



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER | March 18, 2021

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A NOTE FROM PASTOR DAVE

Reading through the Bible, I feel like I need a shower after reading Judges 17-20

I know many of you are reading through the Bible this year, and that's great. It's a great discipline. I read through the Bible every year that ends with an odd number. I am reading straight through the Old to New Testament this year. I'm a little behind but will catch up this weekend.

I am just leaving Judges and heading for the history of Israel's kings... Whew.

to stubbornness breaking down, them crying out to God for help, God taking pity on them and giving them a conquering leader (a judge), and a short period of peace. And repeat.

Some of the judges are dumber than a box of rocks. Take Samson, for instance. He must have been an amazing specimen of strength. I'm picturing Fabio, the model on the front of romance novels. And, no, I don't read them, and neither does my bride. But, seriously, how many times does your current girlfriend have to ask for the secret to your strength before you catch on...

But then Judges takes that horrible turn to the Levite who pushes his concubine out in the street to be abused all night. Have you ever tried making sense of that? I don't care how important hospitality is in the Middle East, this is not acceptable human behavior. This account makes the Corinthian guy who has his father's wife look good.

Let me say first that this text makes me more confident in the credibility of the Scriptures. Why, you ask? Well, the Scriptures don't hide or camouflage poor behavior, even in God's people. Second, in order to wrap your head around this book, you have to understand the theme. It begins in 2:10: "*After that whole generation had been gathered to their ancestors, **another generation grew up who knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel.***" Now this theme becomes the lead phrase in the accounts of most of the 12 judges: "***The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord.***"

Chapter 17 begins a new phrase. "***In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.***" Judges 17:6, 18:1,19:1, 21:26. This last section of the book isn't a chronological conclusion. It is more of a crescendo of accounts of just how evil people can be when they reject God and do what's right in their own eyes. It is a snapshot of the times.

In chapter 17, we see a man, Micah, who is morally bankrupt but wants God's blessing so he makes an idol and hires a rogue Levite. What? He makes an idol? How far do you have to read in the law to realize that God hates idols? In chapter 18, the whole tribe of Dan decides that they need idols and a fake Levite, too, so the whole tribe sins. That is followed by the worst story in the whole Bible (chapters 19-21).

In chapter 19, another (different) rogue Levite comes along. He isn't an obedient Levite because they are to be monogamous, and he has taken a concubine. She is unfaithful to him and then runs away. He tracks her down at

surrounded by scoundrels who want the fake Levite for their pleasure. The old farmer and the Levite decide to offer their virgin daughter and concubine to this crowd to be raped. In the morning, after being abused, she died on the doorstep.

If you are trying to figure out which law of hospitality would supersede the natural protection of a daughter or concubine, you are wasting your time. This is a picture of evil people who are so far from God that somehow in their twisted souls, this made sense. One of the reasons that God hated the Canaanites and wanted the Israelites to drive them out was because of their detestable sins, including sacrificing children and the devaluing of life.

Just because something is described in the Bible doesn't mean it is righteous behavior. If you are trying to make this rotten Levite's behavior acceptable, you are wasting time again. The book of Judges is a peek into the depths of evil in the hearts of people who do not acknowledge God nor work at knowing Him. What is truly amazing is that God took pity on this lot at all when they cried out to Him.

RVC I kids VOLUNTEERS

We need kids workers to return. In the last few weeks we have jumped from about fifteen kids per service to forty, and the number seems to go up every week. We know many of you are returning, and we are grateful for your return. However, we want to provide a good, safe environment for kids in our ministry, and that takes volunteers. We have had a number of college students volunteer in RVC I kids. Thank you. We really appreciate your hearts for ministry and commitment to our body. Now we need parents and other volunteers who are ready to return. We will keep you posted on our needs and on our progress.

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GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE: APRIL 2 @ 6:00 P.M.

We are planning a Good Friday Service this year on April 2 at 6:00 p.m. The service will consist of music, an account of the crucifixion, and an opportunity to respond to the cross by nailing your sins (symbolically) to the cross. The

care. With so many people returning, we have more kids than volunteers right now.

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EASTER SERVICES: APRIL 4 @ 9:00 A.M. AND 10:45 A.M.

On Easter morning, we will have two services at our current normal times. We will have the overflow available in case all seats are filled in the Worship Center. The first service is always our most attended so, if you want a seat, you might consider coming to second service.

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EASTER INVITATION TO BREAKFAST, APRIL 4

Easter Sunday morning, April 4, the Café will be open for breakfast from 7:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. It will be free. Sign up at the Café the next two Sundays, March 21 and 28. We'd love to make your morning easier. Watch for more details soon or inquire at the Café counter on Sunday.

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RVC | kids

If you're around children a lot, you learn they're thinking through big ideas and challenging questions.

“Why did God make Satan?”

“Why did God create people when He knew they would sin?”

“Who made God?”

intends to write a book for kids about atheism. I watched an interview with him where he said he was writing children's books because some "stupid" people teach their children that God made the world. You may not personally choose to purchase these books or expose your children to them. However, children are being exposed to these ideas, whether in their classrooms, through friends or from general curiosity.

How far should we go in protecting our children's spiritually?

Commit to deepening your own understanding. As questions come up, seek truth according to scripture--not what you think is true or what you think the Bible says. If you are not sure, seek the answers together.

Ask your kids the tough questions that maybe they have encountered. Be proactive in your child's spiritual growth. As you spend time together, engage in discussions that can lead your child to feeling comfortable asking open and honest questions about God, creation, and the Bible. Don't shy away from the hard ones. Admit when you don't know, but give encouragement that you can find the answer together.

Be a detective. I had a student say, "I hate coming to church". Of course, I could have overreacted and gave the reasoning for needing to be at church and lectured on the salvation found only in Jesus. But I spent a few extra minutes asking questions with a calm voice and open heart. Come to find out she doesn't like coming because, after church, she goes to her aunt's house, and her aunt likes to take her on a long, scary slide. So she really doesn't hate church, she just doesn't like what follows. Be a detective. You will be surprised at the underlying reason for the question or comment.

Apologetics seems like a big adult church word. It is. It is a matter of linguistics; a big word or big concept can be broken down to simple explanations. The more our kids are exposed to the world and the lies that come with it, the more we need to be prepared and able to prepare our kids to stand strong on God's truth. We have to be ready to answer those hard questions.

There are many resources to help you on your journey. If you are interested to learn more, feel free to contact me (tracy.fettner@rvcoshkosh.com).

Serving Students Training for RVC I kids ministry

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training for our serving students. If you have a student in 5 - 12 grade that would like to serve or is currently serving in RVC I kids, please RSVP by April 10th. We ask that all current serving students attend the training. Lunch will be provided. If you'd like to learn more about serving students, please contact Tracy.

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COMPASSION TEAM

The Compassion Team is organizing an outreach to support our local law enforcement officers and administrative staff through letters of encouragement. Everyone is invited and encouraged to participate. To be involved, pick up your *Thank You* cards at the Compassion Team table this Sunday (the 21st). Write down your name and the number of cards you'll be taking. Please return those cards, with your note of encouragement written inside, on Sunday, March 28. The Compassion Team will be dropping the cards off at the sheriff's office and city police station later that week.

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GIVING ENVELOPES

Just a quick reminder that if you need giving envelopes, you can reach Kathi Miller at 920-231-2265 to arrange getting them. If you are interested in giving online, you can do so by clicking [here](#) to get to the giving page on the RVC website.

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(Best viewed in landscape orientation on mobile devices)

Sunday, 3/21

Sunday Service (Worship Center)	9:00 a.m.
Sunday Service (Worship Center)	10:45 a.m.
High School Youth Group	6:00 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.

Tuesday, 3/23

Compassion Team	6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
Elder Meeting	6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, 3/24

Middle School Youth Group	6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
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Thursday, 3/25

Ladies Bible Study (Café)	9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
Ladies Bible Study	6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

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GIVING UPDATE:

YTD Giving 5/1/20 - 2/28/21

Actual: \$643,028.35

Budget: \$588,016

Weekly Giving 3/8 - 3/14/21

\$10,500.42

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