

Real stairway to heaven starts with obedience to creator

A few years ago, while talking with a friend about temptation and the constant struggles within the Christian life, he shared about how often he wilts under the power of negative influences and, like most of us, usually ends up being disappointed with his choices. After going back and forth confessing our weaknesses and failures, out of frustration he asked me a pointed question: “Why do we continue avoiding our responsibility to do what is right?” Hmmmm... I tried to find an intelligent response or some spiritual way to justify our disobedience, but all I could come up with is the sobering fact that we just do not want to.

We realize this is a strong statement and one we would rather not think about, but the Bible also never promised the Christian life would be easy. George Orwell is quoted as saying, “The further a



LIVING ON PURPOSE
BILLY HOLLAND

society drifts from truth, the more it will hate those who speak it.” Nonetheless, I would rather be known as someone who confronts our problems than ignores them. We will never change the rebellious cycle of defeat until we allow Christ to renew our mind and help us develop self-discipline. It’s true, we can live as close to God as we desire.

I remember watching Flip Wilson back in the early 1970s and one of his more popular comedy routines was called “The Devil Made Me Do It.” Many could relate to the clever idea of accusing the dark side for our bad decisions. We understand how easy it is to blame someone else for our mistakes, but

as most of us know, this is just hiding behind more excuses. Anytime we intentionally deny the truth, we are heading down a dangerous road and will eventually pay a great price whether it be in this life or the next.

The reality is that the devil can attack us within the parameters of God’s approval, but he mostly plays the role of a tempter and persuader. Our own carnality is also a strong influence and might suggest a second piece of chocolate pie, but no one is making us eat it.

I’m not trying to tell anyone about what God wants to change in them. I’m only presenting some things to consider so that we can all think a little more clearly about what is really important. We know there are many different levels of seriousness with our spiritual lives, especially when it comes to knowing why we are here and what are

we called to do. In order to follow God’s purpose, it’s wise to develop discernment to recognize the voice of the shepherd among the voices of distraction. When we agree that knowing and obeying our creator is the meaning of life, only then can we begin to climb the real stairway to heaven.

A couple of the first steps include being sincerely prepared to submit our will to God and giving him complete control over our decisions. You see, there is a throne in the heart of every person and there can be only one king who rules upon this throne. If God is not sitting upon the throne of our life, someone else is. For Christ to be our Lord, we literally become possessed by him.

This may sound rather extreme, but he cannot lead us if we are always making our own plans. Most of us love the idea of going

to heaven but are not really interested in all the details of taking a holy vow and coming into covenant with God.

Romans 6 reminds us that we are “servants to whom we obey,” and since our actions reveal our intentions, it would be good to examine our hearts and make sure Jesus is occupying our throne. You see, where we spend our time and what we think about reveals our allegiance to our true master. The core of the gospel is that Jesus came to rescue us, but he did not save us so that we could do whatever we desire.

He saved us so that he could accomplish his desires through us.

Dr. Billy Holland lives in Central Kentucky with his wife, Cheryl, where he is a Christian author, outreach minister and community chaplain.

HIGHLIGHTS

Morning Prayer offered Sunday

LA GRANDE — St. Peter’s Episcopal Church of La Grande will celebrate Morning Prayer at 11 a.m. Sunday. Coffee and Fellowship Hour will follow in the Parish Hall.

Center open for family history research

LA GRANDE — The “Come Follow Me” lesson for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for the week of Oct. 21-27, based on First and Second Thessalonians, will focus on preparing for the second coming of Christ.

Members of the congregation will be the speakers for the Sacrament Service. Sunday school meetings will be held during the second hour.

The Columbia River Temple in Richland, Washington, will reopen Oct. 22. For those

Submissions

Churches and faith-based groups are encouraged to submit Highlights for the Spiritual Life page by 4 p.m. Tuesday for publication Friday. Submit by email to news@lagrandeobserver.com (with Highlights in the subject line), by fax to 541-963-7804, or by hand to the office.

There will be a church council meeting following the service. A Budget Committee and Nominating Committee will be established to prepare for 2020.

South African missionaries speak Sunday evening

LA GRANDE — At the La Grande Church of the Nazarene, Sunday school is held at 9:15 a.m., followed by a worship service at 10:30 a.m. Pastor Kevin Goss will continue the “Upside Down Kingdom” sermon series from Matthew 6:1-18 with a message titled “The Heart of Worship.” Worship is first and foremost about inward orientation rather than performance, which means that at the heart of worship is the condition of the worshippers heart.

At 5 p.m. Sunday evening, the community is welcome to a presentation by South African mission-

aries Fred and Sheryl Tedder who will talk about the exciting work being done through the Life Tree Community Church in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Bluegrass gospel ministry leads worship services

SUMMERVILLE — The Rochester Family Bluegrass

Gospel Music Ministry will be ministering at the Summerville Baptist Church’s worship services at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. Sunday.

Led by the this musically talented family and filled with music and scripture, the services will “lift your heart toward the Lord.”

— Observer staff

Grande Ronde Mennonite Church

Cove

Hymn Sing

Place: Ascension School on Church St.

Date: Sunday, October 27, 2019

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Refreshments following • Everyone Welcome

541-786-1289

CHURCH

Service

DIRECTORY

First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

901 Penn Avenue 963-2623

lgdisciples@gmail.com

Worship 10:00 a.m.

~Join us at The Lord's Table~

Services This Week

IMBLER CHRISTIAN CHURCH

440 RUCKMAN, IMBLER 534-2201

www.imblerchristianchurch.org

Sunday Services

9:00 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

CHURCH

Service

DIRECTORY

Cove United Methodist Church

1708 Jasper St., Cove, OR

North Powder United Methodist Church

390 E. St., North Powder, OR

JOIN US... Catch the Spirit!

Worship: 9:00 a.m. Cove

Worship: 10:00 a.m. N. Powder

Roman Catholic Church Services

La Grande - Our Lady of the Valley

1002 L Avenue

Saturday 5:30 pm Mass

Sunday 10:00 am Mass

Weekdays 8:00 am Mass

Union - Sacred Heart

340 South 10th Avenue

Sunday 8:00 am Mass

No Weekdays

Elgin - Saint Mary's

12th and Alder

Sunday 12:30 pm Mass

No Weekdays

La Grande United Methodist Church

"OPEN HEARTS, OPEN MINDS, OPEN DOORS"

1612 4th Street - 963-2498

Pastor Taylor Gould

lgumc@eonl.com

www.lgumchurch.org

Office Hours: Mon-Thur 9am-Noon

Worship 10:00 am

Fellowship Coffee Hour 11:00 am

- Nursery provided -

Grace Community Lutheran Church

The Place

62848 Philynda Loop in Island City

"We are called to Serve"

Sunday School for all ages - 9:00 am

Sunday Worship 10:00 am

Pastor Carl Seelhoff

Phone: 541-786-0447

grace.lutherancove@gmail.com

Amazing Grace Fellowship

1316 T St., La Grande, OR

541-568-4567

Sunday 10:30 a.m.

2 Cor 12:9 My Grace is sufficient for you.

IS 40:31

La Grande Seventh-day Adventist Church

A Place where hope is found in Jesus

Join us in Fellowship & Worship Every Saturday

9:30 a.m. - Bible Study/Fellowship

10:45 a.m. - Worship Service

2702 Adams Avenue, La Grande • 963-4018

Pastor: Mike Armayor

www.lagrande22adventistchurchconnect.org

Learning for Today and Eternity

Little Friends

Christian Preschool/Childcare 963-6390

La Grande Adventist Christian School

Christian Education K-8th Grade 963-6203

First Landmark Missionary Baptist Church

1812 1st St. La Grande

Pastor Dave Tierce • 541-605-0215

We use the King James Version Bible

Sunday School - 10:00 am

Worship 11:00 am

Sunday Evening Bible Study - 3:00 pm (Effective June 10)

Wednesday Evening - 6:30 pm

"Where you can find TRUTH according to the scriptures"

www.flmbclagrande.com

Zion Lutheran Church

(an ELCA church)

902 Fourth Street, La Grande, OR (541) 963-5998

9:00 am - Worship

10:00 am - Fellowship & Refreshments

10:30 am - Classes

Pastor: Roberta Smythe

www.zionlagrande.org

St. Katherine's Catholic Church

Fr. Thomas Puduppulliparamban

301 E Garfield Enterprise

Mass Schedule

Sundays:

St Pius X, Wallowa - 8:00 am

St Katherine of Siena, Enterprise - 10:30 am

Saturdays

St Katherine of Siena, Enterprise - 5:30 pm

Weekdays

St Katherine of Siena, Enterprise - 8:00 am (Monday - Thursday and First Friday)

All are welcome

First Baptist Church

SIXTH & SPRING, LA GRANDE

541-963-3911

Sun. 10:00 AM - Worship

Sun. 8:45 AM - Exploring the Bible

Wed. 6:15 PM - AWANA

Summerville Baptist Church

Sunday Services:

Sunday School & Adult Bible Classes 9:45AM

Children's Church & Worship Service 11:00AM

Family Worship Service 6:00PM

Wednesday:

Prayer Mtg, Children's Bible Club, Youth Group 7:00PM

A church for your whole family

Visit us at summervillebaptistchurch.org

Calvary Chapel

1433 Jefferson Ave. 963-5884

Contemporary Worship

Expositional Teaching

Sunday Service - 10:30 a.m.

Studying The Book of Second Corinthians

Wednesday Service - 7:00 p.m.

Studying The Book of Joshua

Wednesday Night Youth - 6:00 p.m.

Tune in to Calvary Radio 88.1 CSN

LaGrande Church of the Nazarene

109 18th Street • 963-3402

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

Hands and Faces