



**August  
2016**

**Forest Hills EFC Messenger  
5183 Pebble Creek Trail  
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If we have missed your birthday or someone else's, please contact the office to inform us.

- |           |                                   |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| August 1  | John Pagani                       |
| August 2  | Ian Leathers                      |
| August 8  | Larry Driggs                      |
| August 9  | Adrian Dickson                    |
| August 10 | Phil Kloster                      |
| August 14 | Katelyn Meyerdirk                 |
| August 18 | Haley Meyerdirk<br>Katie Neubauer |
| August 19 | Greg Sandberg                     |
| August 21 | Billie Simms                      |
| August 22 | Carol Dickson                     |
| August 23 | Diane Newman                      |
| August 24 | Eli Evans<br>Carolyn Hunt         |
| August 30 | Julianna Lownsdale                |

## Family Night Resumes

Wednesday September 7<sup>th</sup>



**Meal served: 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.**

**Cost: Kids \$1, Adults \$3 or Family \$8**

**AWANA Clubs 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.  
Adult Bible Study 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

### Professions of Faith

In Concert  
at Forest Hills EFC  
Saturday August 20<sup>th</sup>  
2 p.m.



Refreshments & Love Offering

### Pastor Mitch on Study Break

August 1 thru 14

What is Study Break? It is two weeks each summer that allow Pastor Mitch to take time focus on studying scripture in preparation for the coming year as well as having an opportunity to recharge and spend time with family. These two weeks are given each August in Lieu of taking a whole summer Sabbatical every several years. This summer he is going to be preparing to teach Revelation in Sunday School. He is hoping also to visit the Ark Encounter near Cincinnati.

### Weekly Schedule

#### Sunday Morning

9 a.m. Sunday School  
10 a.m. Fellowship Time  
10:25 a.m. Worship Service

#### Wednesdays

6:30 p.m. Adult Bible Study

#### Saturday

8 a.m. Men's Prayer Group

## What is the Gospel? (Part 6) Can There Be Unity Without Agreeing on the Gospel?

We have spent the past several months considering the nature of the Gospel. Even as I write this article, tens of thousands of people are gathered in Washington D.C. in the name of Jesus and the Gospel to pray and worship together with the hopes of unifying Christians in America and around the world. I admire the goal, and I pray this would be achieved. But I am concerned we are trying to manufacture a unity that cannot last unless we agree on certain fundamental truths. The most important of these truths is the nature of the Gospel.

**Question:** What difference does it make what people believe about the Gospel? Aren't you getting all worked up about minor issues?

**Answer:** If we do not agree on the nature of the Gospel, then we do not agree anything in relation to who Jesus is and what He has done for us or the place of God's Word in our lives.

**Question:** How important is the Gospel, and is it really central to our lives?

**Answer:** Do not listen to me, but consider what Paul had to say about the importance of the Gospel.

“Paul, an apostle (not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), 2 and all the brethren who are with me, To the churches of Galatia: 3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, 4 who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, 5 to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen. 6 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! 10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ. 11 For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 1:1-12

In verse 6, Paul expresses his amazement at how quickly the Galatians have strayed from the Gospel. He goes on in verse 7 to say that any teaching other than the Gospel he received from Jesus Himself, and shared with them, is a distortion of the truth. He goes on to pronounce a curse in verse 8 against anyone who preaches a gospel contrary to the one he shared with them. Even if an angel appears and speaks this “other” gospel, they are not to be listened to, because they are not from God.

This highlights a key problem each of us experiences. There will always be a temptation to change or distort the Gospel to fit our desires. But if we distort the Gospel, can we be unified around it, truly? What happens if each person or group distorts the Gospel to fit their particular desires? Can all these groups and individuals with their “own adjustments” really be unified in the name of Jesus Christ? Once each group has made its adjustments, how close to one another are we really?

Let's consider some of these distortions:

- Minimizing the depth of our sin against God. Some contend that man is basically good, and he has only made a few errors that need to be fixed by Jesus. Romans 3 clearly teaches there is no righteousness at all in any human being separated from Christ. This error can be very subtle, but it is very serious. A number of groups make this error, but in particular The Latter Day Saints and Seventh Day Adventists believe each person enters heaven based on the righteous deeds they have done, and Jesus simply makes up for any shortfall. This is a works righteousness and contradicts Ephesians 2.
- Salvation comes through praying a prayer. These insist that saying the right words in the right way are enough to bring salvation to a person. Prayer is the proper response to saving faith, but Romans 10 makes clear salvation comes from a transformation of heart and mind brought by the Holy Spirit.
- Salvation is completed by something other than God's grace and the gift of faith He gives to each believer. This includes those who insist that salvation is by God's grace through faith plus \_\_\_\_\_. Some groups insist a person is not saved until they are baptized or speak in tongues or are members of the church or take communion.
- On the opposite extreme are those who believe God will save whom He chooses without needing the Gospel to be shared or the agreement/confession of the individual.
- There are numerous other errors that short circuit the Gospel. Too many to mention every one.

This is why we must seek and call for unity under the umbrella of Jesus Christ and His Gospel, but we cannot do it without the substance of making sure we truly agree on who Jesus is and what the Gospel truly is. There are other criteria, but we need to save those for another time.

In His Grip and Grace  
Pastor Mitch

### Contacting Pastor Mitch

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