

The Challenger

Ministerial Staff

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Reaching people, touching lives, and growing together in Christ's love.

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Your Father knows what you need before you ask Him! (Matthew 6:8b)

One of my youth volunteers from my youth pastor days in Phoenix just called me this last week. (For the sake of this account, we'll call him John Smith.) I hadn't talked to John for a couple of years so it was good to hear his voice. He started our conversation with how he was only returning my call but he was glad for the timing of the conversation because he had really gone through some rough patches in his life and he was grateful for the chance to unload on a listening ear. The patches he was referring to were rough enough that he actually pulled out his 9 mm and stuck it in his mouth. He obviously didn't pull the trigger but he still had a list of grievances:

- His wife, who happened to be a worship leader, left him for another man.
- He fell under investigation at work by someone who claimed John physically attacked him. John was found innocent of all charges but the process of being investigated drove John to try to resign. His resignation was refused.
- One of his best friends went missing in Mexico. Her body was recently found washed up on a beach.
- He had a serious infection in his leg that hospitalized him and threatened his life. In the process, he went into massive kidney, respiratory, and heart failure.
- From his past, he was diagnosed with AIDS. Miraculously, God has removed it to where all evidence of AIDS has become undetectable.
- Most shockingly, he got a knock on his door from the sheriff's department one night. Somehow, authorities had come across evidence that his new roommate was conspiring with a buddy to murder John, steal his possessions, and claim squatter's rights in his house.

I assured him I understood why he would be tempted to end it all. Then I offered, “But John, look what God has done in so many of those situations! You were found innocent and your resignation was refused because of your value to the company. You didn't die of your leg infection, kidney/lung/heart failure or even AIDS. And the sheriff stopped someone from killing you that you didn't even expect! So do you live with a perspective that you're being picked on or do you live with the perspective that God keeps making you a victor over and over again the midst of spiritual attacks?”

It struck a chord with him and it truly seemed to help. But then God really made Himself known. I asked for John's phone number so I could keep in touch to see how he's doing. He responded, “Fred, you have my phone number. You just called me, that's why I was returning your call.”

I replied, “I remember you saying that at the beginning of the conversation, John, but I didn't call you. I lost my phone awhile ago and I don't have your number anymore. Besides that, I couldn't have called you because I've had appointments literally all day long. You called me.”

“Fred, I'm telling you. My computer broke down, I was about to throw it out the window because yet another thing messed up in my life and all of a sudden, my phone, which was laying on the couch so it wasn't a hip call, started ringing. It said, 'Call from Fred Harris' on it. I tried to answer it but no one was there. So I hit the send button and it rang you. How could that work if you didn't call me first?”

I just started laughing – in a creeped out sort of way. I didn't know John desperately needed to talk to me that day, but Someone did. So He put my name and number on John's phone and let it ring. Once my goosebumps settled, I thanked Him for always knowing what we need, even before we ask.

In His Grip,

Pastor Fred

YOUTH NEWS

Youth will be having a car wash on Saturday, May 12th 9am - noon in the Church parking lot. Please be in prayer for them as they go to Glorieta June 27th.

Youth - There will be a cookout immediately following the carwash for all who participated. And mark your calendar for May 31st. We will have a school's out party at 6pm at Pastor Ted's house.



SENIOR ADULT LUNCHEON

Friday, May 25th - Falcon
Friday, June 15th - BoJo's
Luncheons are at 11:30am

GRADUATING

Senior Recognition Day

Sunday, May 27th

There will be a breakfast for graduates and their families at 9:15am and we will be honoring them at the 10:30am service. We would like to congratulate all of our graduating Seniors. Please plan to attend.



There is still time to plan for summer camp at Burton Camp!

Children 1st – 3rd grade: June 3rd - 5th

*Cost \$50.00 per camper

Children 4th – 6th grade: June 6th - 9th

*Cost \$60.00 per camper

It is not too late to register for camp!! Come by the office for a registration packet and instructions on where to send packets.



**POOL PARTY
SUNDAY,
JUNE 18th
5:30 - 7:30 PM
WINSLOW
OUTDOOR POOL**



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 18th - 22nd

Mark your calendars, grab your pals and join us for a week of "Gearing Up for Life's Big Game"

To volunteer to help or for more information, please contact the office or Sarah O'Connell.



May the Lord bless you and protect you; may the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
~Numbers 6:24-25

