

Dear family,

Sunday's Coming (and Hanna too). Remember, Hanna means the LORD is better to me than I deserve! How good our God is.

I am certainly praying for you all, for safety, for peace.

*"I hear the rolling thunder, **Thy power throughout the universe displayed.***

*Then sings my soul my Savior God to Thee*

*How great Thou art, how great Thou art!*

(It would be excellent to **walk** down our on streets and see if there is any opportunity to serve and love our neighbors.)

Please pray for our **services this Lord's day**. I am firmly persuaded that the sweet spirit that permeated our beach outreach last Saturday was due in part to our prayers as we sought the Lord in fasting on Wednesday. Please call your household together on Saturday and pray specifically for our worship, the Lord's Supper, the preaching, the singing of God's worthy praises, and the loving fellowship of the saints.

We will have a **covered dish supper** following the morning service!!! I'm tingling with anticipation; let's seek to make it our best yet (and we've had some great ones).

Pray for **Chris and Haley Bowman** as they head to Fort Benning, Ga. I'm praying that the *three* of them will be surrounded with Christian fellowship.

And remember **Ben** at Cambell (*Go dromedaries!* Okay, I know that sounds *hokey*, but then. . . . never mind. David will get it. =}

Also, please continue to pray for Allison Coggins' health concerns.

I hope you are continuing to lift up everyone who received a tract from our **beach outreach**. Perhaps we will have some visit this Lord's day. May we all grow in our daily love and concern for the lost. I love the heart of Charles Spurgeon reflected in this quote:

*If sinners will be damned*

*At least let them leap to hell over our bodies.*

*And if they will perish,*

*Let them perish with our arms about their knees imploring them to live.*

*If hell must be filled,*

*At least let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions*

*And let not one go there unwarned and unprayed for.*

C.H.S.

Fitz and Bob and I (and hopefully others) will soon start **knocking on doors** of newcomers to the area. We will be giving them the **tract**: “An Appointment You Will Keep” and one of the attractive “windowpane” cards that Shon designed. We will also give them a brief **vision/distinctive statement**. The text of the vision statement is further below:

May our good God continue to richly bless us and establish His kingdom here in Wilmington. I love you all; please pray for me,

Pastor Bob

**Best phone number** to reach me is 910.520.0272

Is your household longing for a **vibrant Church** which is Biblical, Reformational & Joyful, one that emphasizes thinking, loving, serving, and:

1. has a Kingdom vision (& not a "have no vision" or a vision for one particular church or denomination or -ism)
2. has a passion for real multi-generational faithfulness (& not obsessed with having a wiz-bang, 'better than MTV' youth group)
3. has a joyful, reverent, God-centered worship (& not man-centered, seeker friendly music that is more like watching a band perform and that actually inhibits the principle of 'participatory worship')
4. sings God-honoring, Christ-exalting songs which are lyrical, singable, & theologically sound, together with the great hymns & psalms of the faith
5. feasts on accurate expository preaching & grounded in soul-satisfying theology (& not just topical, 'felt need' preaching that is lite on doctrine, disconnected from the Bible's original context, and subject to mere men's spin and ideas. Expository preaching is preaching through Bible books verse by verse, paragraph by paragraph on the basis of good Hebrew and Greek original language study and deep reflection on systematic theology. In a vibrantly Biblical church the doctrinal basis would be Reformed (Westminster Confession of Faith)
6. celebrates monthly communion & has a high view of the Lord's Day,
7. practices regular Biblical eldership and oversight (not "911" or *laissez faire* "hands off" eldering)

8. grows a true brotherhood of strong men who sharpen one another as iron to cultivate Biblical manhood & vital head of household ministry (6 & 7 go together as most churches with elders do not practice intimate shepherding. So, they get 911 calls when a man has blown up and ruined his household. Then they try to clean up the mess [e.g. porn addiction, rebellious teens, bitter & estranged wife, financial bankruptcy, etc. etc]. Intimate shepherding type elders really KNOW their BROTHERS and are 'elder brothers' who encourage them in the faith, in private devotions, in leading family worship, in loving their wives well, in practically discipling their children, in grounding them in sound, encouraging good questions, and dealing with doubts. The shepherds and men of the church ought to be true friends, real community, eat together, do family get together, work on projects and problems together, feast or fast together (really!), and otherwise cultivate a "Biblically normal" manhood culture for them and their sons. Then, we can all be Blessers-men, not wimps or User-men and can thus lead our wives and children toward multi-generational faithfulness and prosperity of all kinds. A reformation of Christian manhood culture is necessary for the health of the Church and attaining multi-generational faithfulness.
9. practices Biblical hospitality & ministries of mercy (not shallow 'fellowship' where we drink coffee, eat a doughnut, listen to an irrelevant Sunday School lesson for 'adults' and then talk about football before or after going to a very forgettable sermon. Biblical hospitality is an 'open hearted-ness' that results in each man's home/household being the locus of real ministry to family, other Christians, strangers and non-believers. It was the chief way of evangelism and outreach for about 18+ centuries of Church history. And Mercy Ministry is actually going household to household with practical helps to hurting people.)
10. celebrates the nobility of motherhood (against the grain of evangelical feminism where "every husband has to send his wife out into a 'career', because no one can make it on one head of household income. This means we men do what it takes to take care of business so our wives can embrace their Creational and Covenantal calling, privilege, and duty to raise godly children in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation.
11. cultivates the beauty of godly femininity (We are shepherding our wives and daughters toward being a 'lady', being 'lovely', having a quiet and submissive [to God] spirit, and do our best to clean them up from worldly goals for 'females' like being 'hot', glamorous', or competitive (while never minimizing the reasonable pursuit of desire and desirability for both women and men within the blessed parameters of covenant marriage and the delights of the marriage bed.
12. raises children to be obedient, to be a blessing & not a terror (If we don't teach little ones to 'obey your parents', how will they grow up to 'obey God'. We can't let them be brats; we must raise them to love and worship God from the heart and serve Him **all** their days.
13. encourages young ladies to loveliness, modesty, & chastity (Sadly, most Youth or College Church group girls look more like, sound more like, and act more like Brittany Spears than Sarah, the wife of Abraham, or Abigail, the

wife of King David whom the Bible describes as lovely and wise. Seventeen magazine teaches them to be hot not lovely, sexy not modest, and date hot guys not be chaste. This 'goal' is not an option for Christian people.)

14. trains young men to manliness, responsibility, & leadership (Sadly, most Youth or College Church group boys are just that, boys.) They play games - incessantly, text message, do porn, cultivate a neo-hippie appearance to be cool, have little idea about getting in or out of a good college, much less getting a real vocation that can support a wife and family before age 40.

This is also not an option.

15. rejoices in God's gift of large families (Sadly, most Evangelicals look at you as if you are weird if you have more than 2.3 children. While most are content to "be fruitful and add", we read the Creational ordinance and mandate to "be fruitful and multiply". That means lots of children, and from a "Biblically normal" perspective, lots of blessings! Being Biblically normal (*or at least aiming for Biblical norms*) is a very different definition of 'winning'. We do, however, fully recognize the providences that may result in single-parent families, and embrace the variety of family formats which make up the Body of Christ, the Church. We are citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, so we are not trying to win at the America Dream *per se*.

16. does all things for the Glory of God (Sadly, living ***Soli Deo Gloria*** (to God alone be the Glory) is not the life goal of most American evangelicals because they have let their hearts be trained to live for comforts and pleasures and status. We are called to peace - not pleasures, to Christ's joys - not happiness, and to know Christ and make Him known - not a comfortable life. Yet we know that this Biblical service and worship of God is an abundant life, a joyful life with blessings in both this life, and in the life to come. There are many paradoxes of living the life of the Cross and a life filled with the Spirit's love, joy, and peace . . . For we know and love the abundant life of living for God's glory rather than the illusory trinkets and fashions and so-called securities of this passing world.