



SEEDS NEWSLETTER

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MEET THE FAMILY

Mark & Lesa Byrum and Mary Leonard



Mark and Lesa Byrum were part of a group of about 60 people from Pastor Kyle's home church in Northern Virginia who spent a weekend in Georgetown way back in 2008 to help canvass the town and attend the Bluegrass Baptist Church inaugural service at the Cardome Center. Little did they know that Kentucky would become their home, and they would be members of the rapidly growing church they supported at birth!

They moved to Louisville in 2012 after they closed their law practice in Northern Virginia so that Mark could take an attorney position at Fort

Knox. Lesa soon joined him there as an attorney. Despite their long commute to church each week they have remained faithful members here, although they have recently been focused on caring for Lesa's mother, Mary Leonard, who sold her home in Tennessee and moved in with them after her husband died in 2018. She also attended here until her health deteriorated.

Mark still brings his beloved banjo to our monthly Men's Prayer Breakfast and is adjusting to retired life while Lesa continues her job at Fort Knox. They were both saved at a young age and grew up in church. Their introduction to each other came in a Federal Courthouse, litigating on behalf of their respective clients. After the case was settled, they learned they had much in common! Now they have a daughter and two grandsons living in Virginia.

A married granddaughter lives in Florida. A second daughter went home to be with the Lord in 2010.

Mary Leonard was saved as a child and grew up in church. When she was a teenager her husband-to-be, Cecil, visited her church with his Dad who came to preach there. They later met again and married after Cecil's U.S. Army service in WWII. Two of their four children live in Virginia, one in South Carolina, and Lesa here. Cecil went to be with the Lord in 2003 after 55 years of marriage.



Judy Scott

Judy and her husband, Earl, joined us in 2015 and immediately became involved with every aspect of church life. Earl passed away nine days short of their 60th anniversary on June 13, 2022. Judy continues to faithfully attend here.

She is originally from Shelby, North Carolina and met Earl, a Kentucky boy from Hardy, when he visited a brother who lived in Shelby. Earl worked as a coal miner all his life. After his retirement in 2015 the couple moved to Georgetown to be close to their daughter, Lana, who works here and in Alabama as a realtor. A son, Greg, died in 2015 from leukemia.

Melissa Chivvis

Melissa invited Jesus into her life at the age of 5, at Oak Grove Baptist Church in Danville, Virginia. She made a career move from Danville to Georgetown as a horse trainer in 2021, and now rents a small farm 4 miles from us down Route 25, where she homeschools her three daughters.

Mollie, 13, and Merabella, 10, were both saved in Danville. McKenna, 7, was saved and baptized here in April this year. Bluegrass Baptist Church was recommended to Melissa shortly after the family arrived in our area.



PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Being a Learner

Ahhhh, the season of schoolbooks, homework, tests, and quizzes has begun for another academic year. Most of our parents with kids still in school are well aware of it, and grandparents or yet-to-be-parents can see the buses driving all around their neighborhoods.

As we head into another academic year, we ponder the pattern of learning. There's always more to uncover about God, His Word, and the world He's placed us in. Just as Jesus challenged His followers to be His disciples, we, too, are called to immerse ourselves in the learning process of our faith. Easton Bible Dictionary defines a disciple of Christ as one who:

- (1) believes his doctrine,
- (2) rests on his sacrifice,
- (3) imbibes (partakes of) his spirit, and
- (4) imitates his example.

Matthew 10:24 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.

Luke 14:26-27, 33 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple ... 33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

These passages and many others shape our learning process—the growth, maturity, and choices required to be more than a follower of Jesus Christ. It is the virtue of surrendering our lives to him. When I was younger, I learned grammar only by surrendering to the fact that the subject had to own a sizable portion of my weeknights. I would have rather been shooting a basketball, kicking a soccer ball, or kissing a frog than doing that homework. I literally would have done anything to avoid it! Sadly, my grades proved that I was not a good disciple of grammar class, and I'm thankful that this is not the case regarding Christ and my relationship with God.

But the same truth applies: if I am going to be a good disciple, I will have to forsake much that allures and distracts me in this old world. A great passage to consider is found in John chapter 6, where Jesus teaches that *He* is the Bread of

Life! He is both descriptive and divisive in His teaching of this truth, in contrast to the religion of the Pharisees.

John 6:60-61 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

The answer was yes, it did offend them, and Jesus the Master Teacher was glad that it offended them! Relationship and discipleship with the holy God of Heaven will offend our mortal being. Peter gives the right and true answer to this fact from the heart of a disciple/learner.

John 6:66-69 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will -- ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

Hopefully, this is the answer from your heart as you become an ever-growing disciple (learner) of Jesus Christ.

WHAT'S HAPPENING!

Anniversary Sunday: 16 Glorious Years



The Choir sang to open both our morning services on August 11, 2024. We are grateful for all God has done, and look forward to all He plans to do!

Aloha Graduation Party



The Navigators LifeStage hosted 65 people (including teenagers (left) and this year’s graduates (right) at their annual farewell to those heading off to college and into the workforce.

Bible Adventure Club

By Wes Wade

BAC is our Wednesday evening children’s program in an adventure type format that takes children aged 4-11 on fun journeys through Scripture. Students are separated by age, and each class has a teaching time, a short music lesson, and a short game and activity time. It is like a mini vacation bible school every week! There’s a take-home workbook where weekly memory verses are listed, and it includes a short summary of the lesson along with some questions for the students to answer. I encourage all parents to take 15 minutes and read through the workbook with their child to build upon their knowledge of our great Creator. It will be time well spent! Badges are rewarded every semester based upon the completion of tasks such as learning a memory verse each week.



2A Day



Our men’s annual Second Amendment Day brought a group of firearm enthusiasts together on a fine summer morning to compare their various long guns and pistols, compete in target shooting, instruct sons about gun safety and proper use, and enjoy a time of fellowship together.

ENCOUNTERS:

LIVING AS A CHRISTIAN IN A POST-CHRISTIAN WORLD

In this section we share anecdotes from church members about their experiences (inspirational, amusing, or sad) as Christians living in a world that is increasingly hostile to Jesus Christ. Written submissions should be 200 to 300 words in length, or you could simply tell us your story.

This month’s story is written by Pam Lindner as a testimony to the personal cost that sometimes attaches to receiving Christ as Savior.

I grew up in a devout Catholic family. My uncle was a priest and six of my aunts were nuns. I don’t recall ever missing church and my household was strict about keeping every Catholic ritual and belief. We were not a “Catholic-in-name-only” kind of family! I wholeheartedly believed everything the church taught and sincerely followed and served.

When I was 17 years old I was taking classes to receive the “sacrament of confirmation”, where the Catholics teach that a believer is sealed with the Holy Spirit. I was also dating a Baptist boy at this time that wanted to end our relationship because I was Catholic. In an effort to keep the boy I told him that I would go to my church on Saturday nights and go to church with him on Sundays. The pastor of the Baptist church he attended was a nice man but the most boring, monotone speaker I’ve ever listened to. However, I heard things in that service that I had never heard before. In my mind, I already believed everything these people did. I believed that Jesus was the Son of God and lived a perfect life, died on the cross, and rose again. But “saved”... what does that mean? (Side note— I have never forgotten how God’s WORD is more powerful than our abilities to deliver it. He will bless our obedience and His Word will not return void!).

I began to carry a notebook with me and write down all the questions I now had. I would ask someone at the Baptist church and then I would ask my priest. I would attend services and youth events at the Baptist church, then stay at a convent for a weekend to prepare for my upcoming confirmation. Back and forth I went for months. I don’t recall one person clearly explaining salvation to me, but I cannot tell you how many people, young and old, God put in my path that would share a little more light and reveal more truth to me; planting and watering.

A teenager from school gave me a booklet by John R. Rice called “Dear Catholic Friend” that really opened my eyes to the differences between Catholicism and the Gospel. One day all of this knowledge finally came together in my understanding. I knew Christ had lived, died, & risen, but now I knew *why* he did those things. He did all of that for *me*. He paid for my sins and offered himself as a gift that I could freely accept. I was alone in my room and called out to Christ and accepted that free gift. This was wonderful, and I was excited, but in the morning I realized that I was still a 17-year-old in a Catholic family... with a confirmation ceremony scheduled for the next weekend.

I had an enormous decision to make— especially for a teenager. God gave me the strength to tell my family that I could not go through with my confirmation and that I no longer believed what the Catholic church taught. My family was not happy about this. I received many accusations of being brainwashed or having joined a cult. My grandpa declared that I was out of his will and my sweet grandma cried every time she saw me for the rest of her life. I was still living at home, and even though I had worked to buy my own car and paid all my own bills, my dad wouldn’t let me drive myself to the Baptist church and he wouldn’t give me permission to be baptized. I understand how difficult this was for my dad and I can empathize with his grief and attempts to hold on. However, I had a new faith and relationship with Christ and I was not going to be deterred.

Initially, my boyfriend would pick me up for church, and when that relationship ended, there was a sweet family in church that would pick me up for each service. Things were growing increasingly tense at home and I wanted so badly to be baptized that I moved out on my own at 18 while I was still in high school.

A few weeks later a borrowed horse trough was brought to church for my baptism. Less than a year later, a young man I knew from the Catholic church was asking me to marry him. He got saved as well, we got married, and we have lived for almost three decades as outcasts from our Catholic families. The cost of being a disciple of Christ is great, but the benefits are beyond comprehension, and I've never had any regrets about my decision. I praise the Lord that He's placed me into HIS family and given me an amazing story of redemption to share with others.

BIBLE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Life comes at us in a hurry, sometimes making it difficult to get timely answers to questions that confront us while reading the Bible or wondering how to apply Bible truth to real-world problems. Here we aim to answer your questions while also providing a resource for our church family.

This Month's Question: What does it mean to be separated "from" the world, and yet be "in" the world?

The Answer from Pastor Zach Kirchner is that we must have a specific reason to be in the world.

The Bible says Christians are supposed to be both separate from the world and in the world. This apparent contradiction is resolved if we understand our role as Christians.

Christ prays for his disciples, not that they would be taken out of the world, but that they should be protected from evil that is in the world (John 17:15). Elsewhere in Scripture, there are clear warnings to Christians not to participate in the things of the world (1 John 2:15, James 4:4).

As I've been reading through Ezra recently, I came across Ezra chapter 4 that gave me some helpful clarity on this subject. In the first portion of the book of Ezra, the Lord stirs up the spirit of King Cyrus and charges him to build the House of God at Jerusalem.

Cyrus sends two leaders along with 42,000 other people to begin the work (Ezra 2:64). Soon, others come to see the progress and offer to join in the work. They claim to “seek your God as [the Israelites] do; and we sacrifice unto him” (Ezra 4:1–2).

But the leaders of Israel sharply retort: “Ye have *nothing* to do with us to build an house unto our God; *but we ourselves together* will build unto the Lord God of Israel” (Ezra 4:3, emphasis mine). If you read 2 Kings 17:33 ff. to find the origin of these people who supposedly sought God as the Israelites did, you would discover that “they feared the Lord *and* served their own Gods.” Ezra had earlier identified these people as “the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin.” (4:1).

Clearly, the Israelite leaders understood they were to remain separate from people who claimed God as just another one of their gods. The same principle applies to us, that we should mark people by their fruit (Matthew 7:16) and be discerning when it comes to choosing friends, confidants, or counsellors.

Yet Jesus also wants us to be engaged with the world! He puts our role in context when He prays that just as the Father has sent Him into the world, so He has sent His disciples into the world (John 17:18). In other words, Christians are to be in the world for a *specific reason*. We are stewards of the glorious gospel of Christ, and we are called to be agents of Christ in a world that desperately needs the hope of the Gospel. Keeping this mission in front of us at all times is an excellent way to recognize our responsibility and live in a way that balances separation from, and serving in, the world’s system.