

**Crossville Church
of Christ**

P.O. Box 211
Crossville, TN 38557

Phone
484-5297 or 484-2960
Fax 707-0025

Elders:

Frank Bohannon
Jiggs Killgore
Jonathan Loveday
Larry McDuffee
Brian McLaughlin
Jon Tatum

Deacons:

Jim Bell
Charles Evans
Kyle Fairman
Dale Hennessee
Mike Isaacson
David Kerley
Doug Loveday
Greg Maxwell
Don Napier
Tom Parham
Mark Roberts
Roger Smith
Jason Wyatt
Jerry Wood

Ministers:

Barry Kennedy
Ken Mears

Missionaries: (India)

Don Iverson
Jim Waldron

Service Times

Sunday Bible Study	9 AM
Sunday Worship	10 AM
	6 PM
Wednesday	6 PM

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Ladies Bible Class
Tuesdays 11AM
Prayer Meeting
Tuesdays 10 AM
**Joyful Generation
(Youth Devotional & fellowship)**
1st Sunday 7:00 PM

COMPASS

**Using God's Word to Chart The Course
Of A Congregation**

www.crossvillechurchofchrist.org
Email: Office@crossvillechurchofchrist.org
Elders@crossvillechurchofchrist.org



July 5, 2015



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JULY

July 8: "My Joy & My Crown, an Introduction"
Ben Bailey, McMinnville, TN
July 15: "My Joy & My Crown in Grace & Peace" (Phil. 1:2)
Tom Holland, Brentwood, TN
July 22: "My Joy & My Crown in Prayer & Preaching" (Phil. 1:4, 15-18)
Jason Gann, McMinnville, TN
July 29: "My Joy & My Crown in Faith" (Phil. 1:25)
Brandon Parsley, McMinnville, TN

AUGUST

August 5: "My Joy & My Crown in Fellowship & Unity" (Phil. 1:5, 2:1, 2)
Bill Williams, Manchester, TN
August 12: "My Joy & My Crown in Christ's Return" (Phil. 2:16)
Tony Britt, Pikeville, TN
August 19: "My Joy & My Crown in Christian Service" (Phil. 2:17-22)
Paul Sain, Pulaski, TN
August 26: "My Joy & My Crown Being in the Lord" (Phil. 3:1-7)
Ralph Hart, Manchester, TN

SEPTEMBER

September 2: "My Joy & My Crown in Present & Future Things" (Phil. 3:13-14)
Stephen Law, Crossville, TN
September 9: "My Joy & My Crown in Right Thinking" (Phil. 4:8)
Tony Lawrence, McMinnville, TN
September 16: "My Joy & My Crown in Contentment" (Phil. 4:11-12)
Dale Barger, Wheeler Hill, TN
September 23: "My Joy & My Crown in Christ Given Strength" (Phil. 4:13)
David Lipe, Cookeville, TN

I I KEEP FIGHTING BUT I CAN'T SEEM TO WIN

Barry Kennedy

There he was, all alone and surrounded by the enemy. He knew that reinforcements were on their way that and his only hope was to keep fighting until help arrived. However, it seemed as though the harder that he fought, the less he advanced in the battle. He seemed to be attacking in the right way, striking the enemy where it counts the most, and feeling as though he was “holding his own.” Nevertheless, he was faced with the fact that the harder he fought, the victory seemed farther and farther away. Imagine the frustration he must have felt. The endlessness of the battle, the hopelessness of victory, not to mention the weariness of the body brought on by the battle had him frustrated beyond imagination. Does he give up and surrender to the enemy, or does he keep pressing on, praying that help will soon arrive?

Sounds like a scene from some action movie. Not exactly, actually it was a dream that kept me tossing throughout the night. Dreams are amazing little motion pictures of the mind. Most dreams are not logical and make very little sense at all, but on the other hand there is a spiritual point that can be made from such a dream as this. “Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water; but a man of understanding will draw it out” (Proverbs 20:5). That is not to say that God is speaking to us through our dreams; instead, His Word is our light of direction today (Psalm 119:105; 2Timothy 3:16, 17; John 5:39). So what are some spiritual tidbits we might glean from this dream that could help all of us in our Christian walk?

We are surrounded by the enemy (1Peter 5:8). Satan has been portrayed in many different ways. Often we find ourselves subconsciously seeing him as the man in red with the little horns, pointed tail and a pitchfork. If that were the case, there would not be any problem spotting him anywhere. The Bible tells us that he can be transformed into an angel of light, making it imperative that we all maintain a healthy level of vigilance. Consider the words of God to Ezekiel: “Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me” (Ezekiel 3:17). The temptation to sin is ever before us, surrounding us as an army bent on conquering every soul ever to walk the earth. However, God has promised that He will never leave nor forsake us ever (Hebrews 13:5) and with God on our side, who could possibly be against us (Romans 8:31)?

Reinforcements are often close, but not quite there yet. We are given instruction from above as to the care and attitude we are to have one toward another. Jesus said we are to love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:39). He also emphasized the impact this would have upon the world around us. “By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples. If ye have love one toward another” (John 13:35). However, far too many of us find ourselves “too busy” to concern ourselves with one another’s walk of faith. We say “go thy way be ye warmed and filled. . .” (James 2:16), but we never consider the fact that we might be that reinforcement that this soul needs to endure his fight. Paul, to the Roman congregation wrote, “We then that are strong OUGHT to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves” (Romans 15:1). Are we leaving our brothers and sisters alone in the battle with Satan?

It may sometimes seem as though the harder we fight, the less we advance. Satan has many weapons in his arsenal, but two of the most deadly are the weapons of doubt and discouragement. If we doubt our God, Satan has already won a crucial battle in the war of the soul. Sin is the transgression of God’s law (1John 3:4) and the result of sin is death (Romans 6:23); therefore, any time we sin we bring ourselves to the precipice of eternal destruction. God does not want man to suffer the consequences of sin, and thus He sent His only begotten Son to die in our stead (John 3:16; Romans 5:8). We are the recipients of His matchless love when we willingly submit to Him in loving obedience (John 14:15; 15:14; Hebrews 5:8, 9; etc.). Satan, on the other hand, would love nothing more that to tear down the confidence and hope that every Christian has in God and himself. Satan does not mind it when we take a step forward, just so long as we take two steps backward. Paul said that it helps to have the right mindset. “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:13, 14). We must maintain our focus on the goal; no matter where our earthly reinforcements may be, God is always with us.

Life has its way of being filled with many battles. Imagine having to go into physical battle without the proper training. Even worse would be having fight with proper training and still not being able to win. This was the dream mentioned earlier. All the right moves were being made and no advancement was evident. All of the right targets were being struck, but the enemy would not fall. What frustration and anxiety such a situation inflicts upon the soul! But wait, this was just a dream, right? Yes, but the implications should be obvious. We are all in this battle on time's side of eternity. What could be the reasons behind our lack of, or limited advancement?

Do we have the proper training? When one becomes a child of God, he enlists into the service of God's army. Paul encouraged Timothy with these words: "thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy 2:3). Soldiers need intense training to be prepared for any situation that may arise. We as Christians are to be prepared for our battle with sin. God has supplied His soldiers with all that we need according to the apostle Peter. "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:" (2 Peter 1:3). Many, if not most, of us are still in need of "basic training." Others have progressed to what we might call "special forces." God's word lets us know that there comes a time when we all need to advance. "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat" (Hebrews 5:12). We have been commended to God and His word which has the ability to build us up as well as give us an inheritance in Heaven (Acts 20:32; 2 Corinthians 10:4). Are we following His training regiment?

Are we wielding the proper weapon? We live in a world filled with all kinds of weapons, designed for almost any tactical situation. Many can recall the looming fear of the "Cold War," a fear that at any moment the two super powers of the world could unleash the catastrophic consequences of a nuclear holocaust. Man seemed to have achieved the ultimate power when the ability to split the atom was made a reality. The mistake is that the ultimate power is not in the atom or any form of matter that creation may deliver. The Word of God keeps man and his "accomplishments" in the proper place. "For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). In fact, Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus laid out precisely what every Christian soldier needs in his arsenal.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: (Ephesians 6:13-17).

David was offered the finest weapons in the kingdom when he was about to face the giant Goliath (1 Samuel 17:38, 39). David left them behind because he had not "proved them" that is, he was not trained how to use them. What David took into that battle Saul, Goliath, nor the armies of Israel and the Philistines could see with their naked eyes. The Almighty power of God was with David that day, and we know what happened to Goliath. What we would do well to remember is that, even though David won that battle, he was still facing a war. David faced a war that would many times bring him to his knees. No doubt, David felt as though "I keep fighting, but I just don't seem to win." He defeated Goliath, and many other enemies of God, and now Saul wants him dead. David gives in to his lusts for a beautiful woman; now he has a child on the way and has to deal with her husband. He is the king, but he has to stand helplessly as his child dies. He tries to lead as God would have him, but now his son wants to murder him to take his throne. How many times he might have said that he could not seem to win the fight, yet he maintained a heart of penitence. That is the only way that any of us will ever "get out of this world alive." Life, for some, may seem to be like a dream; for others that dream may seem to be a nightmare. I awoke from my dream to realize that the fight was over. One day we will awake from this life to face eternity. The question is, "Will we awake to an eternity of peace or find ourselves in a nightmare from which we never awake?"