

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church of God Big Sandy

ChurchofGodBigSandy.com

May 13, 2017 • 2:00 p.m. • Sunset 8:08

Service next Sabbath: 2:00 p.m.

Order of service

Song leader	Reg Killingley
Pianist	Bea Gusner
First sermon	Dave Havir
Teen class—Library	Martha Mclver
Kids' class—Classroom #2	Jennifer Danapas
Second sermon	Dave Havir

Quick takes

1. Board-nomination process begins today—The board-nomination process (which occurs in May) begins today and will continue until May 27 at 5:00 p.m. The election process will continue in June.
2. Death of Robert Ferris—In last week's bulletin, we mentioned that Robert Ferris (age 97) had been placed in hospice care at the VA facility in Bonham. He died shortly after midnight (at the beginning of Sunday, May 7).
3. Memorial service for Robert Ferris—There is a short memorial service for Robert Ferris scheduled in the building shortly after the church service today (scheduled for 4:30). Normally, our congregation prepares food for the family of one of our deceased members. Since we are unaware of any family members, there will be no food at the service.
4. Big Sandy school banquet on May 18—There is a Big Sandy school banquet scheduled in the building on Thursday, May 18.
5. Hawkins school banquet on May 25—There is a Hawkins school banquet scheduled in the building on Thursday, May 25.
6. Combined church service on Day of Pentecost—The Tyler congregation of the Church of God International (CGI) will be meeting with our congregation on Pentecost (Sunday, June 4). The schedule for that day is:
 - 2:00 p.m. Bible study by Dave Havir and youth classes
 - 3:00 Church service with Vance Stinson giving the sermon
 - 4:00 Potluck meal

7. Edifying the Body—This week's article is "The Octopus Outsmarts Darwin Again" by Eric Metaxas.
8. Among Friends—This week's article is "Rahab Lied and Was Blessed" by Dave Havir.
9. Eye on the World—This week's "Eye on the World" is 14 pages.

"God Values Us"

This article is from the "Edifying the Body" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's website, churchofgodbig sandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of July 16, 2016.

By Mary K. Thompson

LOUISVILLE, Ky.—When I was a little girl I had a fantasy that I had been left in the wrong home and that my real parents, the king and queen, would eventually come to rescue me from the mundane life into which I had been placed.

This was not because my home was so horrible. It was not, but I often had a sense of not belonging and of not being cherished.

Desire to be special

I have come to understand what some of the family issues and problems were that contributed to this sense of unworthiness, but I think it is a common feeling that many people carry around and rarely acknowledge to themselves, let alone share with others.

There are many stories centered on the theme of discovering we are royalty, including *Cinderella*, *Pretty Woman*, *Star Wars* and many others. Boys tend to have somewhat different fantasies, often involving slaying a dragon and winning the princess, but the underlying desire is the same—to feel special and chosen.

The funny thing is that as Christians we are told that the desire to be royalty will be fulfilled and is actually already true. When we recognize who we are as daughters and sons of God, we realize we really are special and chosen.

Galatians 3:26 tells us, "You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."

And Romans 8:16-17 tells us we are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

It is just that it is so hard for many of us

to believe it, or if we believe it to really feel it emotionally.

Starting out feeling loved

If you have ever watched a toddler basking in the glow of parental attention, you see children develop that sense of specialness early on if raised in a loving family.

When our granddaughter was about 2 years old, she announced to the warthogs at the zoo, "It's Lily!" and then went on to introduce her parents to the warthogs, who she clearly expected to be as happy to see her as she was to see them. She had no difficulty feeling special and loved.

Young children are often so pleased with their efforts at art or at singing and dancing and rarely feel insecure about whether these efforts are good enough. (Contrast that to how most adults feel.) Invariably, however, many life experiences teach us to temper that sense of being special.

Losing that sense of being cherished

While it's clearly important to learn that the world does not revolve around any one of us, what often happens is that we altogether lose our sense of being loved, special and wanted.

Often we experience damaging messages that contradict our value and specialness. By the time we are teens, or even earlier, we may begin to struggle with feelings of being unworthy and undeserving. This can happen despite the best intentions of good parents and teachers.

Some people experience deep wounding

and trauma through abuse of many kinds. Even when that is not part of our experience, we are often harmed in more subtle ways by harsh judgment, expectations we cannot live up to or rejection by peers.

Many of us reach adulthood functioning just fine on the outside but carrying painful scars and a battered sense of self. The idea that we are special and chosen is just too much at odds with our sense of self for us to believe it.

Keeping our secret

This can be further reinforced by the need to keep those feelings secret. We do not share them with others and maybe do not even fully acknowledge them to ourselves.

We feel deficient and damaged and other people seem just fine. We are doing what has been referred to as “comparing our insides to other people’s outsides.”

Because the hurt is hidden, it is not open to corrective feedback, and most people never know that others share the insecurities and self-condemnation they themselves sometimes feel.

You may have had the experience of getting to know someone well and realizing that your first impression of him was wrong. Initially, you may have seen that person as standoffish or felt he was nothing like you.

Given some time and a chance to have some deeper conversations, you may realize he has many of the same insecurities and self-doubts, and many of the good qualities, that you have. Ideally, this creates a bond of trust and caring.

It helps to remember that most people carry hurts and insecurities, or even deep wounding, below the surface. When we can remember that we are loved, cherished and created by a loving Father, we can extend love and forgiveness to others in a way that can be healing for them and humbling for us.

Being recognized by God

I find many of the encounters Jesus had with people in the Gospels to be fascinating. Many of the encounters seem to indicate that Jesus knew the individuals well despite having just met them.

This is true with his encounter with

Nathaniel, with the other apostles He chose, and with the woman at the well. He seemed able to know them at a deep level and saw both their potential and understood their sinfulness and need for healing.

Sometimes He perceived their hearts were hardened and not open to change. Many times, He perceived their need for forgiveness and love and a willingness for change and repentance.

He took people where they were and offered love, forgiveness and healing, which allowed for change.

When we struggle with an awareness of our unworthiness and need for change, it helps to remember that God loves us so much that He gave His Son to be our Savior (John 3:16).

While this is such a familiar verse to most of us, it is good to stop and reflect on how precious we must be in God’s eyes. This is not because of who we are, but because of who God is.

Humility and trust

With increasing healing and closeness with our God who truly loves us and sees us as His chosen children, we can come to recognize our own value and worth in a way that does nothing whatsoever to diminish the value of others.

In fact, it can be valuable to remember that ultimately God wants to be in a loving relationship with each human being. We can become more humble rather than prideful as we recognize the amazing gift of God’s love that we could never deserve but receive as a gift.

With a closer relationship with God, we can paradoxically recognize that we are cherished members of God’s royal family and unworthy sinners who can do nothing to earn love or salvation.

Rather than finding this paradox difficult to live with, it can come to be part of a rich process of healing, love, repentance and increasing trust.

We can also come to recognize that God also cherishes others we encounter and equally sent His Son for them. With God, there is always enough love and cherishing to go around!

“Rahab Lied and Was Blessed”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of May 13, 2017.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—One of the stories in the Bible that is unnerving to the emotional system of religious people is the story of Rahab. Here are three emotional reactions that religious fundamentalists have concerning the story of Rahab.

- She could not have lied.

- She could not have been blessed for lying.

- If you teach that she lied and was blessed for her lying, you are trying to encourage religious people to take up a lifestyle of lying.

Seriously, I wish I had a dollar for every time I saw those emotional reactions.

Rahab lied

The book of Joshua proceeds with events of the children of Israel following the death of Moses. God instructed Joshua to take the Israelites into the Promised Land (Joshua 1:2). One of the first directives given by Joshua was to send two spies to collect information.

Joshua 2:1—The spies lodged in the house of Rahab.

Joshua 2:2—People told the king of Jericho that spies had come to his city.

Joshua 2:3—The king of Jericho told Rahab to bring out the men who had come to her house.

Joshua 2:4—Rahab hid the two men (on the roof according to verse 6) and answered the king.

Notice how many ways (in verses 4 and 5) that Rahab told her lie.

- The men came, but I didn’t know from where.

- When it was time to close the gate at dark, the men left.

- I don’t know where the men were going.

- Pursue after them quickly; you can catch them.

Rahab was blessed

Bible verses show that Rahab was blessed because of her behavior.

- **Joshua 6:17**—Rahab lived, because she hid the messengers.

- **Joshua 6:25**—Joshua spared Rahab and her family, because she hid the messengers that Joshua sent to Jericho.

- **Hebrews 11:31**—By faith, the harlot Rahab survived because she received the spies with peace.

- **James 2:25**—The harlot Rahab was justified by works (her decisions and actions) when she received the messengers and sent them out another way.

Rare exception

Bible students are fully aware that God and His Bible do not endorse lying.

There are many powerful verses that show God’s view about lying and various consequences that can occur from this character flaw.

Most lying has horrible motives. Here are just a few examples.

- To gain a possession for yourself or to watch someone else lose a possession.

- To gain money for yourself or to watch someone else lose money.

- To gain recognition for yourself or to watch someone else lose recognition.

- To gain an award for yourself or to watch someone else lose an award.

- To gain trust for yourself or to watch someone else lose trust.

- To gain any type of advantage for yourself or to watch someone become at a disadvantage.

- In other words—to gain for self or to watch other people hurt.

God doesn’t want that type of lying. However, He was pleased to watch Rahab demonstrate a good reason for lying (which is a rare exception)—Rahab lied to protect life.