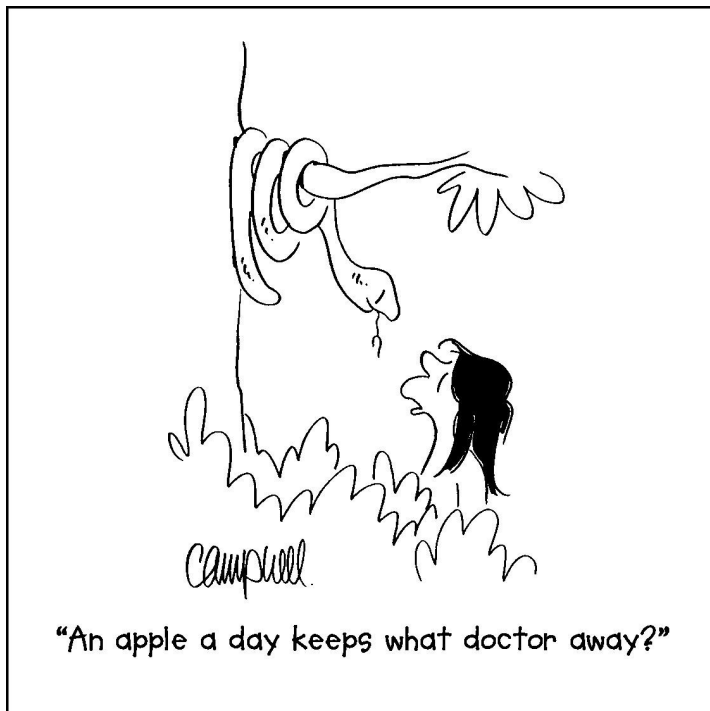


Sunday October 14 through Sunday October 21

- Pastor Robert continues his sermon series. Today, "Faith in God's Promise" will be the topic.
- Youth will be meeting at 5 pm.
- Administrative Board will be meeting this evening at 7 pm. Topics will include information for District Charge Conference.
- Monday evening the Parsonage study group will meet at 6:30 pm.
- After the worship service on October 21, there will be an appreciation dinner for Robert in the Fellowship Hall.
 - The Trustees will have a meeting in the Sanctuary.
 - The District Charge Conference will be at Trinity-Wise.



Sunday October 14

- 10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School
- 11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship
- 5:00 pm—UMYF
- 7:00 pm—Administrative Board Meeting

Monday October 15

- 6:30 pm—The Joys of Intercession at the Parsonage
- 7:00 pm—Boy Scouts

Tuesday October 16

- 7:00 pm—Girl Scouts

Wednesday October 17

- 6:00 pm—Prayer Team
- 7:00 pm—Choir Practice

Thursday October 18

No Scheduled Activities

Friday October 19

No Scheduled Activities

Saturday October 20

No Scheduled Activities

Sunday October 21

- 10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School
- 11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship
- 12:00 pm—Pastor Appreciation Potluck
- 3:00 pm—District Charge Conference
- 5:00 pm—UMYF canceled

God Shows the Way

Genesis 12:1-3

God told Abram to leave his kindred, country, father's house, and land. God says, I will show you the place you are to go. Abram left these places to go to the place God promised to show him.

How many places have you left? Many of us spend at least 12 years of our lives learning how to leave. Fifty-nine years ago, I left Mrs. Bell's 1st grade classroom. I left the room. I left Mrs. Bell's presence. In the 5th grade I left Spring Creek Elementary School. I left Chattanooga, Tn. I eventually left the state. How many places have you left? When you left did you leave your experiences and knowledge behind?

The place that God shows Abram has little to do with GPS coordinates. The place God shows Abram is the place to stand in God's Promise!

The first half of life is spent learning how to survive. School equips us with survival-tools. Tic-Tac-Toe, checkers...Monopoly are childhood games that teach us how to survive among our kindred, country, father's house, and land. Playing marbles is a primer of the Art of War. Survival is neither good nor bad. It is necessary!

Abraham had learned how to survive! God invites him to enter the second half of life. God Promises to "show" Abram the **WAY** to live an abundant life.

The meaning of "curse" is to create evil. It is made of thoughts and actions that harm self, or another person. To "bless" means to reflect the image of God. God Promises to Bless Abram. God Promises to show Abram the Way to be a blessing to all the families of the earth.

Abram has lived the first half of life! It is time for him to take his survival skills, enter the wilderness, and learn the difference between surviving and blessing. Survival is driven by fear. To survive this cruel, hostile world we must know when to fight, freeze, or run. To learn how to live we must learn the WAY of Blessing. Think about it. Most the of things we fight, freeze, and run from threaten our way of thinking and feeling. They do not present a mortal danger like a hurricane, tornado, or venomous serpent.

Religion is supposed to teach us the Way of Life. Religions teach FAITH. Faith teaches us to be blessings. Faith gives us a third place to stand. The third place offers us eyes to see things with awareness. Awareness never judges. Awareness trust God's Promise; "I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. You are to be a blessing to all the families of the earth. Please see the illustration below. (The middle is the place to stand to experience God's Promises.)

Blessing-----Promise-----Curse
Good-----Faith-----Evil
Agape-----Awareness-----Judgment
Repentant Thief -----Jesus-----Thief
Holiness-----The Cross-----Sin
Father-----Son-----Holy Spirit

Western Culture has taught us to approach life in a Dualistic Way. Dualism sees two things. One is right. The other must be wrong. Paul calls this the work of the Flesh. Psychology calls it ego. Genesis calls it The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. We will never enter the Kingdom of God following this way. It traps us in survival mode. Are you ready for the second half of life? Are you ready to leave your kindred, county, father's house, and land? Give thanks that you have mastered survival! Are you ready to go to the place God will show you. The Old Testament calls it The Promised Land. The New Testament calls it the Kingdom of God. Only when we trust God to curse those who curse us will know God as Lord, and King of our LIFE.

- **What survival skills did you learn from your kindred, country, parents house, and neighborhood?**
- **Survival is motivated by fear. What or who are you fighting? From what or whom are you running? Describe the place where you feel stuck?**
- **Which of these are you ready to leave? Are you ready to go to the place God will show you?**
- **The place of God's Promise begins with Forgiveness. To forgive does NOT mean to forget. Forgiveness leads us into God's Promise. Forgiveness transforms the memory of feeling cursed into an experience of God's blessing.**
- **God said I will bless YOU! This is what Jesus reveals on the Cross.**