

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements

Bill Brittenham

Song Leader

Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper

Clay Morris Jack Calvert

Mark Davis

Prayers

Jon Barry Joseph Barry

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements

Scripture Reading

Song Leader

Lord's Supper

Prayers

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Announcements

Song Leader

Prayers

live with your "thorn" uncomplainingly — that is, sweet, patient, and free in heart to love and help others, even though every day you feel weak — is true sanctification" (J. I. Packer).
— via *Reaching Forward*, November 16, 2009

ABOUT US

Elders

Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Mike Davis Clay Morris

Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.
Worship6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

WWW.TXKCHURCH.COM

GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

- Hear** the word of truth Romans 10:13-17
- Believe** the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24
- Repent** from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38
- Confess** the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10
- Be Baptized** in His name Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12
- Walk** in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10



Volume XXVI

January 3, 2021

Issue 1

Turning the Page on the Calendar Won't Change Things

Shane Scott

Has there ever been a year that more people were ready to be done with than 2020? I know a lot of churches that began the year with a theme like "2020 Vision for Christ" or some other play on the number "2020" and vision. But who could have seen what was coming this year?! Racial protests, a worldwide pandemic, and political turmoil (okay, we could see *that* coming!).

But as we eagerly wait for the clock to strike midnight tonight, and for a new year to begin, we should not be deceived into thinking that a tick of the clock is going to make any real difference. Racial tension will still exist, the pandemic is poised to take more lives than ever, and political turmoil promises to be a constant part of civil life. None of these problems will magically disappear just because the calendar will say 2021 rather than 2020.

Perhaps you know someone who thinks they will manage time better if they only find the right planner, or will lose weight if they only find the right diet, or will get in better shape if they only find the right gym. I do – it's me! And I have bought/tried/joined countless planners, diets, and gyms. But until I change my mindset, no amount of extrinsic or synthetic aids will make a difference in my life.

And the same is true with the date on the calendar. The numerals 2-0-2-1 alone will make no impact on your circumstances. What will make a difference is focusing on what you actually have an influence on, beginning with *you*. This is the reason that some people have had one of the best years ever in 2020 – they embraced the adversity presented by this year as an opportunity for growth, and they

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Bonnie Allgor, Maxine Burnham, Ann Thomas and Francine Davis.**

Please remember **Maxine Burnham** and **Jean Cronce** in your prayers.

Charlotte Hailey is home recuperating from her surgery

Cathy Monaghan is doing better.

Laci Morris' parents, grandmother and one of her brothers and his wife all are suffering from the Covid virus. Her father and grandmother are in the hospital with pneumonia and her mother is feeling rough. Please keep **Laci** and all her family in your prayers.

Here is the current schedule of services:

Bible Study:	9:30 AM
Services:	10:15 AM
Kids Only:	5:00 PM
Monday:	7:00 PM
Wednesday:	7:00 PM
Thursday:	7:00 PM

Sunday Kid's Class and Monday, Wednesday and Thursday Classes are via Zoom

**Ladies Bible Class:
Next Class is Jan. 12th**

Matt. 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

determined to focus on their choices and actions as they sought to glorify Christ.

Paul's famous affirmation of the strengthening power of Christ is especially relevant this coming year. "I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:11-13). Whatever the year was like for Paul, whether prosperous or impoverished, what did not change was his contentment in Christ. Focus (hey – that would be a good name for a magazine!) on Christ fortifies us against the pride that often accompanies prosperity and the despair that often accompanies adversity. There are joyful people who live in chronic pain or poverty, and there are miserable people who live in opulence and comfort. The difference is the presence (or absence) of Christ. Christ, not the address on the map or the date on the calendar, is key.

Some of you have felt deep loss this year, and I hope this admonition to Christ-centered contentment does not seem callous. Having lost several loved ones to COVID, and having lost my wife to cancer two years ago, the last thing I want to convey is insensitivity. To the contrary – those of us deep in grief need to anchor our heart in Christ even more. Recognizing the difference between what we cannot control (our loss), and what we can control (our response), is how we learn – through Christ – to be "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" (2 Corinthians 6:10).

Maybe you have struggled this year (as I know I have). The one advantage to a new year, a new month, a new day, is that it provides us an opportunity to reflect, repent, and recommit to Christ. Embrace the adversity in your life as the refining fire God intends to draw us closer to Christ and inexpressible joy (1 Peter 1:6-9). And then whatever 2021 brings its way, you will be ready to use it for Christ's glory.

Via: focusmagazine.org

When Strength is a Disadvantage

Gary Henry

"And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

NORMALLY, WE THINK OF OUR OWN ABILITY AS AN ADVANTAGE. Whatever we think we need to do, we'd rather be able to do it than not be able. We cringe at the thought of personal insufficiency, of coming up short. But in our relationship to God and in our work in His kingdom, there is a sense in which our own personal strength can be a disadvantage. "Natural strength is often as great a handicap as natural weakness" (Hannah Hurnard).

Whenever there is something that we can do and we know that we can do it, we are tempted to believe that our strength is

our own: this is OUR ability, WE have learned how to do this thing, and so forth. We begin to feel independent and self-sufficient, and our need for God recedes into the background. It is strange but true, the more we think of the things God has made us able to do, the less we pay attention to the God who made us able to do them.

To Paul, God said, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul, like all of us, probably enjoyed days when he felt adequate and sufficient to do what had to be done. But in truth, God could do a good deal more with Paul on the other days — when Paul felt weak rather than strong. So God gave Paul a "thorn in the flesh" to multiply the number of days when he would feel weak. Those would be the days when he was most conscious of his dependence on God's help and therefore the days of his greatest usefulness.

When a "thorn in the flesh" makes its painful appearance in our own lives, our natural response is to want it to go away as quickly as possible. Yet if it is God's will for us to continue to deal with it, our attitude needs to be the same as Paul's: "I take pleasure in infirmities ... For when I am weak, then I am strong."

"God uses chronic pain and weakness, along with other afflictions, as his chisel for sculpting our lives. Felt weakness deepens our dependence on Christ for strength each day. The weaker we feel, the harder we lean. And the harder we lean, the stronger we grow spiritually, even while our bodies waste away. To