

SUNDAY MORNING
<p>Announcements Mike Davis</p> <p>Song Leader Daniel Allgor</p> <p>Lord's Supper Jon Barry Mark Davis Cory Easley Clay Morris</p> <p>Prayers Jack Calvert Preston Ellis</p>
SUNDAY EVENING
<p>Announcements Mike Davis</p> <p>Song Leader Jack Calvert</p> <p>Lord's Supper Mark Davis Cory Easley</p> <p>Prayers Wendell Mobley Dee Minter</p>
WEDNESDAY
<p>Announcements Bryan Garlock</p> <p>Song Leader Jack Calvert</p> <p>Prayers Mark Davis W.H. McFerrin</p> <p>Invitation Gerald Eaton</p>

ABOUT US
<p>Elders Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis</p> <p>Deacons Jon Barry Bill Brittenham Mike Davis Dave Massey</p> <p>Evangelist Bryan Garlock</p>
SERVICE TIMES
<p>Sunday Bible Study9:30 A.M. Worship10:15 A.M. Worship6:00 P.M.</p> <p>Wednesday Bible Study7:00 P.M.</p>
WWW.TXKCHURCH.COM
<p>GOD’S PLAN FOR SALVATION</p> <p>Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13-17</p> <p>Believe the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24</p> <p>Repent from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38</p> <p>Confess the name of Christ ... Matthew10:32-33; Acts 8:35-30</p> <p>Be Baptized in His name Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12</p> <p>Walk in newness of life and be faithful unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10</p>

Think On These Things

Franklin Drive Church of Christ

2301 Franklin Drive ■ Texarkana, AR 71854 ■ (870) 772-0746

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Issue 23

Fight the Good Fight

Bryan Garlock

Do you want to go to heaven? Then you are going to have to fight your way there. The apostle Paul wrote, “Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” (1 Tim. 6.12) Elsewhere Paul wrote, “It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.” (Phil. 1.7) Jude taught, “Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.” (Jude 3)

Do not misunderstand. We are not to physically fight people or governments – this is not the enemy; rather, we are to spiritually fight evil – this world and its ruler (Eph. 2.1-3; 1 John 2.15-17; 1 Peter

5.8-9). Peter instructed, “...abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.” (1 Peter 2.11)

Do you have the convictions to fight this good fight? Choose your weapon (2 Cor. 10.3-6) and armor (Eph. 6.10-18) wisely. Train with your sword regularly (Eph. 6.17). Have the determination to stand and fight with hand to hand combat – not to shrink in fear and retreat. “Be strong in the Lord...!” (Eph. 6.10) Fight to win!

Have the confidence to say, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.” (2 Tim. 4.7-8)

“For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” (1 John 5.4) Will your faith be victorious? BG

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Willie Margaret Mobley, Bob Buls, Bonnie Allgor, Maxine Burnham,** and **Francine Davis.** Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

David Massey's brother **Dillon** is not doing well at all. He is under Hospice care and sadly is losing his battle with cancer. Please pray for his comfort and strength. And also keep **Dave** and the rest of the family in your prayers.

Melinda Prynne does not have a date yet for her surgery. **Dave** and **Debbie** have returned but will go back to be with her for the surgery and her recuperation. Please keep praying for her complete recovery.

Bonnie Allgor is awaiting the results of her tests and the directions from the doctors for her treatment.

Joey Avance is on a new medication for some of his problems. Please continue to pray that the doctors can find and provide relief for his longstanding health issues.

"Experience God"

Russ Bowman

Twice in the last month I've run across "religious advertising" that has featured the phrase that entitles this article. In one instance, a local religious organization was promoting some kind of holiday program and the banner in front of their facility invited the general public to "Come

Experience God". The other circumstance is a bit more pronounced and permanent, as one of the prominent "community churches" in Beaumont has erected a high-tech sign outside of their building which features not only their name, but an electronic billboard as well. And between the two, they have also included the words "Experience God".

I recognize that I'm not the smartest guy in town. But I'm not completely uneducated and illiterate, so I'm having some difficulty with the aforementioned concept. Just what does it mean to "experience God"? I understand the concept of "experience". I've experienced the thrill of flying in a WWII fighter plane. I've experienced kidney stones and knee surgery. I've experienced the nervousness that comes from speaking before a large audience. I've experienced the loss of loved ones; anger over injustice; the awe of watching three daughters be born into the world; the love of a good wife. I've experienced a hole in one and a sub-par round of golf. I've experienced friendship; dating; parenthood; drought; hunger; elation; hair loss; bad coffee. I've experienced a lot of things. The concept defined means "a particular instance of personally encountering or undergoing something." We experience events or perhaps sensations, particular circumstances or activities. We don't experience people. That is not to say that we cannot have experiences with people, or even experience things along with people. But we don't experience people.

I've never heard someone use such language with regard to another animate object. I haven't "experienced" Tracy, though we've shared some experiences and I definitely have experience with her. I was almost thrown from an Arabian stallion named "Bando" one time, and while someone might try to argue that I had "experienced" Bando, it would be accurate only to say that I had experienced what Bando could do to me – his strength or even the influence of his demeanor.

But I can't experience a horse, or a dog, or one of my kids. Or God.

It occurs to me that the advertising above is pandering to the unquenchable appetite of our generation for that which entertains, fascinates, or captivates us. We are becoming a people given to what is sensual or sensuous. And I don't mean what is merely sexual. I mean that we are given to whatever arouses our emotions, our senses, our attention. We want to be moved, amazed, enthralled, immersed in the sights, sounds, smells, feelings of those things going on around us. So much of our culture is aimed at the tantalization of the senses. We are bombarded by visual and auditory stimulation – we stare at computer screens and televisions; we are constantly tethered to iPads and cellular phones; we lose ourselves in virtual reality video games. We live to be entertained. We want the rush of experience, and we live for the next thrill. We are losing our ability to think, to meditate, to reflect, to contemplate. That which is not dramatic becomes mundane, boring, even unbearable. No stimulation? No thanks.

And so, here we are, advertising that which is completely and utterly impossible. God is not an event or a circumstance. He is a being – a person if you will, though divine in nature rather than human. Technically, He is three divine beings, but that is really another issue. My point is that He cannot be "experienced" any more than you or I can. We can have experience with Him. We can experience a relationship with Him. But He is not to be considered on an equal plane with Space Mountain at Disneyworld or a pheasant hunt in South Dakota. Jesus didn't die on the cross so that our senses might be tingled or that we might have some existential or transcendental experience. He is a divine Personality Who designed and created us and

with Whom we have lost our association due to our own propensity for selfishness and immorality. He is kind and gracious to the point that He has made great sacrifices so that we can once again enjoy fellowship with Him. And He has the power to provide to His people an eternal and incorruptible body so that we might experience everlasting life in association with Him in heaven. That is the experience which He offers.

In the meantime, what He asks of us in this relationship is pretty mundane compared to much of the world's enticements. Discipleship certainly has its satisfactions, but it does not appeal to the thrill of sensuous satiation. God doesn't promise that every day will be emotional nirvana. In fact, He promises that some of the experiences that grow out of my association with Him will be frankly unpleasant – persecution, sacrifice, suffering, self-denial are pretty much guaranteed events at some point in the life of a godly man. Worship, even though it may prompt great emotions in us, is not designed as some dramatic catalyst to an adrenaline rush. It is the honest outpouring of honor and gratitude from forgiven men as we offer to God our appreciation – in accordance with His revealed desires. And in so doing, we teach each other and remind each other and encourage each other regarding this association with God that we have chosen. And, hopefully, He is satisfied and pleased with us.

I find it both reprehensible and sad that we have so digressed in our views of God. I wonder if He stands insulted. Or merely marvels at our pitiable sensuality.

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<http://focusmagazine.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/experience-god.mp3>