

Vancleave Church of Christ

Sermon Title: Focus on Jesus

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1, 2

Prayer Requests and Announcements

August 27, 2023

Mary Stipler: She received good news that her recent biopsy results turned out benign.

The Bean Family: They are mourning the loss of their son who was killed in an auto accident.

Suzette Saucier: She recently passed away. Let's remember her family as they grieve their loss.

Bobbie Sue Perry (Brennen's grandmother): She has severe breathing troubles and needs our prayers.

Jack and Jace Hudson: They are at home now from their recent hospital stay. Mom is well, also.

Earl Kenney: He has been sick lately and requests our prayers on his behalf.

Dianne Robinson: She has not been feeling well this past week. Let's remember Dianne in our prayers.

Tara Forte: She has recently received a good report; we are thankful to the Lord for His compassion.

Ongoing Prayer Requests

Please be sure to give an update on these at: vcocministry@vancleavechurch.org

Becky Tarvin	Earl Kenney	Linda Kenney	David Robinson
Terry Thornton	Sheryl Hare	Frank Sentelle	Roger Hammond
Susan Flurry	Timmy Barton	Bonnie Halcome	Grady Weston
Carla Wages	Judy Stutts	Rita Newburn	Berkley Smith
Pete Hankins	Rick Bedwell	Scott Mcollough	Cheryl Solla
Larry Ishee	Tommy Webb		

A Word of Encouragement for the Week Ahead

"We are all faced with a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as impossible situations"

- Chuck Swindoll

"And Jesus looking upon them saith, 'With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible'" (Mark 10:27, KJV)

Announcements / Other:

- **FOOD PANTRY:** We need of these pantry items: **CANNED HAM, CANNED CHICKEN, VIENNA SAUSAGES, BEANIE WEANIES.** All donations are appreciated.
- Please continue to pray for and support our mission works in Guyana, India, and Guam as well as the good works at Gulf Coast Bible Camp.

Our Local Mailing Address:

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Growing By Going Beyond

Lance Cordle, Calvert City church of Christ
Calvert City, KY

Introduction. We have all seen a toddler crawling around a room, eagerly eying furniture that can be used for leverage when the time comes for “pulling-up.” We have also seen, that toddler reach the pull-up stage and move to walking “with no holds.” We rightly praise and encourage such behavior. We know that growth is only achieved by going beyond present circumstances. What we sometimes forget is, that we (adults) need to grow also. That growth, though it may be imperceptible to the eye, is still real growth. Let us consider some things we need to move beyond in order for us to grow spiritually.

Beyond Our Own Expectations. Our achievements will only be as high as our highest goals. If we aspire to be pew-warmers only, that is all we will be. Our minds will not be engaged in the private study of the word of God and our faith will not be challenged by the word’s clash with the world in our daily life. We dare not be content with “just being religious.” Here is a challenge for us: “Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children” (Ephesians 5:1). That ought to raise our goal.

Beyond Our Hurts, Losses, and Failures. There is no doubt about it, in this world we will have tribulation (John 16:33), or trouble. Persecution is to be expected (2 Timothy 3:12). Further, physical accidents and health failures occur regularly, as does death. Christians are not immune to any of these things. Therefore, when these occur in our lives, we must deal with them in a realistic, optimistic manner. This in no way minimizes the importance of our own health or the personhood of those we love. However, if we cannot accept the loss of something or someone that/who is truly gone from this life, we will suffer serious mental and spiritual consequences.

Beyond the Expectations of Others. We all have certain limitations. They may be in our physical makeup or circumstances. However we can move beyond some of those limitations. For example, we may hold a job that pays minimum wages. However, that does not mean that we, or the job, are insignificant. We can work enthusiastically at any job we may hold (Ecclesiastes 9:10). We can do the best we can with what God has given, and be satisfied in the realization that we have done so.

Conclusion. Growth, by its nature means moving beyond the present circumstance to even better circumstances. If we approach it in that manner, even the most disheartening of circumstances can be faced with courage and optimism. Let us go beyond...and grow.

A Note from your Preacher

I really appreciated this article since it deals with some real-life struggles we as Christians face from time to time. It also is a good reminder that no matter how long we have been part of God’s heavenly family growing in Christ is something we can all do as we follow the Lord who is the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2; 2 Peter 3:18).