



MINISTRIES

The journey of life is full of ups and downs just like a roller coaster! It is a good thing that I like roller coasters. The crazy ride is very scary as well as

extremely exciting. The challenges bring great joys, and the struggles bring brokenness that allows His power to be



Madison will be moving to Washington, DC for a job and graduate school this summer!

exposed even more. Every event and experience is managed and guided by the Father's hand. Although life seems random to us, it is very much under His control just like the extreme details of a world class roller coaster. Every turn and loop is calculated according to His agenda and plan. Our experience may

feel out of control; it is actually under His precise oversight every moment. As a result of His plan and providence, we each have experiences that shape and mold our lives in different ways.

In May of 1979, I experienced an event that shaped my life: I heard clearly the Gospel message and responded to it. That Saturday evening, I surrendered my life to Jesus and began the process of making Him Lord of my life as I confessed Him as Savior. The days that followed that event would continue to shape my life. The Lord would bring significant people into my life to help guide me and disciple me. One of the most significant individuals in my early faith journey was my youth pastor, Steve Hammack. Steve and his wife Donna came to our small town First Baptist Church as a young couple with great passion for young people and an evangelistic heart like none I had ever seen. My parents were very involved in their lives, so, of course, I was close to them, if for no other reason than the hours I would spend around them with my parents. However, Steve had a profound impact on my early discipleship and understanding of the Bible.

Under Steve's leadership I grew in my understanding of the Gospel and how to share it. I also stepped into the pulpit for the first time under His leadership on a youth Sunday. Nervous was a very shallow term for how I felt before stepping into the pulpit that day! In his usual calm and calculated

manner, Steve met with me in his office before the service and shared some of the most important words with me ever. Steve told me that every time I step into the pulpit to preach, I need to humble myself behind the cross and allow the cross and Jesus to be the primary focus of everyone in the room. If I would rest in His cross and His power, the Holy Spirit would use me as a tool for His Kingdom each time I preached a message. I will never forget feeling the cross in front of me after praying with Steve. I realized it was the Lord who was going before me, and I was simply to follow Him. To this day, every occasion to stand before a crowd of people to share, my mind reflects to that moment in Steve's office on our knees asking God to give me words and speak through me as I stand behind the cross! I am thankful to Steve and Donna for their legacy in my life and in the lives of so many others who are still serving today with foundations strengthened by this awesome couple.

My journey through my teenage years was not easy, but it was good. I saw the Lord do many things then that have deep impact on the way I live life now. I learned to step out and be more evangelistic with my encounters and relationships. I learned the value of missions and growing the church through going to where the need is for Gospel ministry. I learned how to share the truth of His Word without fear. The people I have been blessed to learn from in my journey have had a huge impact on all that I do in this journey of faith.

As we all walk this journey of life, the Lord brings people across our path to either influence us or for us to impact their lives. Each opportunity can turn into a life long partnership that proves to be beneficial for many years. I challenge you to reflect on your journey and remember some of those people who have molded your life. Try to bring back those memories and lessons and thank God for the growth and maturity that came then as a result of their impact on your

life. Reach out to them, if you can, and share your gratitude and maybe update them on the fruit of their legacy. If you are the one who is molding a life right now, remember the significance of that and allow the Lord to use you to build Kingdom builders! It takes the body working together and all of us play a part in the plans and purposes of the Lord. Consider today how He will use you to Reach the World and Teach His Word!!



Jett is our history buff and enjoyed the DC trip tremendously.



Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. John 8:34

The Bible tells us we are *all* sinners. But, the good news is that our sins are forgiven through His death and resurrection. No matter what we have done, we find forgiveness from Him. When we think about this and what Christ did on the cross, we might have a hard time believing that we can really be forgiven for *everything* we have done or will do in our life. But, what happened then changes *everything* for us now.

Jesus forgives us...without question... for it *all*. And we know we can trust Him and His word, because He does what He says He will do. He takes something hopeless, and He makes it full of hope. The resurrection means that hope is not lost! All we have to do is call out to Him, believe in Him, confess our sin, and walk daily with Him. He desires to have this close relationship with us, just like we do with our own children!

Anything that stands between us and Jesus is a distraction from Him, and a distraction makes us stumble. Each of us have burdens or sins that we struggle with daily... What if these are the things that are holding us back from having this close intimate relationship with Jesus? We need to take it to the cross. This is where He shed His blood for our sins, and He left it all there.

"He himself bore our sins" in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by His wounds you have been healed." Peter 2:24

For many of us, taking it to the cross is easy. But, leaving it there is hard. Leaving it there requires *faith*. Whenever we have frustration, speak words of doubt, express fear or anxiety in any way, or start to question something, we need only to "take it to the cross." Maybe it is pain, sadness, sickness, pride, unforgiveness or prejudices. Perhaps it is bad language, gossip, pornography, lack of self-control, impatience, lust, envy, jealousy... and everything else that hurts us in any way - all of that needs to go to the cross.... It must *ALL* go to the cross.

Jesus is no longer carrying our sin, he suffered on the cross for it. It is finished and we are to hold on to it no longer! If we pick it back up, that shows distrust in him and will keep us from focusing on His face. But many of us do just that, we immediately pray about it, talk it over many times with Jesus.... We take our things to the cross. But, do we really *LEAVE* them there? Do we truly surrender *ALL* to Him?

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; He has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. Colossians 2:13-15

He forgave *ALL* of our sins. He canceled our debt. He took the condemnation away. He took away the power and authority of these sins in our lives. *He didn't just take them away either.* The Bible says that after He took them away, He made a spectacle of them and triumphed over them! They are powerless....They are *NOTHING*..... He eliminated them! When we take our sins and burdens to the cross, we are meeting Him there, asking Him to take these things from us and free us of their oppression in our lives. Jesus gladly takes the burdens upon Himself and sends us back on our way to keep working for Him in this world.

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. But you know that He appeared so that He might take away our sins. And in Him is no sin. No one who lives in Him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen Him or known Him. 1 John 3:4-6

If I fail to give Him each and every part of the things I bring to the Cross, I am neglecting to fully surrender all to Him. I am not trusting Him to carry the entire weight of these burdens. I am failing to *LEAVE* these items at the cross.

As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. Psalm 103:12

God has cast our sins and burdens as far as the east is from the west! They are *GONE*. Once they are completely left in Jesus' hands, these burdens and sins have absolutely no control over my life anymore. We must hold ourselves and each other accountable to "take it to the cross"...and to leave it there. Jesus is big enough to handle *any* and *all* of these burdens. It's not our job to carry these things around. Our job is to keep our eyes on Jesus' face and live out His purpose in our lives. It is also not our job to fear, doubt, get angry, judge, question or blame..What is our job? Our job is to share the Gospel and to love and serve others.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the Pioneer and Perfecter of faith. For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1-2**I keep my eyes always on the LORD. With Him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Psalm 16:8****Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58**

Karen Katchuk

2021 Mission Trips

Until further notice, all mission trips have been postponed or canceled. We desire to be on the mission field wholeheartedly. At the same time, we must take necessary precautions to keep our friends, family, and neighbors safe. We seek to honor Christ above all else during this pandemic no matter the cost. As soon as we are able to travel again, we will post all trips on the website and in the newsletter. We look forward to working with you all again soon!

Tornadoes ravaged parts of our home town at the end of March. We were able to be a part of the clean-up efforts for several close friends. What a joy to serve with other believers during this time! We are continuing to collect gift cards for families in need - Walmart, Target, grocery stores, gas stations, restaurants, etc. All cards are fully tax-deductible!

