 15). These deeds of practical service are often what God will use to provide the opportunity for the advancing disciple to either evangelize an unbeliever, or edify a fellow believer.

The place and function that God has in mind may or may not be the ones that we would choose for ourselves. We may have doubts about our abilities (Exodus 4: 10). We may not even want the job (Jonah 1: 3).

Such arguments fall on deaf ears of the One who makes these choices and provides all (John 15: 5/Phil 4: 19) that one needs.

The place and function that God has in mind may or may not necessarily be the one that our parents, pastor, friends, peers, or closest advisers have in mind (2 Sam. 7: 3).

The place and function that God has in mind  
**(See Little Things Page 8)**

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## We Need The Cross

We will all eventually die. The Bible is correct, there is an afterlife with judgment, heaven and hell. What is our plan to reach heaven?

Many say: 'Well, I'm a relatively good person – when I die I'll just hope for the best. Others add: 'I've been baptized, had communion, plus I give regularly to the church and charities – I think I've ticked all the boxes.'



It's ironic that many people, including many Christians, think getting to heaven depends on what they do. When asked about the relevance of Jesus Christ and the Cross, most scratch their heads; they don't see a connection between their going to heaven and what Christ did on the Cross. Many people consider the cross simply a symbol of Christianity – a story told at Easter how a good man was wrongly crucified and miraculously rose from the dead.

Fact is, if we could earn our way to heaven by good deeds or religious rituals, Christ died needlessly on the Cross. If we could save ourselves by our works, there would be no point for Jesus to die for our salvation (John 3:16). The Bible states: we can never be good enough to save ourselves (Eph. 2:8-9) – our works are filthy rags in God's sight (Isaiah 64:6) – that we need to be born-again (John 3:3) – and become a

new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17).

To enter the kingdom of heaven we need to have God's perfect righteousness. This is the whole point of Jesus being crucified on our behalf. If we accept the gift of salvation by believing in Christ we receive His perfect righteousness and are instantly adopted into the family of God.

Alternately, if we are hoping our good deeds or religious rituals will save us; sadly, we are in for a very rude shock.

We need the Cross. Christ is our salvation – He is the only door and way into heaven.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." John 14:6.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is a gift of God not of works, lest anyone should boast. Ephesians 2:8-9. (Used with permission)



**Do you need counseling?**

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may (Luke 1: 31) or may not (Matt. 28: 19, 20) immediately be made known.

But once it becomes known, God has a whole of an idea (Jonah 1: 17) in mind if we deliberately choose to do otherwise.

More than once I have pursued a place or function only to discover that it was not the place or the function that God had in mind. Such things were/are what God has in mind for others, but not what He has in mind for me.

After engaging in such endeavors, God has always brought me back to an environment of solitude where I can study and write in order for me to do the work that He has in mind.

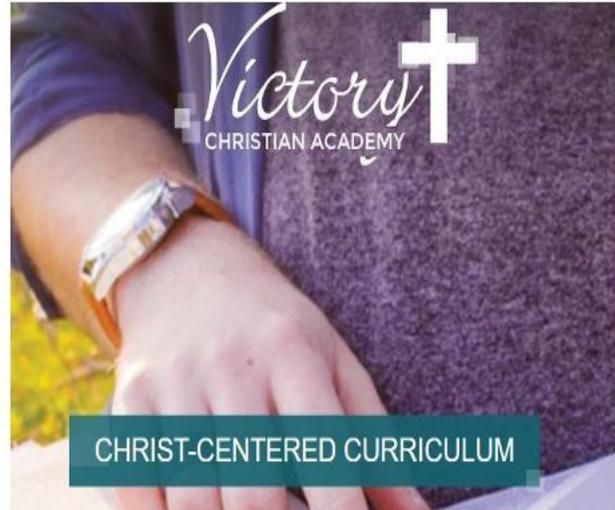
David sincerely desired to build a temple for God, but it was to be the future work of Solomon (1Chron. 17: 1,4,12).

In the parable of (Matt. 25: 15) the master gave each servant different amounts of coins to work with according to their individual abilities while the master was away. When the master returned, each servant was rewarded (Matt. 25: 21, 23) or reprimanded (Matt. 25: 26, 27) on the basis of what each one did with what each one had been given.

Many of us are here to be the ones working behind the scenes supporting the ones God has chosen for the more public functions (Matt. 10: 41, 42) with our time, treasures, and talents.

Jesus taught the greatest ones among us are the ones who serve the others (Matt. 23: 11). There is no such thing as something only being a drop in the bucket when that is what God wants done (Zech.4:10).

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**Therefore, my friends, I want you to know that through Jesus the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Acts 13:38**

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