

FROM BRIDGE STREET

News & Updates From Our Church



Fellowship of Christian Athletes

BY RICK JACKSON

FCA Prayer Breakfast:

By all accounts, our Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) Prayer Breakfast this past Sunday, Jan28th, was a success. We hosted about 70 athletes and coaches from Calhoun Academy and Calhoun County High School. We recognized the state championships earned by CA's Cross Country team and by CCHS's Boys Basketball team.

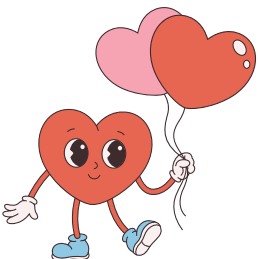
Good food (good cooks!), good beverages and fruit, and good greeters, and great decorations. We heard a wonderful message from Mr. Earl Humes, FCA Area Director for Calhoun, Bamberg, and Orangeburg Counties.

GOD IS AT WORK! We cheered for Jesus. We gave away almost a box of Bibles. We had several professions of faith!

This Prayer Breakfast happened because we, as a church family, all took part. You all prayed. So many workers helped.

Thank you all, Rick Jackson.

Matt 9:37-38 Then he said to his disciples, " The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to The Lord of the harvest to send out laborers to His harvest."



THE GREATEST IS LOVE

BY PASTOR ERIC
TRUESDALE

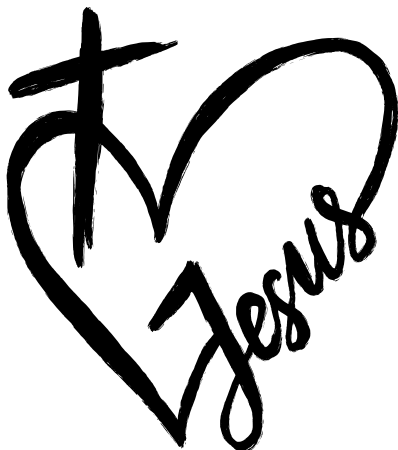
So many times, I have heard this scripture read at weddings or renewings of vows. Jennifer and I read them at our wedding. Not understanding the verse, I applied it to my love for my wife.

However, years later, as I was in seminary, I understood there was so much more to this verse.

When we take the verse and study the word 'love,' it means 'agape' in Greek. It is a strong, positive emotion of regard and affection. In many instances, it is the love that God has for His people. In others, it is the love that we have for God Himself that we give back to Him. It is the highest type of love that one can show to someone.

Two other types of love are spoken of in the Bible: 'eros,' which is sensual love, and 'philia,' which is brotherly love (which is how the city of Philadelphia got its nickname).

As we reflect on agape love, let's consider the example of Jesus Christ, as described in 1 John 3:16-18. Christ's love for us was not merely spoken but demonstrated through the ultimate sacrifice on the cross. This sacrificial love goes beyond mere affection or emotional regard. It's an active, selfless giving for the well-being of others, mirroring the way Jesus loved humanity. By understanding and striving to emulate this level of love, we can deepen our relationships with God and each other, genuinely fulfilling the commandment to love as He loved us.



Remember what scripture says about love as we celebrate Valentine's Day on the 14th. Out of faith, hope, and love, love is the greatest. Why is that? We have faith in the Lord because of our love for Him. Faith is having strong confidence and reliance upon someone. We know that as believers, God will care for us because of His unfailing love. This, in return, makes us love Him unconditionally. Hope is the feeling and understanding that some desire will be fulfilled. We know that God will provide the desires that align with His Word. He knows what is best for us and will give us what is best. How can you not love someone back who only wants the best for you?

Does this mean that Jennifer and I, or others reading this at our wedding, were wrong? No, but it does mean that God has to be our highest love in our relationship. Let us strive as believers to love God with the highest regard of affection because, as scripture states, we love because He first loved us, as well as the command from the Lord in the Gospels. The other command Jesus said was like it: to love our neighbors. Take time to show your love for others. It can be as simple as a text or as in-depth as planning something special.



EXPERIENCING GOD

BY ERIC TRUESDALE

Henry Blackaby's "Experiencing God" is not just a book; it's a journey into a deeper relationship with God, making it an exceptional study for small groups in the Southern Baptist community. This study stands out for its profound impact on individuals and groups, fostering spiritual growth, communal understanding, and a strengthened relationship with God. Here's why "Experiencing God" is a superb choice for small groups and what each member can expect to gain from it:

1. Deepening Personal Relationship with God

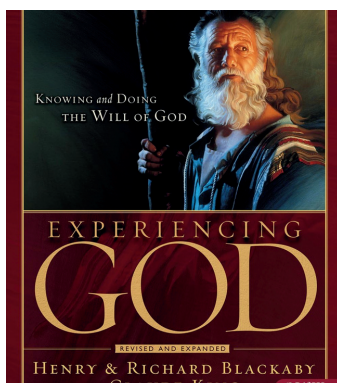
"Experiencing God" encourages participants to explore and strengthen their personal relationship with God. Through its guided lessons, individuals are invited to experience God in a more intimate way, moving beyond mere knowledge of scriptural facts to a deeper, heartfelt connection.

2. Emphasis on Active Faith

Blackaby's study emphasizes the importance of an active, living faith. It's not just about learning and discussing; it's about putting faith into action. Group members learn to recognize God's work around them and are encouraged to join Him in His endeavors, fostering a practical and dynamic faith.

3. Biblical and Theologically Sound

Staying true to biblical beliefs, "Experiencing God" is deeply rooted in scripture. This ensures that the study aligns with Southern Baptist doctrine, offering a safe and theologically sound environment for spiritual exploration and growth.



4. Community Building

Small groups provide a unique opportunity for building close-knit communities. "Experiencing God" facilitates this by encouraging open, heartfelt discussions, shared experiences, and mutual support. Members learn together, pray together, and grow together, strengthening the bonds within the group.

5. Real-Life Application

This study is grounded in real-life application. Each lesson is designed to connect biblical truths to everyday life, helping participants apply what they learn to their personal, work, and community lives. This practical approach helps members see the relevance of their faith in all aspects of life.

6. Enhanced Understanding of God's Will

One of the core teachings of "Experiencing God" is discerning and following God's will. Participants learn to listen for God's guidance in their lives, a skill that is invaluable for making decisions that align with His plans and purposes.

7. Encouragement in Spiritual Disciplines

Regular engagement with spiritual disciplines such as prayer, Bible study, and meditation is encouraged throughout the study. These practices deepen the participants' spiritual lives, enriching their individual walk with God.

8. Leadership and Discipleship Training

"Experiencing God" also serves as an effective tool for training future leaders and disciples. Members who go through this study often find themselves better equipped to mentor others and take on leadership roles within the church.

9. Renewed Passion for Evangelism

The study naturally instills a passion for evangelism. As participants understand God's work in the world and experience Him personally, they are often compelled to share their faith with others, fulfilling the Great Commission.

10. Life-Transforming Experiences

Finally, "Experiencing God" is known for being life-transforming. It's not uncommon for participants to emerge with changed lives, having experienced God in ways they never thought possible.

"Experiencing God" by Henry Blackaby is more than a study; it's a transformative experience. It aligns beautifully with the doctrinal beliefs of the New Testament Church, making it a valuable resource for small groups seeking a deeper, more active faith. Through this study, members can expect not only to learn about God but to truly experience Him in their everyday lives.

First Baptist



St. Matthews

Building Bridges for Christ
Let all that you do be done with love.
1 Corinthians 16:14

February 2024

Upcoming Events

5th- Current Missions
4th-Deacons Meeting- 6 pm
6th- Trustees Meeting- 5 pm
11th- Souper Bowl Lunch -12 pm
13th-Vision Team -5:30 pm
14th- Valentines Day
14th- Golden Group -12 pm
19th- Office Closed for Presidents Day
20th- Constitution and ByLaws
21st- Sewing for Missions
24th- Roundtable- 2 pm

Birthdays & Anniversaries

1st-Babara Powell
4th- Eric Truesdale
6th- Jenny Swofford
6th- John Robbs
11th- Jackie Dyches
13th- Sheryl Davis
14th- Randy McGee
16th- William Hair
20th- Rick Jackson
22th- Pamala Golden



*Building bridges for Christ in
St. Matthews and the world!*

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