



STAND FIRM TOGETHER

Ty Harman, one of our Forcey brothers, shares this illustration of how God's strength works *together* rather than *apart*:

The 21st day of July 1861 in Manassas, VA was a day like many July days here in the DC area. The temperatures were in the mid-90s but the beating sun and the humidity certainly made it feel even hotter. The wool uniforms of the newly-enlisted soldiers contributed further to making it an almost unbearable day for both armies. This was to be the day of the first major land battle of the American Civil War.

The war had started three months earlier in South Carolina, and neither side expected it to last much beyond the first battle. This was especially true in the Northern states, where most people expected their way-ward countrymen to return to the fold after a beating in the first battle. The Manassas battle began almost as a picnic outing, as dignitaries and curious citizens from DC came on horseback to observe the happenings from a distance. The volunteers who had heeded both governments' calls to -arms were a rag-tag bunch with only rudimentary training and not the veteran fighters that they would become.

The Union Army won skirmish after skirmish, pushing the Southern forces further and further back until they reached a location known as Henry House Hill. It was here the Yankees halted their advance, unintentionally allowing the Southern forces to regroup. At approximately 2pm, the Union attack began again, and continued to push the Southern army back.

Then Col. Thomas Jonathan Jackson and his brigade arrived on the field. These boys were just as green and new as any others, but many had known Jackson as a teacher and artillery instructor at Virginia Military Institute. Jackson organized his men behind a slight rise in the ground where they were mostly hidden from the view of the approaching Northern army. As the Union tide rolled up, the Southern units retreated back through Jackson's line; yet Jackson kept his men together.

The Union advance crested the hill, and started down upon Jackson's fresh troops. Jackson's men opened fire on them, and stood their ground. The Union tide broke upon the troops but did not move them. General Bernard Bee, a leader of one of the retreating units, saw what was happening and pointed it out to his troops saying "Look, there

stands Jackson like a Stone Wall. Rally behind the Virginians." With this now famous phrase, not only did Jackson acquire his nickname, but the retreating troops joined Jackson and halted the Northern advance. The tide of the battle turned in that one instance and the Northern victory turned into an ill-organized and rapid retreat back to DC.

How does this event of 150 years ago impact our spiritual walk today?

The Bible repeatedly tells us to "Stand Firm" (1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:11), "Be Still" (Ps. 46:10; Neh 8:11), and "Trust in God" (Proverbs 3:5; Ps. 4:5; John 14:1). As Satan and the world attack us on many fronts, we often feel overwhelmed, beaten

down, and ready to give in. But thankfully God never gives up on us and has strength to spare for us. God promises to never leave us nor forsake us (Heb 13:5) and we can rely on His promises.

The other wonderful thing is that we, like the volunteers in Jackson's units, don't fight the battle alone. We have other believers willing to come along beside us and fight our battles with us. But for this to be effective, we need to foster relationships with one another and get to a point where we are comfortable sharing our struggles and weaknesses with each other so that they can come beside us. This vulnerability is scary and hard, but nothing that is good ever comes easy.

The small groups here at Forcey have the aim to be a place where these relationships can be built and grow in the context of God's Word and His love and grace. The Crossroad men's small group that I am involved in has really been an encouragement as I see myself and them growing closer to God, and it has challenged me to see those areas where God still has some work to do to conform me to the image of Christ.

The next time that you begin to feel you can't go on, remember the example of the Virginia boys under the leadership of a man they called Stonewall and know that we are under a Leader who is called "a Rock" (Is. 26:4), "a Stronghold" (Ps. 59:16-17) and "a Mighty Fortress" (Ps. 18:2) (makes a "Stone Wall" seem rather weak by comparison). Also, get involved in a small group and begin fostering the relationships that will lead to accountability and growth in your spiritual walk.

- Pastor Phil Powers

Soul Winning at Forcey

“**Q**nd Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold” (Luke 19:8). One of the evidences of salvation is a changed life. Sometimes, as in the case of Zacchaeus, the new convert gives evidence of their new life in Christ almost immediately. A Forcey member recently encountered this type of response while witnessing for Christ at a local hospital.

As the Forcey member visited from room to room, he met an older gentleman named Rodney. This patient appeared at first glance to be asleep, but while the soul winner was leaving some gospel tracts on his tray, Rodney opened his eyes. The Forcey member then introduced himself and explained the reason for his visit. When asked concerning his assurance of salvation, Rodney admitted that he did not know whether or not he would make it into Heaven. As the Forcey member presented the gospel message to him, Rodney listened intently and with evident sincerity. Within a short time, this older patient bowed his head and called upon the Lord Jesus to save him. Immediately after calling upon the Lord for salvation, Rodney burst into fervent prayer that the Lord would take away his swearing and his lust-ing after the flesh.

As the Forcey member reflected later upon Rodney’s salvation, he concluded that this cry to the Lord for deliverance from certain sins was in reality the Holy Spirit commencing His work of sanctification in Rodney’s heart. Like Zacchaeus of old, this new convert was now eager to change his sinful ways.

- **Ralph Zimmerman, Evangelism Team**

Mission Minute

Dear Forcey Family,

We praise God for the opportunity He has given us these last 41 years to serve in full-time ministry. Twenty of those years we were with Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) in Brazil and the remaining years we have served with Slavic Gospel Association (SGA) at the headquarters in Illinois. You have been our vital partners during all of these years, through your prayers, financial support, and personal encouraging interaction. We thank you for your faithfulness to the Lord and us.

Now has come a time of moving into a new phase of our lives called "retirement". However, we do not intend to just put up our feet and stop. We will still be involved with SGA, both with a few hours of work a month to complete projects and volunteer time to do some ongoing tasks. Also, as the Lord enables, we plan to be involved in various short-term missions endeavors, both in the States and overseas. At home, we have personal and family projects that we would like to complete, too.

We ask for your continued prayer support as the Lord leads in this next phase of life, for His glory. Also, who knows, we may just "pop in" occasionally for a visit at Forcey Bible Church.

Yours in Christ, Ed & Mary Alice Titcomb

**UPCOMING
FALL
SERIES!!**

“Genesis and the Authority of the Word of God”

On a recent airplane trip, Dr. John Doane and his wife Daryl, who attend Forcey, were seated next to a life sciences professor at a major university. The professor mostly slept and read, but when the plane was landing John and Daryl and the professor exchanged a few thoughts on the topic of evolution. The professor claimed that evolution was the basis for the life sciences, but also admitted that he does not use evolution from day to day. The professor seemed uncomfortable with further discussion. Nevertheless, after some prayer John followed up by email.

In his message to the professor, John affirmed that Darwin had been accurate in some of his claims—such as the

non-fixity of species. He also mentioned, however, how a modern understanding of genetics is consistent with the Bible’s category of “kinds” and with the rich variation of species that could come from just two animals of each kind on Noah’s ark. He went on to point out that disease and death were not in God’s original creation, but God can still work in spite of them—particularly in the death of Jesus that provides atonement for our rebellion that started with Adam’s Fall.

While in graduate school at MIT, John, who had grown up in a church but was not a practicing Christian, became converted. Several years later, a friend who was a medical doctor introduced him to theory and data indicating that the earth’s magnetic field is young. John remembers rejoicing at learning there was such information that was consistent with a straightforward

Stephen's Ministry Training Class

The Stephen Ministry at Forcey has taken a year's sabbatical and is now fresh and ready to offer a new training class early in September. Over the last 20 years more than 50 people from Forcey have taken this training, been commissioned as Stephen Ministers, and have been able to offer care and compassion to many people during this time.

Stephen Ministers offer care and support for people experiencing life difficulties such as the death of a loved one, job crisis, aging, separation or divorce, long-term illness, or for those needing the support of a Christian friend. They receive 50 hours of intensive training covering topics such as effective listening, confidentiality, the stress of hospitalization, feelings, and utilizing community resources.

Stephen Ministry is a confidential ministry; those receiving care can be sure that their identity and what goes on in the caring relationship will remain private. In addition to the training, these Christian lay caregivers will continue to receive twice-monthly continuing education and

supervision support sessions as they strive to offer the highest quality Christian care-giving.

Forcey Bible Church is one of more than 7,000 congregations throughout the United States, Canada, and many foreign countries that have made Stephen Ministry a vital part of their congregational care approach.

If you are interested or have questions about the upcoming Stephen Ministry training opportunity please contact any of the Stephen Ministry Leaders listed below. The new training class will begin early in September on Monday evenings from 7:00 to 9:30 PM. Watch for upcoming announcements concerning several "Informational Sessions" after the morning services to give you more information concerning the details for the training. Please call any of the Stephen Ministry Leaders for more information:

Megan Muller – (301) 384-7562
Flo Strawser – (301) 218-2875
David Yang – (301) 384-2160
Jerry Schneider – (301) 622-2200 ext. 813

“A Stephen Minister’s Experience” Quick to Listen?

Do I really listen to people well? Every time I asked this question of myself, the answer was not so definite. I understand a good listening ear is very important to my communication with other people. Many times, I think I understand what other people are saying, but later on find that I missed some points. Or, I completely go a different direction – resulting in not correctly understanding the true message other people try to convey to me.

Through some experiences of my spiritual journey, I learned that a good listening ear is not just related to our mental knowledge or an educated mind per se. It is very much related to the maturity of our inner spirit. Heart can only be reached by heart. When we communicate with a person, we are actually communicating with a living soul. Do we really listen to people well? Moreover, we are quick to listen. Sometimes, after we listen to what people say to us, it takes us quite a while to understand what meant to convey. Are we quick to listen or slow to listen?

I took Stephen Ministry training a few years ago at Forcey and learned so much about how a long-term caring ministry works in the body of Christ. Listening is a critical skill I learned from my involvement of Stephen Ministry. Also, it is a very humble and rewarding experience. When I was assigned to a care receiver, each visitation I went through, not only did I learn something about the person I visited, but I also learned many things about myself through how I listened to others and how I reacted to the things I heard. From a human point of view, it was a very challenging work. I very quickly found that my limitations are so obvious that I couldn't provide what I wished to provide. I constantly prayed that God would use me as a vessel to freely manifest His glory to quench the person's soul needs. Furthermore, I certainly learned that only God can heal – men cannot, no matter how much we wish we could. When God entrusts to us a precious soul, who are we to dare go forward to handle a relationship based only upon our limited understanding of life. We barely even understand ourselves! How we can be so sure that we can understand other folks' life journey. Indeed, it is such a humbling experience that we must constantly pray that we're not hindering God's channel of provision to other people's spiritual needs. We need to listen to God, listen to other people, and listen to ourselves.

Only heart can touch another heart, soul touches another soul. In our personal spiritual journey walk with our Lord, God will use our personal experiences to empathize with other people, realizing that our experience is not so unique, strange, and indescribable. Have you ever been hurt? God can use your experience to build up another hurting person. Do you let Him overflow in you and outflow to be a channel of His glory? Stephen Ministry is a very good tool for you to be more fulfilled and strengthened to be a powerful witness to God's grace and salvation to other people.

- David Yang – Stephen Minister

Genesis continued from Page 2

reading of Genesis. Since then, he has continued to learn about similar information published by professional scientists and has become convinced of the foundational importance of Genesis.

This fall, John will be leading a Sunday evening series "Genesis and the Authority of the Word of God." John and some others will speak on Biblical and scientific themes from the standpoint of Biblical authority, and will discuss the impact of beliefs about origins on church and society. Many of the difficult questions that Christians and non-Christians alike have about origins will be considered.

More information about this series will be presented in the coming weeks. Please prayerfully consider coming to the class and possibly bringing a friend or loved one with you.

- Mark Zimmerman



July Calendar Highlights

- ◆ Forcey Day Camp - June 27 - August 12
- ◆ SAM Bible Study (Summer Session) - Tuesday @ 10:00 a.m.
- ◆ Losing To Live - Sunday @ 4:30 p.m.
- ◆ ESL - Tuesday @ 7:00 p.m. (weekly)
- ◆ Young Women's Bible Study - Wednesday @ 6:00 p.m. (weekly)
- ◆ Karate - Friday @ 7:00 p.m. (weekly)
- ◆ SIS Prayer - Saturday @ 7:00 a.m. (weekly)

Be sure to check the Forcey calendar on www.forcey.org for additional information on events.

OUR PASTORAL STAFF

Philip Powers, Senior Pastor

Gerard Schneider, Associate Pastor for Counseling & Family Ministries

Ronald Jones, Associate Pastor for Christian Education

Lonnie Harris, Associate Pastor of Singles Ministries

Chris Marchand, Associate Pastor for Teens

John Itzel, Minister of Music and Worship

Art Kennedy, Minister of Arts and Worship