

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church of God Big Sandy

ChurchofGodBigSandy.com

May 20, 2017 • 2:00 p.m. • Sunset 8:13

Service next Sabbath: 2:00 p.m.

Order of service

Song leader	Ron Avey
Pianist	Helen Botha
First sermon	Daniel Botha
Teen class—Library	Jeanine Case
Kids' class—Classroom #2	Mindy Forrestier
Second sermon	Daniel Botha

Quick takes

1. Board-nomination process continues—The board-nomination process (which occurs in May) will continue until May 27 at 5:00 p.m. The election process will continue in June.
2. Thank you—Thanks to the individuals from the congregation who served (sound booth and event monitor) at the Big Sandy school banquet on Thursday.
3. Hawkins school banquet on May 25—There is a Hawkins school banquet scheduled in the building on Thursday, May 25.
4. Combined church service on Day of Pentecost—The Tyler congregation of the Church of God International (CGI) will be meeting with our congregation on Pentecost (Sunday, June 4). The schedule for that day is:
 - 2:00 p.m. Bible study by Dave Havir and youth classes
 - 3:00 Church service with Vance Stinson giving the sermon
 - 4:00 Potluck meal
5. Edifying the Body—This week's article is "Who Is My Neighbor?" by Shirley West.
6. Among Friends—This week's article is "Speaking the Truth in Love" by Dave Havir.
7. Eye on the World—This week's "Eye on the World" is 12 pages.

“Who Is My Neighbor?”

This article is from the “Edifying the Body” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of May 20, 2017.

By Shirley West

BIG SANDY, Texas—When Jesus walked the earth, it was typical of religious representatives to ask Him questions to test him. One such occurrence happened in Matthew 22:35, when a lawyer brought forth such a question.

The question was: “Which is the greatest commandment in the law?” (verse 36).

He answered: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second one is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself” (verses 37-39, NIV).

In Luke 10:25, Jesus is asked: “What must I do to inherit eternal life?”

His answer was: “What is written in the law and how do you read it? (verse 26).

The man replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself” (verse 27).

Jesus commented: “You have answered correctly; do this and you will live” (verse 28).

Then the man asked: “Who is my neighbor?” (verse 29).

Jesus proceeded to give a parable about four individuals—a victim, a priest, a Levite and a Samaritan.

■ The victim was robbed during a trip from Jerusalem to Jericho.” (We assume that he was a Jewish man because the parable mentions the helper as a Samaritan, and history reveals that Jews and Samaritans did not get along. See John 4:9.)

■ The priest and the Levite ignored the victim, instead of helping him.

■ The Samaritan helped the victim.

After Jesus told the parable, He asked: “Which of these three [priest, Levite or Samaritan] do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robber?” (verse 36).

The expert of the law replied: “The one who had mercy on him” (verse 37).

Jesus replied: “Go and do likewise” (also verse 37).

When I have read the parable, I have wondered: “Who am I in this parable?”

My human nature immediately said: “The Good Samaritan.”

But a small voice inside of me caused me to question if that is really true.

After prayerful study, I realized I was or had been everyone in the parable.

■ At times, I was the victim. Although I have never been physically abused, I have been wounded—by gossip, harsh words and innuendo.

■ At times, I have also been the priest and the Levite. In those situations, I have been the “Christian” who had all the answers, but didn’t have time for those who thought differently from me.

■ God in His love, mercy and grace is teaching me to be a Good Samaritan.

That beautiful parable has influenced me to ask myself: Who is my neighbor?

And the answer was wonderful—my neighbor is everyone with whom I come into contact.

We live in an evil world and we have to display wisdom and discretion.

But we do not have to be judgmental about different affiliations—whether those differences are religious, gender, race, political, social or economic status or appearance.

We are to love, care, encourage, forgive, have mercy and assist in any way we can toward those who come into our lives.

When we do this, we fulfill the second great commandment. And, in doing so, we also fulfill the first great commandment—to love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind.

The two commandments are tied together. You can’t do one without the other. As Jesus said in Matthew 22:40: “All the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

May God help us to be Good Samaritans and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

“A Journey to Eternity”

This article is from the “Edifying the Body” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website, churchofgodbig sandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of Feb. 27, 2016.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—How do you handle life when you are disappointed in your own behavior?

Allow me to remind you about a concept that can help you deal with disappointment and with rehabilitation: Life is a journey.

Seeing that phrase probably imparts no new knowledge. When was the first time you heard that phrase? That long ago?

You undoubtedly understand the concept of the phrase “life is a journey” better today than you did when you first heard it. That’s what life’s experience does. Experience helps us to internalize information as we mature.

Story of Ecclesiastes

One of the best examples of life being a journey is in the book of Ecclesiastes.

Believers love the conclusion of that Old Testament book. The book has such a positive message at the end. However, the tone throughout the book can be considered pessimistic.

The book begins in Ecclesiastes 1:1-2 with the thesis that can be paraphrased this way: “Life is worthless.” Then the author writes about his journey.

He tried the route of striving after wisdom (verses 12-18). That didn’t provide him with the answers for which he was searching.

He embarked on the path of pleasure (Ecclesiastes 2:1-3), great accomplishments (verses 4-17) and hard labor (verses 18-23). He still considered life to be flawed.

Ecclesiastes is a fascinating book. We watch a glimpse of a man on a journey in his life. The process of his learning is a valuable lesson.

Focus on eternity

Viewing life as a journey should empower us to make better decisions in our lives. Yet there is more to the story than merely viewing life as a journey.

We are on a journey to eternity. Chew on that for a while.

■ Focusing on eternity should help us to put physical possessions into perspective.

Christ taught His disciples in Matthew 6:25-34 not to become preoccupied with physical things.

■ Focusing on eternity should help us to put religion into perspective.

We need to look to the Apostle. In case you don’t know who that is, check out Hebrews 3:1.

We need to look to the Head of the church at headquarters. In case you don’t know who and where those are, read Ephesians 1:20-23.

■ Focusing on eternity should help us to put negative experiences into perspective.

People have a tendency to do evil toward you because they get away with their behavior during this life (Ecclesiastes 8:11).

■ Focusing on eternity should help us change our behavior.

Paul wrote that if we are risen with Christ we should seek those things that are above (Colossians 3:1-2).

Christ Himself taught that a believer’s recompense would come at the resurrection of the just (Luke 14:12-14).

One other benefit

Remembering that this life is a journey to eternity should be valuable in helping us when we are disappointed in ourselves. We can become reconciled with our Father.

There is another benefit as well. Remembering that this life is a journey to eternity should be valuable in helping us when we are disappointed in the behavior of other people.

There is certainly nothing wrong with avoiding the unsavory behavior of other people. There is also nothing wrong with avoiding unsavory people.

But, if we remember that they are on a journey to eternity, we will do a better job of allowing Christ to be their judge.

Even as we keep our distance, we might even pray that their journey to eternity will be successful.

“Speaking the Truth in Love”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website, churchofgodbigsandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of May 20, 2017.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—Last week, we discussed the concept of “Rahab Lied and Was Blessed.” We acknowledged the following ideas.

- There are many powerful verses that show God’s view about lying and various consequences that can occur from lying.

- Most lying has horrible motives—generally to gain for self or to watch other people hurt.

- Rahab’s lie demonstrated a good reason for lying (which is a rare exception)—lying to protect life.

We see that Rahab’s lying was an act of love. In this article, we want to focus on “Speaking the Truth in Love.”

Damage of lying

Notice a few verses that show the damage of lying.

Genesis 3:4-5—“Then the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’”

Proverbs 10:18—“Whoever hides hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool.”

Proverbs 21:6—“Getting treasures by a lying tongue is the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death.”

Proverbs 26:28—“A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, and a flattering mouth works ruin.”

John 8:44—“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”

Notice the contrast

Notice a few verses that show the contrast between lying and truth.

Proverbs 12:17—“He who speaks truth declares righteousness, but a false witness, deceive.”

Proverbs 12:19—“The truthful lip shall be established forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.”

Proverbs 12:22—“Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.”

Beauty of truth

Notice a few verses that show the beauty of truth.

Proverbs 3:3—“Let not mercy and truth forsake you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.”

John 8:32—“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Ephesians 4:25—“Therefore, putting away lying, ‘Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,’ for we are members of one another.”

Ephesians 4:29—“Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.”

Truth in love

Notice a few verses that show the characteristic of speaking the truth in love.

Romans 15:1—“We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”

1 Corinthians 10:32-33—“Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.”

Galatians 6:1—“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.”

Ephesians 4:15—“But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ.”