



North Fort Myers Church of the Nazarene Messenger

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What about my heart?

One of the most common faults people have pointed out in me is my tendency to use “big words.” The habit has evolved from my love of reading, I suppose. But since preaching and teaching is now a part of my everyday walk, in an attempt to improve those skills, I have recently been examining the terms and language I use. None of us wants to intentionally alienate or confuse the people who might be listening; so in my attempt to reconsider how I use some words and phrases, I have become aware of the recent warnings from my peers about avoiding what is now being referred to as “church speak.” Just for the sake of example, in the hope I don’t alienate or confuse anyone, some of these might be words like “sanctification,” “eschatology,” “transcendence,” or “proselyte.” Yet for some in our day, the terms don’t have to be that complicated. Off-putting terms might be as simple as “youth ministry,” “Sunday school,” and “worship.” After all, we are living in the “post-church” age where many have no clue about church and the terms familiar to it.

However, as I have been trying to study some of those terms we use in church that might be offensive or simply unclear to “non-believers,” I began to look at the question often used by Christians to present the Gospel, “*Have you asked Jesus into your heart?*” So, this being the month where we hear a lot about the heart and think about who or what holds the “key” to our hearts, I thought it might benefit all of us to take a closer look at that phrase and perhaps bring some clarity to how we best present the Gospel. The phrase has been long associated with what most of us know as “the sinner’s prayer,” and has been used, we believe, since the time of the Puritans, or perhaps before. The terminology of “receiving Christ into your heart” became more common as a non-Christian’s prayer of conversion during the great missionary movement of the nineteenth century. The phrase became a useful way to explain to non-believers that they needed to make a *personal decision* to follow Jesus.

However, you won’t find the term anywhere in the Bible. There are scriptures that connect our physical body with our decision to follow Christ. My favorite is Colossians 1:27 – *To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory.*** It brings to mind the idea that Jesus actually lives within us physically (of course, we know this happens through the person of the Holy Spirit). But in the same way that to love someone is an act of the will, and continues because we willfully choose to love; our choice to follow Christ comes as a decision – first, to **repent** of our sins (that means to be feel deep sorrow and regret for the wrong we have done) and second, to **believe** Jesus is Who the Bible says He is. It is intellectual and requires careful thought. I get concerned when I witness believers attempting to explain our need for Jesus, who seem incapable of using any term other than those involving the emotional aspect of our need.

Perhaps the idea of asking Jesus “into our heart” comes from the command in Deuteronomy 6:5 to, “*Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*” Mark Lowry humorously explains that in our Western culture, the heart is the “seat of the emotions.” But he goes on to explain in some cultures other organs represent that place. In the Old Testament, it was the bowels. This passage from Deuteronomy makes it clear, however, that the command by God to love Him is one that involves every part of us – physical and emotional.

Do we do a disservice to the world by creating a picture of following Jesus as something that involves only our emotional being? I’ve been asking myself that question lately, and have decided there is nothing wrong in the idea of using the term “asking Jesus into the heart” to present the Gospel to a non-believer. But as I prepare, I need to try and avoid “church speak” perhaps now more than ever before, since the world might not have a clue what I’m talking about. I simply need to help them see their need for the Savior – in their mind, body, soul **and** heart.

February Church Calendar

- 3 – LAMB’s Meeting – “*Heart Smart*”
with special speaker – Julia Moore
Men’s Ministries meeting at “Smokin’ Pit”
- 9 – Lisa Welchel Speaking in A.M. Service
Ice Cream Social after P.M. Service
- 12 – Board Meeting
New LAMB’s Council meeting
- 15 – Bowling at Pin Street Lanes
- 16 – Kairos Prison Ministry Presentation
in A.M Service
- 21-23 – Women’s Ministries Retreat
at LPCCC
- 23 – Missionary, Raymond Leisure Speaking
in A.M. Service
Alabaster Offering

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 2 – Katy Garner
4 – Jerry Kisner
10 – Dave & Kathy Parker
17 – Dick Van Skiver
Dorrie Conrad
19 – Bill Predko
24 – Bill & Rosemary Rohrey
25 – Bonnie Rose
27 – Jerry & Doretta Parker
28 – Charlie Franklin



Prayer Needs:

<i>Bob Retter</i>	<i>Deanna Hager</i>	<i>Dorothy Chapman</i>	<i>Denise Torvea</i>
<i>Rev. Oxenford</i>	<i>Amy Logsdon</i>	<i>Amber Beck</i>	<i>Eloise Garner</i>
<i>Dick VanSkyver</i>	<i>Robin Sotomyer</i>	<i>Artena New</i>	<i>Carole Brophy</i>
<i>Dottie Nichter</i>	<i>Karen Nacias</i>	<i>Sue Ann Skinner</i>	<i>Darlene Roach</i>
<i>Phyllis Obney</i>	<i>Rita Ruescher</i>	<i>Gertrude Campbell</i>	<i>Logan Vess</i>
<i>Jerry & Mary Kisner</i>	<i>Kitty Baxter</i>	<i>Marla Valasquez</i>	<i>Steve Woodby</i>
<i>Kristin Sanders</i>	<i>Robert Cissney</i>	<i>Mary Austin (ALS)</i>	<i>Russell Abrams</i>
<i>Mark & Debbie Woodby</i>	<i>Helen Beatty</i>	<i>The Ford Family (Larissa)</i>	<i>David Sanders</i>
<i>Jerry Werling</i>	<i>Dorrie Conrad</i>	<i>Janet Hamilton</i>	<i>Janet Andre</i>
<i>Sherry Billings</i>	<i>Betty Hillyard</i>	<i>Phyllis Correll</i>	<i>Mary Clifford</i>
<i>John & Marie Haddad</i>	<i>Irene Genesky</i>	<i>Julie Kaufmann</i>	<i>Joseph Groves</i>
<i>Paul Chaplow, Sr.</i>	<i>Ida Chaplow</i>	<i>Pastor Mills</i>	<i>Betty Stewart</i>

Our military, our leaders & our nation

Monday, February 3 – 6:30

LAMB’s Meeting

“*Heart Smart*”

guest speaker,

Julia Moore

Our annual elections will take place
and we will reveal the winners of
our **Mary/Martha contest.**

Singles Meeting

Sunday, February 16

“Dinner In”

*after the morning
service*

*Plan to bring a friend
and join our singles*



Lisa Welch, popular actress from TV shows, “The Facts of Life” and “Survivor,” will be our guest speaker in our morning worship service February 9, at 10:45 A.M. This is an excellent opportunity to invite your friends and family to visit.

We will be receiving a love offering during the service.

Our church has an updated website.

Just go to:

www.northfortmyersnazarene.com

You will find the latest copy of *The Messenger*, our contact info, the latest news, pictures, email link and more. Check out the site and let us know what you think. We will be updating the site continuously. Your suggestions are welcome.



Lake Placid Camp & Conference Center

2014 Ladies Retreat

Ladies, make plans now to join us for our first annual Ladies Retreat at beautiful Lake Placid Camp and Conference Center, Feb. 21 thru Feb. 23. The cost per person is \$75, which includes two nights' lodging and 6 meals. Our speaker will be Hydie Miller. Plan now to come along and plan on having a wonderful weekend of fun, games and drawing closer to God and one another. Please sign up in the foyer of the church.

Gentlemen,
mark your calendars for our upcoming
District Men's Retreat

at Lake Placid Camp &
Conference Center
Saturday, March 1

This will be an *all-day* event for only \$20 and will be filled with lots of fun and a chance to spend the day getting better acquainted with the guys from our church and around the district.

Plan now to attend!

Alabaster



Since 1949, when NMI began the Alabaster Offering, Nazarenes have given **\$100 Million** to build Churches, Schools, Medical Facilities, and Parsonages.

Will you give to help reach the next **\$100 million?**

February is Alabaster Offering Month
Don't forget to fill up your Alabaster boxes and bring them with you on Sunday, February 23 in our morning worship service. Our goal is 100% participation.



Why Parables?

In the short recorded time Jesus taught and disciplined others here on earth, He taught mainly in parables. After His parables He would often ask questions that would cause the listeners to think outside of their own reference or comfort zone. In Chapter 4 of the Book of Mark, Jesus offered four parables, the sower, the lamp on a stand, the growing seed, and one of His best-known parables, the mustard seed.

Mark 4:10-12 tells us:

When he was alone, the Twelve and the others around him asked him about the parables. He told them, "The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that, "they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!"

To truly understand the teachings of Jesus we must first become one of His. It is not for the worldly-minded to understand. The Apostle Paul plainly states in I Corinthians 1:20-21:

Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

When speaking to a person who is not a believer in Jesus I have found the best way to move them to think about Christ-like things is to try and ask questions that cause them to come up with the answers on their own. That is why Jesus used parables in His teaching.

Most of the non-believers we come across in our daily walk with the Lord believe they are too smart and self-reliant to believe they need a savior. However, in presenting the Gospel, if we pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give us the right questions to ask and the right words to say it will cause them to think outside of their own reference or comfort zone. That is how Jesus brought people to understanding and belief. If it worked for Jesus, I believe it will work for us.

Always working for the Kingdom.

Pastor Van

*Another soul is lost
A mother's heart is broken
Another day is passing
Another chance is gone
Another eye cries a tear
Another ear yearns to hear
That voice which was unspoken
That word which was unheard*

*Don't wait another day
To tell someone about the Lord
Don't wait another day
To tell someone about Jesus.*

*Can you see their faces
In the world today?
Their lost souls and broken dreams?
They search for a way –
If we don't tell them
Another laugh will be unheard
Another song forgot – unsung.
Another smile gone forever
Another dream of God's lost*

*Don't wait another day
To tell someone about the Lord
Don't wait another day
to tell someone
about Jesus.*

North Fort Myers Church of the Nazarene
6781 Bayshore Road
North Fort Myers, Florida 33917
239-567-0150
E-mail - nftmyersnaz72@yahoo.com
Facebook: N Ft Myers Naz