

Youth Pastor Note:

Thank you! This is the first time I am reaching out with a news letter since settling in here at SOBC. I wanted to take a minute to say thank you for the overwhelming welcome that we have received, both as a family and me as an individual. I am looking forward to the opportunity to connect more with you, the students and parents that are connected to the youth ministry at SOBC. Right now I am still trying to catch my bearings as we settle into what youth ministry looks and feels like. I have had a fabulous time meeting and getting to know our students and I am looking forward to meeting our parents as well.

One of the most important goals for us as a youth ministry team is to help students and parents alike grow in their walk with Jesus. Part of obtaining that goal is to make sure that we are all on the same page as we move forward. It is my greatest hope that we will stand together for the spiritual growth of the students, so that as they head out into the world they will have been shaped, molded, and made more in the likeness of Jesus, "the author and perfecter of our faith." (Hebrews 12:2)

If there is anything that I can do to minister to you and your family please feel free to contact me. I look forward to coming along side of the students and families of this community of faith as we all grow together into the image of Jesus Christ.

Upcoming events:

- Sunday, March 1 - Luncheon Fundraiser

A giant thank you to all of our parents and students who helped make the Luncheon fundraiser a possibility. All of your hard work was greatly appreciated. We will add your portion of the funds to your student accounts as soon as we sort out all of those details. Thank you again for your effort!

- Sunday, March 22 - Parent Meeting

It really has been a pleasure for me to get to know some of you in my first month or so here at SOBC. The goal of the meeting will be to lay out the calendar, grab some information, and an opportunity to fellowship together. We will be meeting at 4:00pm in the Oasis. I look forward to seeing you all there.

- Thursday, March 26 - Paint Ball

Just a little bit of fun with the opportunity to wreak a little havoc on each other. Time, meeting place, venue, and cost will be announced as soon as we have nailed them all down.

Thoughts for parents:

"One generation will declare your works to the next and will proclaim your mighty acts."

~Psalm 145:4

Sometimes the most challenging place to share our faith can be in our homes. There are a variety of ways we can feel this way. It could be that we feel like our family is saved, after all they have heard all the same sermons and Bible study lessons we have. It could be that we want to avoid tension in the home, after all we have to live with these people. It could be that we are intimidated by the people in our families. At one time or another I have gone through all of these emotions and more with members of my family. The truth is that we have been given an immense treasure in the gospel and the greatest gift we can give our families, the way we can love them the best, is to share with them what God has wrought in us.

God has worked at least one miracle in the life of every believer; salvation. I think, however, that when we consider all of the places we are and all of the places we could be what we will find is that God continues to work in our lives. What has God done in your life this week? What has God done in His word? Where do you think God is leading you and your family? Let the work that God is doing in your family become a way to communicate the gospel within your family.

Even if your family are all believers use the times that God is moving in your lives to encourage one another to continue to trust in the Lord as you face difficulties, reminding one another of all the places God has been good to you and looking forward to all the places that God has provided the opportunity to continue to trust him.

What your Students are learning right now:

Right now as I am still getting my feet wet with the students, I wanted to jump in with both feet with a Bible study that reflected the needs of the youth group as they were expressed to me during the interview process. One of the key themes that I kept hearing was that previously there was a sense of unity in the youth group but now that sense was lacking or all together gone. Understanding that need, I wanted to do a bible study that would address some of those concerns. So we began a study through the book of Philippians.

Philippians is often called "the book of Joy." The theme of joy is undeniable in the book of Philippians, but there is something underlying that joy, something that precedes that joy. In the opening sentence of Paul's prayer for the Philippian church, we find a hint at the reason for Paul's joy. He says this; "always in every prayer of mine for you all, making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day till now." Did you hear it? Paul's joy has its foundation in the Philippian's partnership in the gospel. The gospel is the source of joy for the Christian. The gospel is the inescapable reality that we have all sinned, that we are all in desperate need of a savior and that Jesus came, died, and rose again to pay the penalty that we could not pay for ourselves. Paul's joy here is furthered because the Philippians have rallied around the gospel and him. The Philippian church was unified in the gospel they were partakers of God's grace together with one another and with Paul.

For us today we face a multitude of differences today, even within the church, but the gospel can be our rally point. We are all equal before the grace of God demonstrated for us on the cross. We can take great joy in the fact that God is creative and makes us all different, but allows us to come together under the banner of His salvation for us. We are challenging the students to start seeing the world and each other through the lens of the gospel; making the gospel of Christ their rally point, their basis for fellowship, and the guide they will follow as they interact with the world.