

Glorious Hope Slavná naděje

Vol. 44, N° 3, September 2018

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WELCOME
109th CZECHOSLOVAK BAPTIST CONVENTION

LIVING WATER

-JULY 5-8, 2018-



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Front and Back Cover: Convention pictures



Convention photos: Dusko Pilic

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Convention Mission Statement

The Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada exists 1) to assist in extending the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in lands of central and eastern Europe, particularly the Czech and Slovak Republics; 2) to support the work of Baptists and other evangelical churches in North America that minister to persons of Czech and Slovak descent, and 3) to provide a Christian context for worship, fellowship, teaching, and appreciation of heritage among those in the United States and Canada who bear interest in the nationalities we represent.

Misijní posláni konvence

Československá baptistická konvence Spojených států a Kanady byla ustanovena za účelem: 1) napomáhat v šíření evangelia našeho Pána Ježíše Krista v zemích střední a východní Evropy, zvláště v České a Slovenské republice; 2) podporovat práci baptistů a jiných evangelikálních církví v severní Americe, které slouží českým a slovenským potomkům; 3) předkládat formu bohoslužby, obecnství a učení, vážít si dědictví těch, ve Spojených státech a v Kanadě, kterým leží na srdci národy, které reprezentujeme.

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Editorial



Springs of Water

It is a hot summer; in many places, unusually so. We are witnessing climate change. With a shortage of precipitation, drought becomes a danger. This then affects life on our planet. If a drought lasts too long, groundwater disappears, and springs dry up. Without water, life is endangered. Water symbolizes life. Jesus uses water as a metaphor for the life of faith (John 4:13–14). For those who believe in God the creator, Jesus Christ has become their source of life.

Christians, by which is meant those who truly follow Christ's teachings and example, have specific callings ordained by God. Even when what should be done is unclear, it is important to persevere in a close relationship with God, not allowing anything to get in its way. Through faith in Jesus, we can approach God with confidence and assurance (Eph. 3:11–12). True Christianity means being faithful to Christ.

In the pages of our magazine we read the stories of Christians who remained faithful. We read not only about a beautiful, problem-free path, but one of sorrow, pain and suffering. *How is this possible?*, we ask. The answer is found in the letter of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians: *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"* (Eph. 6:12). The most important aspect of Christianity is not the work we do, but the relationship that we maintain, which influences our surroundings. This is why there is such an emphasis on having a close relationship to God: because Jesus Christ becomes a wellspring of life for everyone who sincerely "means it" with God.

Editor-in-Chief *Natasha Laurinc*
Translated by *Elizabeth Jane Fields*

Prameny vody

Je horké léto. Místy až neobvyklé. Vnímáme určité změny klimatu. Při nedostatku srážek hrozí nebezpečí sucha. To potom ovlivňuje celkově život na naší planetě. Trvá-li sucho příliš dlouho, mizí spodní vody, prameny vysychají. Bez vody je život ohrožený. Voda symbolizuje život. Pán Ježíš používá vodu jako přirovnání k životu víry. (Jan 4:13–14) Pro ty, kteří věří v Boha Stvořitele, se zdrojem života stal Ježíš Kristus.

Křesťané, tedy skuteční následovníci Kristova učení a Jeho příkladu, mají specifické poslání Bohem určené. I když nám často není jasné, co konkrétně máme dělat, důležité je setrvat v úzkém vztahu s Bohem a nedovolit, aby cokoliv tento vztah narušilo. Skrze víru v Ježíše Krista máme možnost přistupovat k Bohu směle a s důvěrou. (Efeským 3:11–12) Opravdové křesťanství znamená být věrný Kristu.

Na stránkách našeho časopisu se setkáváme s příběhy křesťanů, kteří věrní zůstali. Nečteme pouze o krásné a bezproblémové cestě, ale trápení, bolestech a utrpení. *Jak je to možné?*, ptáme se. Odpověď najdeme v dopise apoštola Pavla: *„Náš zápas totiž není proti krvi a tělu, ale proti vládám, mocnostem a světovládcům přítomné temnoty, proti duchovním silám zla v nebeských sférách.“* (Efeským 6:11–12) Nejdůležitějším aspektem křesťanství není práce, kterou děláme, ale vztah, který udržujeme, a vliv na okolí hodnotami, které tento vztah vytváří. Proto je kladen tak veliký důraz na úzký vztah k Bohu. Proto se Pán Ježíš Kristus stane pramenem živé vody každému, kdo to s Bohem myslí vážně.

Nataša Laurincová, šéfredaktorka

From the President



Dear Friends:
I have been watching my flowers grow this summer, particularly some cosmos I planted from seed. Some of them are blooming now with beautiful red or orange petals around a yellow centre. I am not the only one watching either. Insects are busy probing the centres for sweet nectar, and carrying pollen away with them to share with the next flower and initiate seed formation for the next generation.

This reminds me of Jesus' words:

"Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these." Luke 12:27

The beauty and splendor of nature point unerringly to a Creator of great power and wisdom. Through painstaking study, scientists are uncovering the incredible complexity of life. Limbs, petals, feathers and wings develop according to a timetable, following a detailed, programmed sequence.

With great interest I watched my plants grow from tiny tender seedlings. I got upset when a rabbit during the night-time hours nibbled one of them for his supper, and was pleased as the plant recovered and continued to develop and grow. I look each morning and evening to see how my plants are doing, checking for new buds and eagerly waiting for the next flower to form.

If I take such interest in mere flowers, how much more is God committed to caring for us. This was Jesus' point:

"If that is how God clothes the grass of the field... how much more will he clothe you..." Luke 12:28

What a great time we had at the Convention at Allegheny College in July. It was surely a time of refreshing. How good it was to be together and be encouraged in the good work the Lord has called us to. As the season changes and we move into the fall, let us remember that God has a timetable and a sequence for us as well, to flower, bear fruit, and play our part in the unfolding plan and beauty of the New Creation.

P.S. The midyear meeting has been set for Sat. Nov. 3 at Grace Baptist Church in Windsor. Please join us if you can.

Stan Mantle

From the Executive Secretary



The 109th Czechoslovak Baptist Convention was held July 5–8, 2018, at Allegheny College, in Meadville, Pennsylvania, and attended by over 80 delegates. The theme of the convention was “*Springs of Living Water*” (John 7:38). All sermons were exceptional, and our spiritual thirst was truly quenched. If you were not able to be with us, we strongly recommend viewing videos of full

services, or sermons only, through our YouTube Channel. Besides the main services, all bible studies, mission reports, and ladies’ and men’s fellowships have also been recorded and are available for viewing. Visit our web site www.czskbc.org and choose the YouTube link at the bottom of the page.

This was also an election year in the life of our convention. Most of the General Board members have been chosen to serve another four-year term; however, several new names have been added in the place of those that were promoted to Emeritus status or went to be with the Lord.

General Board Members 2018-2022

– in alphabetical order:

Robert Dvorak, Vlado Dudok, Heather Mantle, Ruby Mikulencak, Nico Mulder, Deb Mulder, Fred Opocensky, Dusko Pilic, Bernie Racinsky, Tim Racinsky, Larry Rucker, Donald Shoff, Judy Shoff, Andrea Lamos-Turner, Petar Vlastic.

Emeritus Vice-President: Joe Novak

Emeritus Executive Secretary: George Sommer

Emeritus General Board members:

Otilia Alac, Vlado Canji, Joe Jersak, Richard Mazanec, Marija Sommer

We are pleased to share with you that Ruby Mikulencak has accepted the leadership position of the Missions Committee. If you are in any way interested in missions and would like to receive newsletters from the Missions Committee or updates on our missionaries, please email us at info@czskbc.org and we will add your email to the exclusive Missions email list.

The Mid-Year Meeting of the General Board has been set for Saturday, November 3rd, at Grace Baptist Church, Windsor, Ontario. Please pray for the leadership of our convention, and for all decisions that will be made at this meeting and throughout the year.

Dates and location of the 110th convention were not confirmed prior to the publishing date of this issue. Please sign up for our quarterly newsletter for the latest updates on the new location and dates of the next convention. Sign-up is available on our convention web site www.czskbc.org (bottom of the front page).

The Christmas issue of *Glorious Hope* is scheduled to be mailed in early December. If you wish to contribute an article or send any information you would like us to publish, the article deadline is October 15th, 2018.

In His service

Darko Siracki

Executive Secretary

darkosiracki@czskbc.org



General Board Meeting



Location and the date of 110th convention in summer 2019 will be announced thru our convention newsletter.



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Reflections

of the 2018

Czechoslovak Baptist Convention

The annual Czechoslovak convention is over, and as I sit here and reminisce about the days spent there, it brings such warmth and blessing. Fellowship is a key to our Christian faith and the common bond of our heritage (spread thin in some cases), and it is always a joyful time.

It would be more appropriate but to hear the words made famous by our dear George Sommer years ago, who was unable to be with us this year — “*The ice cream is melting*”. As always, we enjoyed licking our ice cream cones, and visiting with friends both old and new.



Thursday service

The Men’s Fellowship and Ladies’ Missionary Rally met on Friday morning, and it is always a refreshing time of getting to know each other, and hear reports of the mission work abroad. Ruby Mikulencak, who is home after 30 years of service in Ghana, with SIM, shared with the ladies about her journey of service over the years. We were blessed.

In the afternoon we met in the beautiful, historic Ford Chapel with

And now, I will try to give you a recap of our time together held in the beautiful, historic Allegheny College, Meadville, PA. On Thursday, the General Board and committee meetings were held during the day, but officially our opening service was Thursday evening. Tim Racinsky led our worship service and we were blessed to have as our guest speaker Pastor Steven Mattock, from the Meadville Baptist Church. He was very warm and welcoming of our convention and we hope to hear from him again in the years to come. After the service, what would



“The ice cream is melting”

Dottie Kvasnica at the organ, singing our favorite old hymns and hearing Dottie play some special pieces, which brought back memories to all, I am sure.

Later we met at the athletic complex for another DELICIOUS Bar-B-Que, fellowship and time of worship led by the Convention youth, and then an inspirational sermon by Tim Racinsky. The children were entertained with activities out on the field, and it sounded like they were having a lot of fun.

On Saturday morning the youth left for their picnic in the state park. I am sure they had a great time together, as always. The adults met for Bible study – English led by Ruby, and Slovak by Jan Franka. After Bible study we met to hear reports from the missionaries that are supported by the convention. Jan Franka was introduced as a new missionary going to serve with Radio Lagos in Slovakia and also help with church planting in Serbia. Reports were read from the Vahalas and the Potmas, who are serving in the Czech Republic. The work continues to grow and reach out into the world around them.

Ruby M. was selected to serve as the chair of the Missions Committee. We know that she will put her heart and soul into this work, because she has been out there on the battlefield for Jesus Christ these thirtysome years.

The Saturday evening service was led by the Convention youth. We are so blessed to have this group, originally started by the Lamos Sisters some time ago. This year the group

ages, illustrated through the lives of Abraham and Isaac, who endured through difficult times. “God is in control.”

Sunday we met for Bible study, followed by the memorial service remembering those who have passed on to Glory during this past year. Among them were: L. Valek, Antonia Springle, Rubynell Patrick, Joseph Odell, Ros Hilgrove, Julia



Fabok, John Gazell, Vivian Hynek, Bill Mantle, Bill Bane and Vladimir Siracki.

Morning worship was led by the Convention youth and after the Communion service, Stan Mantle brought the closing message. We gathered for our Convention picture, the closing luncheon and many good-byes, as we packed up and

headed for home, with many thoughts of the fellowship and inspiration we enjoyed together in the common bond of Jesus Christ and our Slovak/Czech, etc. relationships.

I trust that you who read this will begin now to determine with the Lord's help and good planning that you will be at the convention in the coming year. I am aware that there are many who read Glorious Hope who do not attend the Convention, but even if next year will be your first time, we will welcome and enfold you into this bond of precious fellowship, and make you feel at home. Begin to stash away your coins and bills and, the Lord willing, we will see you next year. God bless you all.

P.S. We come from many parts of Canada (Ontario, Toronto, Windsor, etc.) and the U.S (Kansas, Ohio, Colorado, Texas, West Virginia, Virginia, Wisconsin, California, etc.). So plan to be with us next year!!



consisted of: Aaron Blata, Daniel Blata, Monika Blata, Kevin John, Monica Lamos, Andres Lamos Turner, and Filip Vlastic.

Nico Mulder brought the message for the evening, reminding us of God's faithfulness to His servants down through the

Ladies Missionary Rally

Ruby Mikulencak

women meeting
part 1



Growing up in Northern Wisconsin, I lived in a secluded rural farming area where I was sheltered and isolated from the outside world. My whole world revolved around my family, farm work and church, all within a radius of 15 square miles. I was shy, introverted, lacking in self-confidence and very attached to my family.

While most kids are delighted to get away from their home, family and daily chores, I was not. Even if it meant getting out of the daily chores, my attachment to my family and a lack of self-confidence was so great that on several occasions, when I did get a chance to leave home for a camp or visit with relatives in the city of Chicago, I was homesick. I cried myself to sleep at night, longing to be back home with my family.

This closeness to family made it difficult for me to be considered as a candidate as a world traveler. God, however, had an amazing plan for me that would take me out of my rural family comfort zone into the large world of the unknown.

I had thoughts of being a missionary from a very young age, and when it finally happened it was exciting but also very scary. Although you may not think so from what you see

today, growing up in rural Wisconsin on a dairy farm really did not prepare me for what I would experience as a missionary. Except in one important way and that is it did prepare me for hardships.

My parents taught me the ethic of hard work and persevering even though it was difficult. It also prepared me for some of the things I would need to do as a single missionary woman, things like knowing how to use a hammer, screwdriver and other tools, and knowing how to fix minor things, including in a car, like changing tires and oil.

In Ghana, mechanics are called fitters. One day as I was returning home, I saw that the local Catholic priest's car had broken down on the roadside, and I stopped to see if I could help. We had similar vehicles and I had the same problem with my vehicle and so was able to diagnose quite quickly what was wrong and get him going on his way again. Thereafter I was called the Father's fitter!

Before going out to Ethiopia, my first field of service, it is hard to imagine that a quiet, reserved and very shy young woman from Wisconsin was traveling thousands of miles to

a different culture. Before I left, I was given high praise and was heaped with love and support from friends, family and churches.

I was riding pretty high on a pedestal when I arrived in Ethiopia. But the strangest thing happened after I arrived. I found myself getting irritated, discouraged and very angry at times with my new life and situation. Things were not done quickly or efficiently like back at home. The food was different and people were talking in another language. I found out quickly that just because you move or because you change your address, it does not mean you change inside.

Even though I was considered a “spiritual person” for being a missionary, I certainly fell short of what God asked of me as his disciple. Without going into detail, because I will be sharing more about this in the English Bible studies, I just want to say that outward recognition and praise and even outward obedience by going out as a missionary does not change the inside of the heart.

Jeremiah 17:9 says the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked; who can know it? I the Lord search the heart and examine the mind, to reward each person according to their conduct, according to what their deeds deserve.

Landing in Ethiopia was like a dream. For many years I had thought and prepared for this day. Finally I was on African



soil, Ethiopian soil, to be exact! I had come to make a difference in the world. Little did I know that instead of changing the world, I was going to be changed!

After a few days in Addis Ababa, I started my Ethiopian life traveling to the southern part of the country via a long bus ride. But before arriving at my destination, I became very ill. The bus did not stop often and I had an embarrassing accident due to my illness.

When the bus finally stopped at the rest area, I quickly exited the bus and looked for the rest area. All I saw was an enclosed area with a hole in the ground called a latrine, which

looked very uninviting and unsanitary. With not feeling well, there was nothing to do but make the best of the situation.

After 12 grueling hours on a bus, blaring with loud music I did not understand and atrocious potholes, we finally arrived at the destination, Dilla, in southern Ethiopia. This was the village where I was to work three months before language study.

For one whole week I lay ill with fever and a rash, wondering all the time what in the world I had got myself into. I was so sick I hardly missed my family. It was a wonderful provision of the Lord that my neighbor, an elderly, single missionary, visited daily and cared for my needs.

As a missionary one of the things you deal with is sickness, as I experienced right off the bat in Ethiopia. Our SIM missionary doctor said that your body needs to develop immunity towards the different viruses and bacteria that you face in a new culture. We don't like to be sick, or at least I do not like to be sick. Those first few days in Dilla in southern Ethiopia were days of wondering what God was doing and why I was there.

Later on, in the first few years of my experience in northern Ghana, I had to deal with malaria. I hate malaria as it not only makes you very, very sick, it also makes you very depressed. I remember thinking, Lord just let me die—that would be far better than enduring these fevers, chills and shaking over and over again. One time I could not stop vomiting until one of my nurse colleagues gave me a shot.

So one of the huge adjustments as a missionary is to learn how to deal with sickness. You also have to realise that the medical care you receive is not the top of the line that you would receive if you remained in your own country. You might not think that is important, but we lost a missionary child because Ghana did not have the great medical care we have in the States.

As a missionary, you are either saying goodbye or hello. It never stops. I said goodbye to my mom and dad and sisters and they all cried and so did I.

But I learned to live in a new culture and made new friendships. Then when it came time for furlough, these friends cried and said please don't forget us and please come back. So you leave sad and arrive with great joy as family and friends welcome you with open arms. A few short months later you are saying goodbye to these loved ones who are sad and crying, and when you land in your adopted country, you are received with joy.

What a cycle of sadness and joy. It is an emotional roller coaster and it takes its toll on you, and so you compensate and hide your emotions. I learned not to cry when leaving but often on the plane I wept and wept as I said goodbye once again. I knew the separation was long and lonely at

times. This experience happens on both sides of the ocean.

Being on a team is very important as a missionary, because you share so many things with your team members that you cannot share with other people, even your family. In fact, one of the hardest things for me was to realise that my family could not fully understand what I was facing and going through because they have never been in a situation of living in a different culture.

I tried so hard to help them understand, but they just could not until they actually came for a visit and saw and experienced things as they really were. I got more letters and care packages after these visits than before their visit.

After 30 years of serving the Lord, God sent me a very special care package. It was in the form of my niece Sherri. I cannot tell you how wonderful it was to have your own flesh and blood living and serving with you. The last 7 years of my time in Ghana were spent living and working with Sherri. She was a breath of fresh air to me and helped me to see things again from a new missionary's perspective. There was something very special about having your own flesh and blood serving beside you.

But getting back to the theme of working on teams, the people in our teams were all part of important and meaningful relationships. But as in all relationships, things change. People come and go. Whenever a new team member joined the existing team, it took time for that person to feel comfortable and for those who were already on the team to adjust to a new person. There is this period of uncertainty and not being too sure how things would work out with the new people on the team.

When team members left, especially if they had had a hard time adjusting to living in a different culture, those members who remained behind experienced a sense of loss and also a sense of failure. Did we do enough to help that person to accept and adjust to their new environment? Or maybe, if it had been a difficult and discouraging time in ministry, thinking why can they go back to their home culture and I have to stay here.

I remember two very dear friends, who were with me in the beginning of the work in Ghana and were also single nurses. We had a very special bond but shortly after I became director of SIM Ghana, they both felt it was time to leave. It was hard to accept the fact that they were leaving. Had I done something to offend them? Could I have been more sensitive and more understanding?

God in his graciousness said, "Ruby, this is all right. It is even better for them because God was leading them on to something else. Just like you must remain and obey God, so they too must obey wherever God is leading them".

This word from the Lord was such a help to me to adjust to their leaving. I love how the Lord understands us and how He comes to us with just the right word of encouragement



and enlightenment to accept that He knows what is best.

I had no cross-cultural training when I left for Ethiopia in 1972. I did not have a clue how to communicate with the people I had come to serve. Working in a different culture, one must learn the language. But learning the language is not just learning to speak the words and constructing the sentences in the right way.

It means learning how your new culture communicates. Most West African cultures communicate indirectly, while most of us in the West speak very directly. Well, you say, what does that mean? In North America, facts, truth and concrete evidence are so very important, while in many other cultures saving face (not embarrassing yourself or another person) is more important than facts.

As an American, facts and truth are so much a part of me that I feel they should be discussed. But many Ghanaians are more concerned about the relationship than the facts. Indeed, it seems that discussing facts and truth is not as important as maintaining the relationship.

I hope you can see how these two views clash and often cause such misunderstanding. Ghanaians' words are spoken in a way that says the fact but in a hidden way. So often the words are not as important as what is behind the words. Perhaps this sounds confusing. Let me try and explain.

Planting a church in a new culture can really be exciting, because people have to look at their daily activities in light of God's Word. In the beginning, we talked a lot about how Kase-na Christians should marry and how they should be buried.

After discussions on performing weddings, a young couple in the church came and wanted to be married. The church leaders discussed together how they should marry this couple.



They looked at Scripture and they also looked at the way other churches were doing marriages. They made their plans for the upcoming wedding. One of those plans was to ask Pat and me if we would drive the bride to the church from the pastor's house. I was excited and thrilled that the elders wanted us to be involved, and arrangements were made for us to pick up the bride and take her to the church on the wedding day.

After the elders left, I began to think about many things that have happened concerning weddings. Weddings in other churches cost a lot of money, so much so that Christian couples often cannot afford to marry in the church and just begin to live together without the blessing of the church, mainly because of the great expense.

As I pondered these things, it seemed that if one used a vehicle for the first wedding to take the bride to the church, it would add even more expense to the wedding. It would not be a problem while the missionary was present, as the missionary would not charge for taking the bride to the church. But if the missionary's vehicle was not available, then the couple would have to hire a vehicle, thus adding more expense to the wedding.

I thought about this for several days, and the night before the wedding I went to the leading pastor's house to talk about this concern. I felt it might be setting a precedent in using a vehicle to transport the bride to the church.

I shared the concern with the pastor, who listened graciously, and when I asked if he felt using the missionary vehicle for the first wedding would cause problems for future weddings in the church, the pastor replied he did not think it would be a problem. I accepted his words as a fact and said that in the morning I would pick up the bride to take her to the church. We exchanged farewells and I went home feeling that at least my issue was addressed and the pastor did not seem to think it would be a problem.

The next morning I went to the pastor's house to collect the bride to go to the wedding. However, on arrival there was no bride and no pastor to take to the church. I began to think something must have happened to change the mind of the pastor and assumed they went on to the church another way.

I was a bit apprehensive as to why this had happened but continued to the wedding at the church. On arrival I was greeted by the "black faces" of all the church leaders who had come to ask me to use the vehicle.

A "black face" in this culture means you have offended people and they are very annoyed with you. They don't use words but rather gestures and facial expressions to show their displeasure. At this point I was very hurt and wondered what had happened. The wedding went on and there was a wonderful celebration for the newly wedded couple.

A few days later I was called before eight church leaders and told by each one that I had done wrong. I was stunned and devastated and started to weep. I did not understand why there was a conflict, but because the elders felt I had done wrong I asked for forgiveness for what had happened.

I did not totally understand until a few years later when I was in grad school studying about cross-cultural communication. There I learned about indirect and direct communication.

When I went to the pastor the night before the wedding, (actually I should have done it with all of those elders who had asked me), I came with a direct question out of concern for making it even more difficult for future couples to be married in the church because they would need to hire a vehicle.

The pastor took my words indirectly, and assumed that I did not want to use my vehicle for the wedding. Not wanting me to lose face, he said no there would be no precedent set. He was speaking indirectly to me to say you do not want to help us with the bride.

We both misread each other's words. It caused great confusion to the other elders and the pastor. It caused great confusion and hurt to me as well because of direct and indirect communications. This was not the only time I was misunderstood by my directness. Many many times I would put my foot in my mouth and have to apologize over and over again because of this direct speech. These two different ways of communicating caused much hurt on both sides because we did not really learn how to communicate well with each other.

I have been sharing some of the things one deals with as a missionary. They are issues that all missionaries face, but now I would like to share more with you from a time period directly from my journal. I hope it will help you see some of the nitty-gritty of life that Deb asked me to talk about.

Will continue in next *Glorious Hope* issue



The 109th Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada

Friday Service

Tim Racinsky

part 1

Living Water – He Satisfies My Thirst (John 4:13–14)



Whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” John 4:14

That’s great. Thank you very much, music team, and Philip, for that very interesting introduction. I came up with a lot of other facts that aren’t true about me as well, but I think you’re going to find out pretty quickly that I’m not here because I have any special gifts or skills. We are coming here tonight to open up this book, the Word of God, that points to Jesus Christ, who is the source of living water. So I thought that was just a great song to introduce us tonight to our discussion, our talk, in the gospel, and I’ll do my best to keep us a fairly brief time out – the wind’s a little cool and the mosquitoes are coming out. Let’s have some time in God’s Word together, though.

Tonight we are going to be in the Gospel of John, and this gospel is one of those rare books in the Bible where the author has told us the reason he wrote the book, explicitly. We read in John Chapter 20, verses 30–31, *Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book, but these are written—listen—so that you may believe that Jesus is the*

Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. So John wants his readers to know who Jesus is and so that by believing in him they would have eternal life through him.

And our passage this evening is from, specifically, John Chapter 4. It’s a familiar passage, I know, to many of us, about an encounter between Jesus and a Samaritan woman. As we look at it tonight, though, I would like us to remember why John is writing this and why he would include this specific account. So we’re just going to move through this story together. I’ll read a portion, I’ll make some comments about that, and we’ll let the story unfold for all of us together. Let me begin by reading the first nine verses of John Chapter 4.

Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John² (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples),³ he left Judea and departed again for Galilee.⁴ And he had to pass through Samaria.⁵ So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.⁶ Jacob’s well was there, so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.^[a]



Tim Racinsky

⁷ *A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."* ⁸ *(For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.)* ⁹ *The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)* Let me stop there.

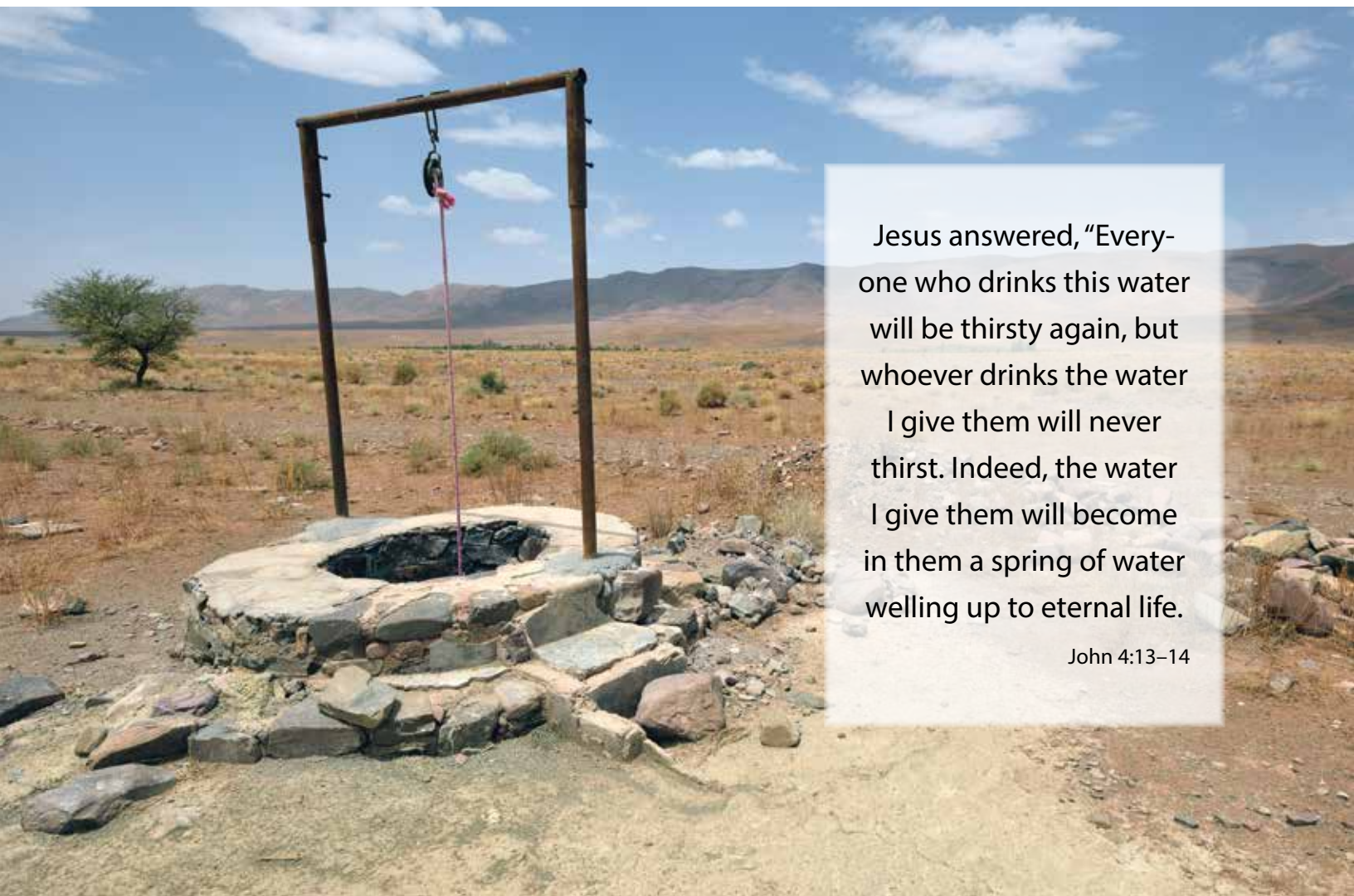
So the setting of our story begins with an unlikely encounter. Jesus and his disciples are moving from Judea in the south to Galilee in the north, and as they do that they're passing through the region that was referred to as Samaria. Now just as a refresher for all of us, the city of Samaria was the capital of the northern part of Israel after Judah and Benjamin and the northern ten tribes had split at the time of King Rehoboam, Solomon's son. Jeroboam became the king of the northern tribes and the Davidic line carried on in the southern tribes. Samaria was the capital of that northern part of Israel, and in 722 B.C. Assyria carried away the northern ten tribes of Israel into exile. This followed many years of idolatry and rebellion and disobedience towards God exercised by the people

of Israel. Now the Assyrians allowed some of the poorest people of Israel to remain in the land but they also imported people from the surrounding nations and the result was not only a mix of people ethnically but also and more importantly a mixed religion, and we can read about that account in 2 Kings Chapter 17.

So it's fast forward now to the time of Christ, and there's a lot of animosity between Jews and Samaritans, even as John puts in his parenthetical note there: the Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. The Jews considered the Samaritans to be these sort of half-breeds ethnically and also idolaters, and they certainly wouldn't have considered them worthy of God's love and attention. So it would kind of be like the Democrats and Republicans getting along, or not getting along, so to put it in the context of something that we can relate to, you know, complete animosity. So John tells us that it's mid-day, because that's what the sixth hour means. The sixth hour in Jewish time-keeping is about noon in the middle of the day, so high noon. And this is an important detail because of the next person who comes into the story that we just read: a Samaritan woman is coming to draw water from the well. Now, why would this be unusual? Well, the typical time to come to the well would be in the morning when it's still cool. The well is outside the city and in the heat of the day this woman is coming in solitude to the well. There is clearly something that brings her here at this time and we're going to see what that is as the story progresses. So Jesus and the woman are alone at the well and as we read, Jesus then asks the woman for a drink, which is met with a response that would probably have been pretty typical for that day, because first of all she's a Samaritan and secondly she's a woman, so here you have this Jewish man asking this woman for a drink of water. But it's a simple question: *Can I have a drink of water?* So that's our setting. Okay, we've set the stage, we know where Jesus is, who's coming in, a bit of the circumstances around him. Let's continue reading on in verse 10 and see how this dialogue progresses.

Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." ¹¹ *The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?"* ¹² *Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."* ¹³ *Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,"* ¹⁴ *but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again.^[b] The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."* Let me to stop there.

So that's our setting, and what follows, that we just read here, is this dialogue. It's going to make clear why John included this specific account in this gospel. We're going to



Jesus answered, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.

John 4:13–14

see that Jesus alone is the means to eternal life and we’re also going to see three things that act as barriers to that eternal life, and how Jesus deals with each of them. And so that first barrier that we just read about that keeps us from eternal life is our own ignorance. Look again at what Jesus said, “*If you knew the gift of God, and who it is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.*” Do you see that? Jesus says to the woman, essentially, first of all that she doesn’t understand the gift of God, and secondly that she doesn’t understand who Jesus is. And this is really where it all starts. Unless someone understands who Jesus is and what he is able to offer them, they will never have eternal life. Let me put it another way: as fallen people we are ignorant of our deepest need and how to satisfy it.

Paul says to the Corinthians that the god of this world has blinded the minds of unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. Satan is at work blinding the hearts of unbelievers so they don’t perceive the gospel, which is the good news, the gift that God gives, and also the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. So they don’t recognize Jesus for who he is as well.

This is the ultimate deception and it keeps literally billions of people from entering into eternal life.

Let’s look at that woman’s response. It shows that she doesn’t understand either of these things. First she confuses the water that Jesus offers with the water that’s in the well before her, so she doesn’t understand the gift of God. And second she asks rhetorically if Jesus really is greater than Jacob. So she doesn’t understand who Jesus is. Now Jacob was certainly an important figure in the Old Testament. We have Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. Jacob has his twelve sons, they become the twelve tribes of Israel, he’s an important figure for sure. So it’s not really, in a certain sense, an unrealistic misunderstanding on her part. Are you really greater than one of the patriarchs? And in fact really both misunderstandings are in some ways understandable. She doesn’t understand the idea of what God is bringing and comparing it to the water of the well. Let’s look at Jesus’ response. Jesus responds by elaborating on those two points again. First he responds by elaborating and contrasting the living water that he is offering with the water that is in the well. Let me read it again: *Everyone who drinks of this water—in the well—will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of*

the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. So there's a contrast between the water she may be thinking of and what he's offering. And secondly he says that he is the one who is the giver of this living water.

Let me read that again: *Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him*, Jesus said there. So we see these two threads running through this conversation. Let me just sort of summarize them again in short form. The first thread is this: Jesus says, if you knew the gift of God, you could have living water. The woman says, how are you going to get that water from the well? Jesus says, this ain't well water I'm talking about, this is eternal life. The second thread is about who Jesus is. *If you knew who was talking to you*, Jesus says. The woman responds *Are you greater than Jacob?* And Jesus responds that he is the giver of living water.

So this is our first barrier to eternal life: our own ignorance keeps us from the living water. Let's pick up the story, and the next verse, and see how this dialog progresses. In verse 15: *The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water". Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband';¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true."* The woman's interest is certainly piqued, even if she doesn't understand it all. So the conversation ends by the woman saying, well, that sounds great, give me some of this living water and I won't have to come here to this well anymore. But then Jesus asked her to

do something very strange. It's not the question that we would have expected at this point in the story. If we were evangelizing, it's probably not the question that we would ask. He asked her to *go, call your husband, and come here*. And why does Jesus ask her to do that? Well, this brings us to the second barrier that keeps us from eternal life, and it's our sin. We see a woman who has had five husbands and now lives with a man who is not her husband. You see, it isn't enough to simply have an intellectual understanding of who Jesus is and the free gift of eternal life. We also need to see that our sin needs to be dealt with. Now I think John wants us to see something specifically about this woman's sin. I don't think that it's so much that the sin is a great sin, that she's some sort of extreme sinner, although we could say that even in our day that would be seeming an extreme behavior. I think that we are meant to see that she's attempting to meet her great need of God through her sin. She clearly desires something to fulfill her and the things that she does to meet that need do not ultimately bring any lasting satisfaction. I think this can be truly said of all sin: it is our attempt to meet our own deepest need in our own way apart from what God provides to us. Yes, the penalty for our sin needs to be dealt with as well through Christ's work on the cross, but even our desire for sin as a means to self-satisfaction needs to be exchanged for true living water that comes from God. So Jesus exposes this part of this woman's life through the question that he asks her. That's our second barrier, our own sin.

☞ Will continue in next *Glorious Hope* issue



Friday Service

Jerry J. Skalsky

February 20, 1943 – May 24, 2017



Jerry was born in Prince George County, Virginia. He was the first son of Jerry A. and Mary Kotasek Skalsky. The family attended Oakland Czech-Slovak Baptist Church. With Czech as his first language, he learned enough English to start school. He had the opportunity to speak Czech daily until the death of his beloved grandmother, Josephine Prichystal Skalsky, in 1964.

One of his favorite memories was his first visit to the Czech-Slovak Baptist Convention at Alderson-Broadus College with his Uncle Joe and Aunt Mary Skalsky. Singing in the choir was a real joy. He and his wife continued attending for another 10 years.

Jerry's career in education and local government spanned 50 years. He had a double Master's in School Guidance and Criminal Counseling. At the time of his death, he was serving his 18th year on the Prince George County Board of Supervisors, as Vice-Chairman. He also was serving his 47th year as a charter member of the Prince George Volunteer Emergency Crew. He was a member of many local, state and national organizations.

His love for his Lord was reflected in his family, church and community involvement. He was a member of Monumental Baptist Church in Petersburg. If he saw a need or was called about a need, he was quick to respond. Proof of his servant's heart was reflected in the 700+ persons who came to his visitation and funeral.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Brenda Sober Skalsky; three daughters, Debra, Julie, and Heidi; a son, JJ; two grandsons; and two granddaughters.

Memorial Service at the 109th Annual Convention

Sunday July 8, 2018



- Milan Lev, July 2017, Mississauga, ON
- Antonia Springle, Oct 2017, Oakville, ON
- Ruby Nell Patrick, Nov 2017, Chattanooga, TN
- Jozef Hodul, Dec 2017, Windsor, ON
- Rose Kilbrai, Dec 2017, Swan River, Manitoba
- Julia Fabok, Harrow, ON
- John Gazo, Feb 2018, Windsor, ON
- Vivian Hynek, Feb 2018, Oakville, ON
- Bill Mantle, March 2018, Stouffville, ON
- Bill Bain, July 2018, Windsor, ON
- Vladimir Siracki, April 2018, Windsor, ON



Charles Spurgeon's Devotion



Day by day the king gave Jehoiachin a regular allowance as long as he lived. 2 Kings 25:30

Jehoiachin was not sent away from the king's palace with a supply of goods to last him for months, but was given his allotment "day by day." In this story he pictures for us the blessed position of all the Lord's people. A daily portion is really all we need.

We do not need tomorrow's supply, for that day has not yet dawned and its needs are still unborn. The thirst we may experience in the month of June does not need to be quenched in February, for we don't even feel it yet. As long as we have enough to meet our needs "day by day," as each day arrives, we will never be in need.

Each day's supply is all we can enjoy. We cannot eat or drink or wear more than each day's supply of food and clothing, not to mention the fact that having a surplus causes us the problem of finding a place to store it and having the anxiety of needing to protect it from a thief. One walking cane or

stick helps a hiker, but trying to carry a bundle of them is a burden. Having enough food is actually as good as a vast feast and in reality is all even the worst glutton can truly enjoy. This is all we should expect, and having a craving for more exposes our ungratefulness. When our Father does not give us more, we should be content with His daily allowance.

Jehoiachin's story is our story, for we too have a guaranteed supply given to us by our King. It is a perpetual and generous portion. Surely this is a great reason to be thankful.

Dear Christian reader, when it comes to the need for grace, you simply need a daily supply. Do you feel a lack of strength for this week? Then seek help "day by day" from above. What a sweet assurance it is to know you will be provided your daily portion! Through God's Word, ministry for Him, meditation, prayer, and waiting upon Him, your strength will be renewed. In Jesus, everything you will ever need has been "stored up for you" (Col. 1:5).

So enjoy your "regular allowance." Never go hungry while the daily bread of grace is on God's table of mercy.

Taken from "Look Unto Me"

The Devotions of Charles Spurgeon by Jim Reimann

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Grace Baptist Church 91st Anniversary



Nico Mulder — the guest speaker



Grace Baptist Church, Windsor, Ontario

- **Saturday, November 10th**
6:00PM—Potluck Dinner
7:30PM—Evening Service
- **Sunday, November 11th,**
9:45AM — Slavic Service. Sermon will be translated to Slovak.
11:00AM—Morning Service
- all services will be streamed live on Grace Baptist website:
www.gracebaptistwindsor.com

Healthy Perspectives for a Healthy Life and Healthy Relationships

Petar Vlastic



Imagine you are riding with a friend and get stopped at a red light. You spend the next two minutes looking around and taking it all in: people crossing the street, cars driving by, “Oh I’ve never seen THIS shop before!”, “Might have to try that restaurant”. For you those two minutes are a time of reflection and peace. For your friend, how-

ever, it’s two minutes of pure nightmare. All they see is that light keeping you from getting to your location faster; what they see are ugly cars and slow people crossing the street. For them, the entire experience is just such a hassle. Perspective is everything: both of you thrust into the same situation, and both of you chose to perceive your situation differently. Your choice of perspective influenced your attitude, and your attitude influenced your behavior. Which one of you had a better time waiting at the light?

I must admit it’s tough always to have a good perspective because, you see, life happens. Yes, good things happen all the time, but interspersed throughout those good times are

challenges on which we often seem to choose to focus. Well, and then there are people. We come across those that make us smile, and we all know those that make us want to pull out our hair. But perhaps the worst thing in all this is regardless of how much we think we are in control, we can’t do anything about our situation that already happened...it is in the past and it is uncontrollable. Here is the good news though: while we can’t control what happened to us (past), we have the power to control how we react to it now (present), so we can reap good consequences to our choices (future). We can choose our reactions, our actions, our words. And it all starts with us choosing a good perspective, which boils down to three areas: God, people, and life.

Develop a healthy perspective on God.

For our overall perspective to change, we must deal with our view on God first. Only if we submit our will to God will we be able to correctly start addressing our perspective on people and life. Therefore, we ought to choose to:

Submit to God’s sovereignty. If life is to make sense, we need to understand that God is all, knows all, is in control of all. Nothing in this world happens without his approval, and the Bible provides multiple experiences of this. To name a few:

Job's trials; the sale of Joseph into slavery; even Peter's temporary lapse of faith during his denial was known by Jesus, who had already prayed for him to come back and strengthen others. And just as with our Biblical favorites, God knows everything and is in control of everything that happens to us. We should find comfort in knowing the Creator is aware of us and cares for us deeply (1 Peter 5:7).

Submit to God's love. The second essential step is always to realize God loves us and just what that means. We know He loves us in that He sent His Son to die for us (John 3:16). It follows that if He sent His only son to take on our sins, we know for a fact He will not leave us to fight through this life alone. While we will certainly go through hardships, we know for a fact that He is a God that saves us from eternal punishment. He doesn't have in His plans to destroy our soul, but rather to give us hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11–13). Isn't it great to know that the Author of life loves us so much and does so much to show us His love?

Understand that our Christian life does not preclude us from enduring hardships. We sometimes seem to expect things to go easy because we follow Christ. That, of course, is not our typical experience, nor is that perspective fair toward non-believers, whom God loves just as much, so we get disappointed. What makes it worse at times is that we see non-believers thrive while we struggle daily just to survive. Except, our wealth is not in the fancy cars we park away from others so they don't get dinged or in big houses with rooms we don't visit; our wealth is in the peace we know through Jesus, in understanding that each day is a God-led process of sanctification which brings internal riches that no amount of money, cars, vacations, or homes can top. Our wealth is found in the perfect, eternal life with God. Once we understand the three tenets above, our response is to fully submit our life and will to Him. Only when we let God take over will our perspective start changing: we will feel His presence when we need to be lifted in times of hardship, we will build perseverance through our experience walking with God, we will gain His wisdom for the times of decisions, and nothing on this earth will shake us. We will be blessed no matter what happens because we will know God leads us and protects us. We will see each situation in life as an opportunity for God to shine through us and for us to get closer to Him.

Develop a healthy perspective on people.

Once we get right with God, we naturally can start working on our perspective on people, and this starts with us ... well ... getting over ourselves.

Get rid of pride. While I do not mean to undermine difficult situations we might have been put through by others, too often the true cause for our poor attitude toward one another is our pride. Our pride is what makes us lose our mind when a baby on a plane cries, the lady in front of us in the grocery

line is paying in quarters, or someone WE deemed unqualified gets promoted over us, and it is our pride that prevents us from seeing the person who hurt us as who they truly are: a human prone to sin who desperately needs God's love, grace, and mercy ... just like you and I do.

Focus on others. As part of our daily battle against "I" or "me", we can choose to understand that our purpose on earth is not to serve ourselves, it's to serve everyone else. Every time I thought of my own interests before anyone else's, that interaction did not end well. Interestingly enough, every time I switched my mind to see others as being more important than me, that relationship strengthened. It's weird, it's contrary to our society's view or our own understanding of relationships, but it works because it's how God designed relationships to work! The moment we start thinking about the needs of each other instead of our own is the moment love will start flowing and we will start making tremendous impacts on the lives of those around us. This will put our people perspective in order. Will it be perfect? Will it mean that everyone will always treat us right? No! But on the heels of the right perspective on God, the right perspective on people will help us understand them better, be more patient, be kinder, be more compassionate, and be more forgiving, which will speak quite loudly to others. We must choose to love all as God loves us.

Develop the right attitude toward life.

Having the right attitude toward God will get us aligned with the right perspective on God's purpose for our life. The right attitude toward people will get us in a better mindset to focus on others and live a selfless life. But the last piece in our equation is that we have to choose to focus our mind on holy, righteous, lovely, good things. Our society is full of negativity and, thanks to 24-hour news networks and social media, that negativity permeates our mind all day long, so it's no wonder it becomes easy to start letting it affect our attitude. Still, Paul reminds us we have a choice: *"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things"* (Philippians 4:8). While he is not telling us to avoid dealing with negative things in life, we are being called NOT to focus our whole being on those negative things, but instead to train our mind purposely to think on lovely, admirable, pure, right, noble, righteous things. If we do, our perspective on life will change. Life happens and we can't affect that. But what we can affect is our attitude. We have a choice each day to submit our will to God, to put others before us, and to intentionally focus our mind and heart on good things, a trifecta combination which will allow us to have an infectious effect on the life of others. If we choose this path, we will intrigue and inspire others, and God will be glorified!

Notes on the 109th Convention

Dottie Kvasnica

The sharing of Ruby Mikulencak at the Ladies' Missionary Rally on Friday morning impacted me because of her honesty about being a missionary.

Some of her memorable thoughts on mission work were:

- There are 200 new viruses in a new place!
- One has to learn to deal with sickness and poorer medical care.
- One says "hello" and "goodbye" a lot!
- It is a large world of uncertainty.
- Even though we change address, we remain the same inside.
- Most important is what WE learn about God.
- We must learn how others communicate—it can be easy for them to misunderstand us and we them.
- God knows what He has designed us for.
- Waiting—or unanswered prayer—develops our relationship with God.
- Nothing you do in the Lord's service is ever useless. (I Corinthians 15:58).
- An African saying is: Speed does not carry blessing. (important for me to recall)
- According to Matthew 28:19–20, we have to do what Jesus said.
- It is one thing to become a Christian, another to become a disciple.
- A disciple is learning by looking at Jesus—studying and learning.
- Spiritual discipline doesn't work without a desire to know Jesus.
- We tend to "buy out" or give in, rather than going. We must go, we must simply be obedient, and help others to learn to go on with Jesus.
- We can rely on God's promises...Isaiah 61 is full of them!

There are wonderful results: after 25 years in the ministry of SIM (Ruby's organization) in one country, there is a strong church there which is now sending out others. Now there are many missionaries from the former mission field. Whether across the ocean or in our own towns, we share many of the same blessings and concerns. But we must remember, we carry about in us the life of Christ—His living water—available to pour out on all those around us. Ruby emphasized this, and it became evident in all the messages at this Convention that we must realize this great truth and freely live it out.



Prayer Update

It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not leave you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed.

(Deuteronomy 31:8)

Our summer Family English Camp with the theme of "Learning" took place the first week of July and it was a huge blessing! Here is what some of the participants had to say:

"Thank you that we could participate in English Camp. We were there for the first time and we liked it a lot. We really appreciate how so many pleasant and friendly people came together there. The teachers were accommodating and willing to listen to our English... The program was so full and varied that we weren't able to take part in it all." Z. & J. K.

"Thank you so much for a wonderful English Camp and for all of the preparation and work that all of you on the organizational team had to carry out. Hats off to you! Once again, thank you, not just for the English, but also for the "spiritual nourishment", the great atmosphere, all the extra activities, and for the wonderful people. Wishing you a beautiful summer and all the best to you!" L.L.

We are thankful for the exceptional team of English teachers from North America and our willing Czech team from the Skalka church and the Ládví church. Please PRAY that each participant would desire to continue learning what it means to be a follower of Jesus and also that God would guide as we begin to prepare for next year's camp.

Vít, our new pastoral intern for South City Church, fell while rock climbing in July and broke both arms and legs, two lumbar vertebrae, and his cheekbone, and struck his head. He was in an induced coma for a week while they monitored swelling on the brain. A series of operations set his bones in place and now Vít is conscious and recovering well. The greatest concern was brain injury, but PRAISE the Lord that it seems like Vít is remembering everything except the accident itself. The road to recovery will still be long and painful. Please PRAY for Vít and his wife, Markéta, during his contin-

ued convalescence. PRAY also for the leaders of South City Church, who were counting on Vít's assistance in ministry starting in September.

Praise the Lord for a rewarding summer trip to Ontario and Minnesota. We were happy to have many opportunities to share in homes and churches about what God is doing in Prague as well as spend time with family members in both countries.

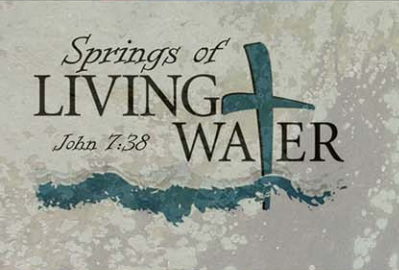
Looking back into history, this August is the fiftieth anniversary of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia on August 20-21, 1968, with 250,000 troops and 2,000 tanks. Their goal was to crush the "Prague Spring" movement of freedom, openness and reform which had begun earlier that same year. Petr and Olda, elders at the Ládví church, remember that day vividly, as the Moscow-enforced return to hard-line Communism hindered their own searches for the truth of the Bible. Praise God with us for the peace and freedom that Czechs have experienced since the Velvet



Revolution of 1989 and that the gospel can be preached in the Czech Republic today, despite the increasing influence of the Communist Party in Czech politics. Please pray for believers around the world where tyranny, persecution, and war continue to be the realities of their daily lives.

Mark, Gretchen, Luke, Noemi, Ben, Elise

*Mark + Gretchen
Luke Noemi Ben Elise*



The 109th Czechoslovak Baptist Convention of USA and Canada

July 5-8, 2018 Meadville PA

