



The Grand Miracle

I recently received an announcement about a conference assessing and answering atheism. You might think atheism was a fringe belief in America—it may have been, but no more. One-in-four Americans under 30 now describe their religion as “atheist,” “agnostic,” or “nothing in particular.” Young people are dropping out of church at five to six times the historic rate, often because of intellectual doubts. Books by the New Atheists have gone mainstream, many becoming international bestsellers.

You might think the answer is to soften the dogmatism of Christianity, to be more “reasonable” in our message rather than emphatic, or to simply avoid intellectual discussions and the supernatural-miraculous assertions of the Bible that don’t fit with modern science. C.S. Lewis journeyed from childhood belief in God, to atheism, to agnosticism, to theism, and finally to belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. This is what he wrote in an essay entitled, *The Grand Miracle*:

“One is very often asked at present whether we could not have a Christianity stripped, or, as people who asked it say, ‘freed’ from its miraculous elements, a Christianity with the miraculous elements suppressed. Now, it seems to me that precisely the one religion in the world, or, at least the only one I know, with which you could not do that is Christianity. In a religion like Buddhism, if you took away the miracles attributed to Gautama Buddha in some very late sources, there would be no loss; in fact, the religion would get on very much better without them because in that case the miracles largely contradict the teaching. Or even in the case of a religion like Mohammedanism, nothing essential would be altered if you took away the miracles. You could have a great prophet preaching his dogmas without bringing in any miracles; they are only in the nature of a digression, or illuminated capitals. But you cannot possibly do that with Christianity, because the Christian story is precisely the story of one grand miracle, the Christian assertion being that what is beyond all space and time, what is uncreated, eternal, came into nature, into human nature, descended into His own universe, and rose again, bringing nature up with Him. It is precisely one great miracle. If you take that away there is nothing specifically Christian left. There may be many admirable human things which Christianity shares with all other systems in the world, but there would be nothing specifically Christian. Conversely, once you have accepted that, then you will see that all other well-established Christian miracles—because, of course, there are ill-established Christian miracles; there are Christian legends just as much as there are heathen legends, or modern journalistic legends—you will see that all the well-established Christian miracles are part of it, that they all either prepare for, or exhibit, or result from the Incarnation. Just as every natural event exhibits the total character of the natural universe at a particular point and space of time; so every miracle exhibits the character of the Incarnation.” (*God in the Dock*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970, pp. 80-81)

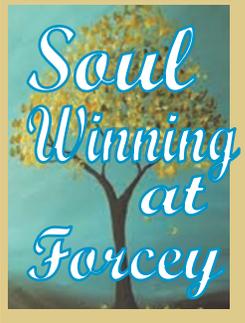
What we need is to be stronger, not weaker—convinced and committed rather than uncertain or “open” - to the revealed truth about God and what He has done. It is the grand miracle!

Dear Forcey Bible Church,

I am so thankful for all the prayers, cards and support, that I received from all of you! Especially the hugs and kisses! I felt God's presence of love, joy, peace, patience, and self-control through the entire funeral of my strong, faithful Mother, Margaret Breen. I truly believe that God hears and answers the prayers of His righteous and faithful children, which all of you have been to me these past 15 years! My heart's cry and prayer is that God was and will be glorified in the days and years to come in my IMMEDIATE FAMILY! The presence of "Jesus with skin on" by all of His children at Forcey Bible Church was seen, heard and felt! I am so honored and proud to be a part of THIS FAMILY of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! Because He Lives, We can Face Tomorrow!

Sincerely,
Jean Breen

~ Phil Powers, Senior Pastor



“Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 7:21). In witnessing to an individual, it is important not to assume that they are a Christian based on their mannerisms or their openness to discuss spiritual matters. The experienced soul winner understands that jumping to a conclusion based on initial impressions can often lead to an incorrect spiritual diagnosis. During a recent visit to a local hospital, a Forcey member almost fell into this spiritual trap.

As the Forcey member entered the room of a middle-aged patient named Rosemary, she greeted him with a wide smile and positive response as he stated the purpose of his visit. The Forcey member quickly concluded that Rosemary was saved and began to speak to her accordingly. However, as the conversation continued, she mentioned her religious affiliation,

which typically is not considered evangelical. Sensing perhaps a false diagnosis on his part, the Forcey member probed a little deeper and found that she was trusting in her good works to get her to Heaven. He then redirected the conversation to a simple presentation of the gospel. As she listened to the gospel message, Rosemary saw from God’s Word that she could not earn salvation by good deeds, but that she must trust solely in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. With childlike simplicity Rosemary called upon the Lord Jesus to be her Savior. The Forcey member then reviewed with her the assurance of salvation in Christ and also received a warm thank you from this new convert.

This opportunity to witness almost ended in failure because of a hasty assumption, but fortunately, the Holy Spirit intervened and brought to light her true spiritual condition and opened her heart to receive the free gift of eternal life.

~ Ralph Zimmerman, Evangelism Team

One year ago, several of us in the leadership of Teens and Missions were working out a plan for bringing back Mission Possible. We came to you asking for substantial prayer support and financial support as well. During Sunday worship services last August, both of the teams presented the results of their Mission Possible experience. We hope you didn’t miss it. But if you did, let me say that it couldn’t have gone better! And, you can view some of these testimonies on our church website (www.forcey.org then click on Teens and on Mission Possible).

MEET THE 2012 M.P. TEAMS

M.P. ONE

Zane Dempsie (leader)
Joan Fountain (leader)
Sarah Abe
Brendan Calloway
Jason Kraus
Angela Reeves
Ryan Thron
Ruth Anne Trageser
Kurtis Winkler
Stephen Winkler

M.P. TWO

Paul Adams (leader)
Carmina Adams (leader)
Kelly Barrow (leader in training)
Shauna Adams
Julie Jeffries
Micah Lydic
Adam Mackie
Matt Mallett
Tim Mallett
Sam White
Jillian Woo

Our leaders and teens focused on training and ministry opportunities to make the gospel known and to hone discipleship. We had lives that were impacted by our outreach in three different countries, and we have teens here at Forcey who will never be the same after what God did in their lives. Several of them have continued with open air outreach all through the last school year. The vision that we had when we wrote to you a year ago was far exceeded by the reality of what God did. He answered our prayers in ways beyond our expectation. (Do we have a great God, or what?) Furthermore, your financial and prayer support of individual teens, your participation in the various fund-raising events last spring, and your generous giving directly to the Mission Possible

program was enough to ensure that the program last year was entirely self-sustaining. (Do we have a great congregation, or what?)

Almost all of the kids from last year’s MP1 will be continuing on with MP2, and will be spending their summer in San Francisco – an area well known for its beauty and for its deep spiritual need. Paul and Carmina Adams will be leading that team. We are also opening up a brand new MP1 team working in several sites here on the East Coast, led by Zane Dempsie and by Joan Fountain. The new teens that have signed up are excited by what they saw happening in last year’s team and some were challenged by our Missions Conference this year to get involved in reaching a world for Christ.

We would like to ask you please to extend your support of this program into 2012 with your prayers and your financial gifts. Each of the teens is raising funds themselves to meet their own support objectives, and many of you have already given to them directly. But we also need to raise some additional funds to cover the expense of providing “leadership and logistics” for both teams. The most efficient way for you to do this is to simply mark a church offering envelope “Mission Possible” and drop it in the offering. Checks can also be mailed to the church, but should be clearly marked “Mission Possible” to be properly credited.

Any financial commitment that you can make to the individual teens, to our general MP giving, and to fundraisers--such as the car wash on June 9th--will be a great help to the program. Most of all we covet your prayers for the teams and the preparation of souls to hear the gospel. What an eternal investment! Thanks!

~ The Mission Possible Team



ATTENTION FORCEY FAMILIES!

Summer is upon us, and we're eagerly getting ready for Forcey Day Camp 2012.

Our prayer is that Forcey Day Camp is all about Jesus Christ, and He has given us two main commands – to love God and to love others (Matthew 22:37-39). In concrete ways, this is to evangelize the lost and edify the saved (Matthew 28:19-20). Both of these goals can be accomplished at Forcey Day Camp, in the lives of both the children and their families.

Each year, we have many children attending camp whose families do not go to Bible-based churches. Thus, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is foreign to them. Their understanding of God comes from whatever they pick up through the culture.



Our strategy for reaching these families is to offer a safe and incredibly fun camp atmosphere that is loaded with Gospel-centered teaching and principles from God's Word. Our prayer is that the memories a child makes at our camp will be saturated by God's Word. This includes the awesome opportunity to respond to the Gospel. We also hope that parents will see the light and testimony of our camp staff, and be encouraged to consider Jesus worthy of their lives.

Then, for those campers and families who already know the Lord, our focus on Bible memorization, teaching, and prayer allow for these campers to grow in their faith.

This summer, I want to invite you into this journey. Here are some tangible ways that you can help serve the Lord *with* our camp:

Join our prayer team. Email me at forceyday-camp@forcey.org and give your mailing or email address. We will send out regular updates with requests to help you pray specifically for the camp.

Give to our Financial Aid. The cost of camp is \$145 per week (low compared to most camps). But we do have some families we want to help with financial aid. If you would like to help us in this effort, please make a check payable to "Forcey Day Camp," memo: Financial Aid. We will send you a charitable receipt for your gift.

Come to Family Night on August 1, 7:30. This is a highlight of our summer ministry to parents. We invite whole families out and it provides a wonderful snapshot of the camp ministry. It is a great time to rub shoulders with camp families (many who are neighbors), see our staff in action, and celebrate the summer. And as always at family night, the more the merrier!

Thank you for your prayer and support for this ministry at Forcey. May the Name of Jesus be magnified as we serve Him this summer at Forcey Day Camp.

~ Mike Maslin, Camp Director

Forcey Christian School

is about so much more than children sitting at desks listening to teachers. On Saturday, April 28 we enjoyed a fantastic International Night celebration. Led by kindergarten teacher Heidi Cordero with support from our Parent Booster Club, we enjoyed an evening of global food tasting, displays from the nations represented by our staff and students, and traditional performances from around the world by our very own students. We followed this event two weeks later with our first ever S.T.E.M. Night, exploring science, technology, engineering, and math. Led by fifth grade teacher Miss Wertz and her team, we did experiments, played with magnets, and viewed the work of our engineering clubs.

June brings us to the end of another school year. Our first through third graders perform at our end-of-the-year program on June 1. Other year-end activities include kindergarten graduation, a 5th grade promotion party, field day, class picnics, and special trips to places like Kings Dominion and Hershey Park, all culminating in our 8th grade graduation ceremony on the last day of school, June 13. This year's keynote address will be given by Forcey's own Lonnie Harris.



Although many classes are full, if you know of families with school-aged children, please refer them to us. We are especially interested in having more Forcey Bible Church families enrolled at our school. Church members get their first registration free (a \$300 value)! Plus, financial aid is available. We want a Forcey education to be accessible to as many FBC families as possible. Please check out our school web site at www.forceychristianschool.org.

We are delighted to serve the Lord with you at Forcey Bible Church. As you think of us, please pray that our students and staff will continue to grow closer to the Lord, even as they head off to summer vacation. Thank you.

~ Rev. Zeke Wharton, Administrator

Lowering Blood Pressure ~ Part I



It is estimated that some 68 million Americans (1 in 3 adults) have high blood pressure, also called hypertension. For African Americans it is closer to 3 out of 4 who have high blood pressure. Why does it matter? The higher the blood pressure the greater the risk of having a heart attack or stroke. 120/80 is considered normal. It is crucial to have your pressure checked regularly by a professional. There is much that can be done nutritionally but if you are on medications please take them consistently and get a check up after making nutritional changes so they can adjust the dosage.

One of the key issues behind high blood pressure is dehydration. Most Americans substitute high sugar, caffeinated drinks for water. Both caffeine and sugar cause the body to lose water so they end up dehydrated even though they are drinking liquid all day. Begin drinking a cup or 2 of **water** when you get up in the morning before any caffeine and notice how you start to feel after a few days. Then begin drinking a cup of water before meals. If you can start cutting back on other drinks and have herbal teas or water with some lemon or lime in it, you will notice a huge difference in how you feel. This will also help you lose weight, another condition tied to high blood pressure. Most people should have about 8 to 10 cups of water a day, but if you are on diuretic medication or have kidney problems, you will want to check with your doctor.

The opposite side of the coin with water balance in the body is **sodium**. So much of our food is saturated with salt that we must make a conscious effort to cut back. If you can keep it to 500mg per meal a day then it will stay at the recommended level for those with hypertension of 1500mg daily. Read labels and make sure to multiply the number of servings times the amount of sodium listed so you know how much is in the whole package.

Jeremiah 24:7 "I will give them a heart to know that I am the LORD, and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart."

~ Nancy Parlette, *Health Ministry*



Forcey Bible Church's new college ministry, is here! Bridging the gap from adolescence to adulthood. Graduating seniors from Teens and all college-aged young adults are invited to attend the first-hour Sunday school class meeting in room 326 starting July 1. Breakfast and coffee will be served.

Come celebrate the start of this exciting new ministry with the Bridge Barbeque at the Batts' house (1104 Schindler Drive, Silver Spring) on May 31. Come visit our table or email us at bridge@forcey.org for more information.



forcey
BIBLE CHURCH

Loving God and People, Like Jesus

www.forcey.org