

(Continued from page 3)

that's okay." I mean completely open hearted, big sigh, submitting to God, total release forgive. The kind of forgiveness that frees us as least as much as it frees the person that we are forgiving. Ephesians 4:32 tells us how we ought to forgive, "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you." Matthew 18:21-22 tells us how often we should forgive, "Then Peter came up and said to him, 'Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?' Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.'" This superpower also comes with a grave warning about not using it. In Matthew 6:14-15 Jesus tells us, "For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." If we take Jesus at his word, we should be out there, bam, bam, bam, forgiving everyone, even people who don't need it.

The second superpower we are given is love. I am not sure that we can truly love unless we have already sincerely forgiven, or maybe forgiveness is an act of love? Anyways, they are tied together, forgiveness and love. Love is not optional. John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." Love is a commandment to and a hallmark of all Christians. The command to love is not a command to feel, it is a command to act. It is a command to actively pursue what is in their best interest. Sometimes when we are hurt it is a command to act in spite of how we feel. Here's 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 with some thing I added in, not to try to improve scripture but to make a point:

"Love is patient and kind (while injured or in conflict);
love does not envy or boast (while injured or in conflict);
it is not arrogant or rude (while injured or in conflict).
It does not insist on its own way (while injured or in conflict);
it is not irritable or resentful (while injured or in conflict);
it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth (while injured or in conflict).
Love bears all things (while injured or in conflict), believes all things (while injured or in conflict), hopes all things (while injured or in conflict), endures all things (while injured or in conflict).

I think it is important for us to ask ourselves when someone hurts us or we are in conflict, "Am I being patient and kind? Arrogant or rude? Insisting on my own way? Irritable or resentful? Etc."

The final superpower that we are given is prayer. Specifically prayer for the one who has hurt us or that we may be in conflict with. Again I am not sure we can offer sincere and appropriate prayer for them unless we have forgiven them and are loving them. Or maybe we need to pray for them as we are forgiving them as an act of love. How should we pray for them? What is always best for them? More God is always in their best interest. "Dear God, please give them more of Yourself, pour out your grace and mercy. Pour out your Spirit on them. Draw them close to You, bless them and continue to mold them into the image of your Son, Jesus. For their good and your glory. Amen." It is simple but it isn't easy. "I can do all things through him who strengthens me," Philippians 4:13.

If we truly and sincerely forgive one another, love one another, and pray for one another, where is there room for Satan to create conflict and division?



Cornerstone CONNECT

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Birthdays (January—March)

Josiah Avery 1/7
Dawn Dossey 1/10
Hudson Pike 1/15
Dale McIntire 1/29
Rachel Pike 1/31

Tracy Scully 2/9
Irene Laine 2/13
Jim Mattson 2/13

Joshua Pike 3/8
Joyce Duck 3/11
Renae Smith 3/15
John Hill 3/20

Anniversary

Larry & Patty Gamer 3/14

We're Back!

Cornerstone returned to onsite Sunday morning worship services on Sunday November 29, 2020, the first Sunday of the 2020 Advent season.

The return to in-person worship followed the development of a COVID conscious meeting plan that complies with guidelines published by federal, state, and local agencies of interest. Chairs have been removed to provide the recommended social distancing. Hand sanitizer and masks are available. Unused classroom spaces have been closed off and we have agreed to make use of only one of the four bathrooms in the building, minimizing cleaning requirements. Tables have been removed from the Commons and replaced with additional seating. Direct linked TV monitors are available in the Commons and in the middle classroom to provide extra participation and viewing space while these COVID protocols are in place.

Online broadcasts continue on the Cornerstone website at www.cscchurch.com/service-live-stream, on the Facebook Cornerstone group page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CCCGrandMarais>), or on the Cornerstone YouTube channel (Cornerstone Community Church of Grand Marais; https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWB_AvSIbvCYbQD6cYGaRIg).

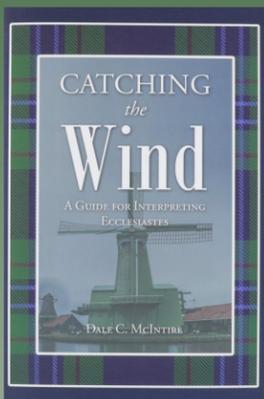
Sunday morning worship remains at 10:30 AM, CST.



Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus— Spiritual Seasons in Our Walk with Jesus



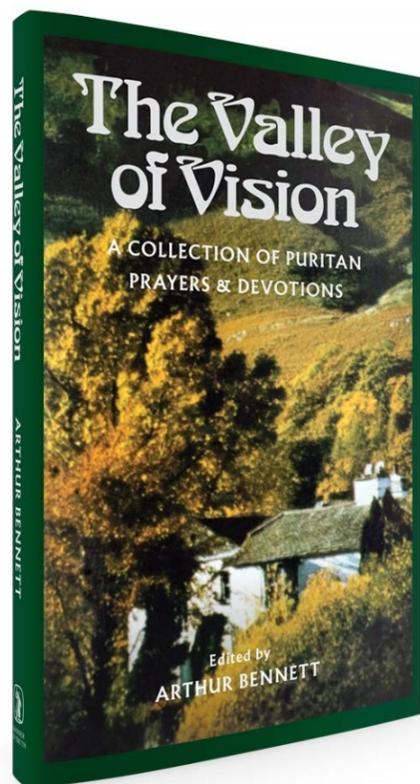
The preaching series, *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus*—The Gospel of Mark, continues through January in Mark 6 focusing on five spiritual seasons a Christian is likely to encounter in their walk with Christ. The five seasons are *Giving, Grieving, Resting, Serving, and Understanding*. February and March will find us in chapters 7 and 8, Lord willing.



Catching the Wind: An Interpretive Guide to Ecclesiastes

Long days of pandemic isolation and seclusion can leave us feeling a bit useless. Ongoing seasons of public and social unrest and discomfort can leave us wondering if there is a point to it all. Solomon addresses these questions by posing as his hypothesis that everything is meaningless, a chasing after the wind, then experimenting to determine whether his hypothesis is correct.

You can follow the steps and outcomes of Solomon's ancient social experiment and its contemporary significance in Pastor Dale McIntire's book, *Catching the Wind: An Interpretive Guide to Ecclesiastes*, now available through Amazon.com.



As part of Cornerstone's ongoing commitment and mission to make disciples, even during these days of pandemic restrictions, we have added a feature to our Sunday morning worship called **Teach Us to Pray**.

Jesus' disciples came to Him with this same request, that He would teach them to pray with the discipline, faith, and effect His prayer life demonstrated. Jesus did not dismiss the request, suggesting they ought already know how to pray. Rather, He gave them a model to expand upon. We often call that model *The Lord's Prayer*.

We are including a variety of prayer models as the opening prayer for our worship services. The models we are taking come from a collection of Puritan prayers and devotions titled *The Valley of Vision*. We aren't casting these prayers as "better" than ours as much as instructive for those who would add depth and understanding in our seasons of prayer. Various Cornerstone family members have volunteered to lead us in prayer each Sunday morning. Some will read these prayers. Others will use these models to inform their own prayers. All of us expect, in one way or another, for Christ to grant our request, *teach us to pray*.

Copies of *The Valley of Vision* can be obtained through Amazon.com or www.BannerofTruth.org, or www.WTSBooks.com.



How can we **PRAY** for you?

As various groups return to meeting together, a common desire has been for prayer, and for knowing how to pray for the Cornerstone family. If you have prayer requests to share, please use any of the contact avenues on the front of this newsletter to share them with us.

REFLECTIONS ON CONFLICT IN THE CHURCH

—John Hay, Elder

God is sovereign. He is all powerful and in control of everything. He knows everything and can do anything. Yet, he chooses to use flawed people. II Cor. 4:7 *"But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us."* He chooses to use flawed people for His glory. Sometimes with flawed people our flaws rub against each other. This rubbing can go from a little uncomfortable to hurting a lot.

When we are hurting, it is "natural" to move away from the source of our pain. Think about touching a hot stove, our hand jerks back before we are conscious of the pain. When we are hurt by a brother or sister in Christ we "naturally" want to draw away from them. But I would suggest our focus on our brother or sister as the cause of our pain may be misplaced. Eph. 6:12 *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."* Satan uses the hurts that we cause one another to drive us "naturally" apart. Our real beef is with Satan and his minions, not with each other as he would have us believe. We are on the same team. God has created us as a single body under the headship of Christ:

I Corinthians 12 12-31 *"¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves^[c] or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. ¹⁴ For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts,^[e] yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, ²⁴ which our more presentable parts do not require. **But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, ²⁵ that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.***

When we are hurt and draw away from one another there is division in the body; things are not going according to God's plan. During those times I believe we need to focus our time and energy "supernaturally" drawing together to fight the real enemy.

Did you know that God has given us superpowers? II Peter 1:3-4 ***"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire."***

There are three (at the very least) superpowers that God has given us that I believe can help us fight Satan when we are facing conflicts and division: Forgiveness, Love, and Prayer. I believe they all go hand in hand.

The first superpower we are given is the power to forgive. True forgiveness is free. If we require an apology or for them to acknowledge that they have wronged us, we are asking them to pay for forgiveness. When I say forgive, I don't mean just saying, "Oh,

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Several in our congregation have inquired about the financial state of Cornerstone. I'm pleased to be able to inform you that our Lord has blessed us during this time of quarantine and separation. In the middle of December our finances were status quo with previous years. Giving was \$4100 behind budget but was \$4000 above expenses. In late December we received several very generous gifts and as of mid-January we are \$19500 ahead of budget and \$29000 above expenses. Praise the Lord!

Current fund balances are:

General	42324.00
Helping Hand	10,365.00
Special Missions	5720.00
Special Projects	518.00
Sabbatical	<u>23,302.00</u>
	82,228.00

Rejoicing in the faithfulness, goodness, and grace of God with you!

—John Hill
Treasurer