



CrossWay Community Current

an Evangelical Free Church

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Christian education for all

Our Elders have published a schedule for Sunday School this fall, to begin on Sept. 22 at 11:30 a.m. Children will find their classes in the usual places, while adults and youth have two options: in the Sanctuary — Background for the Corinthian Letters, a companion to Pastor Manuel's new sermon series (already underway) or — in the lobby — Christian Doctrine through a step-by-step examination of the Evangelical Free Church of America's Statement of Faith. (see page 4)



New Beginnings music radio

Have you "tuned in" yet? It's available on our church's website (address above). A new outreach project of CrossWay, this internet outlet features classic contemporary Christian music plus short devotional messages. Here's the New Beginnings mission statement:

"We share the Gospel with a needy and lost world around us, including those who have fallen away from the church over the years. And, to encourage believers to be lights in a dark world that stand by one-another and serve Christ. To help us all prepare for Jesus's soon return."

Pastor Manuel's podcast airs Wednesdays at noon and 7 p.m. and Sundays at 9 a.m.

He would love to hear from you with your comments and questions. The "station" offers his email address for feedback: ipastor@aol.com.

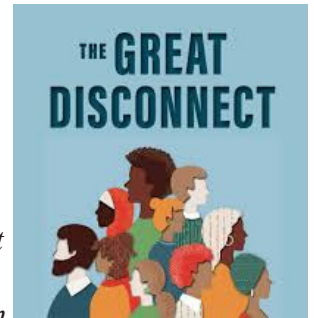


This being a transitional month, here's a helpful schedule for September Sundays, 11:30 a.m.

- ▶ Sept. 1: All-church prayer meeting
- ▶ Sept. 8: Missions presentation/Cutherells
- ▶ Sept. 15: All-church ministries fair
- ▶ Sept. 22 & 29: Christian education for all

New to the CrossWay library

The well respected pollster George Barna's group was commissioned by Mission India to research the progress of Christ's Great Commission, with the results of the study published in 2022 in *The Great Disconnect: Reclaiming the Heart of the Great Commission in Your Church*.



Serious content for the serious Christian. Barna says, "Based on data in three key areas (Motivations, Methods and Money), *The Great Disconnect* uncovers perceptions, behaviors and barriers affecting missions strategies within US churches and how the Great Commission is lived out today." Take a glance and consider adding it to your research. On the library table in the lobby, near the coffee bar.

Coming Up at CrossWay Community

Sundays • 9:30^{AM} • Prayer, lobby classroom
Sundays • 10^{AM} • Gather for worship together
Tuesdays • 1^{PM} - 3^{PM} • Neighborhood prayer walk
Wednesdays • 6:30^{PM} • Underhill Club
Sat., Aug. 31 • 1^{PM} - 2:30^{PM} • Baptism preparation
Sun., Sept. 1 • 11:30^{AM} • Church prayer meeting
Wed., Sept. 4 • 6^{PM} • Elder meeting
Sat., Sept. 7 • 9^{AM} • Men's breakfast @ Bob Evans
Sat., Sept. 7 • 9^{AM} • Women's breakfast @ Russ's
Sun., Sept. 8 • 11:30^{AM} • Cutherell missions presentation
Tues., Sept. 10 • 1^{PM} • Ladies Bible Study/Philippians
Sun., Sept. 15 • 11:30^{AM} • CrossWay Ministries Fair
Thurs., Sept. 19 • 6:30^{PM} • Small group @ Le's
Sun., Sept. 22 • 11:30^{AM} • Sunday School begins



Saints Who Sin

Now I admit up front the title to this month's *Current* article might rankle a few. Am I encouraging sin by assuming God's people (His saints) will sin? The short answer would be "no!" Also, the last time I checked, most of us do not need someone to "encourage" us to sin. We sin of our own volition and usually do not need much encouragement to do so!

The reason I start with this subject matter is that I have been working through much preparation time in the Corinthian letters. How much do you know about the Corinthians? With God's good help and grace, I hope you will know much more about the people and church in Corinth. Let me just say, they were a mess.

Years ago, when we were considering a name change for our church, I jokingly suggested it would be more honest to call our church something like "First Church of Messy People." Not too elegant, but honest all the same.

The church in Corinth struggled with pride, sexual immorality, disunity, mistreatment of leaders, drunkenness, and materialism. Yet despite all this, God calls them "*saints*." (I Cor. 1:2-3) And Paul, knowing what he knew about them, closes the letter with "*The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love to all of you in Christ Jesus. Amen.*" (I Cor. 16:23-24)

Recently, I was reading from J.C. Ryle's *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*. Reflecting upon Jesus' words in John 17:1-8, here is some of what he shared: "We should notice secondly in these verses what a gracious account they contain of our Lord Jesus Christ's disciples. We find our Lord Himself saying of them, '*They have kept Your Word, they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You, they have received Your words, they have known surely that I came forth from You, they have believed that You sent Me.*'"

"These are wonderful words when we consider the character of the 11 men to whom they were applied. How weak was their faith! How slender their knowledge! How shallow their spiritual achievements! How faint their hearts in the hour of danger! Only a very little time after Jesus spoke these words, they all forsook Him and fled, and one of them denied Him three times with an oath. No one can read the four gospels with attention and fail to see that never had a great master such weak servants as Jesus had in the 11 apostles. Yet these very weak servants were the men of whom the gracious head of the church speaks here in high and honourable terms. The lesson before us is full of comfort and instruction. It is evident that Jesus sees far more in His believing people than they see in themselves, or others see in them. The least degree of faith is very precious in His sight. . . . Wherever the gracious Saviour of sinners sees true faith in Himself, however feeble, He looks with compassion on many weaknesses and passes by many defects. It was this way with the 11 apostles. They were weak and unstable as water, but they believed and loved their master when millions refused to own Him." How Jesus viewed His disciples and how He views the Corinthians church (and us!) is similar.

Now I do not have the time or space in this article to lay out a comprehensive theology of sanctification. I will only share a short phrase and encourage you to explore its implications. The phrase is this: "Become what you are," a dynamic best seen, perhaps, in Romans 6:1-14. We primarily are saints — "set apart ones" by virtue of Jesus's work in us through His Gospel. (I Cor. 15:1-11) Yet, we are saints who still sin. We are not yet perfected. Some day, we will be. (Rom. 8:18-39)

The most powerful and effective way for us, then, to become what we are, is to reflect on not what we are supposed to "do" but on what has already been done for us by Jesus. Doing so (pun intended) will release the power of the Gospel in our lives, stirring us to walk by the Spirit, thus fulfilling the law. (Gal.5:1-26) So . . . if, today, you are feeling more like a "sinner," like a failure in your walk with Jesus, remember, He sees you as and calls you a saint. Let *that* sink in.