

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;

I will counsel you and watch over you. . .



That's an interesting word . . . passion. I think it's not a word we use so much, anymore. It seems to me that with the general malaise that has set in to our culture, not so many people are passionate as they used to be. Not so excited, enthralled, not so much investing into one thing or one dimension of life with vigor and purpose. Call it malaise, or depression, or melancholy, people just don't seem all that excited about anything, anymore!

What's your passion? Do you feel passionate about something? Or someone?

Years ago, I would have said my passion was motor vehicles. Didn't matter what kind. Started out with a quest to be able to drive the family garden tractor (I was not allowed until age 14), then progressed to go-karts, mini-bikes, motorcycles, then cars. By the time I had graduated high school shortly after my 18th birthday, I had been through two go-karts, two mini-bikes, one motor scooter, three motorcycles, and eight cars, three of which were actually roadworthy!

In more recent years, I have become passionate about helping people to follow Christ. Preaching the gospel, teaching Sunday School, leading mission trips, writing newsletters, making home visits . . . that's become my purpose, and passion in life!

So, what's yours? And how do we know what our passion is? Here are some clues. Our passion may be related to:

- The things we think about the most, or dream about.
- The things we spend the most time on.
- The things we spend the most money on.
- The things we talk to others about, conversationally.

This Sunday, April 9, is going to be for us at Salem 'Passion Sunday.'

You're thinking . . . 'But, Pastor Art, I thought it was going to be Palm Sunday.'

Well, most churches, on the Sunday prior to Easter observe either Palm Sunday, or Passion Sunday. When we have a 'Good Friday' service, which lays bare the passion of Christ, we have Palm Sunday the weekend before.

When we do not have Good Friday services, we use the weekend before Easter to explore the passion of Christ. And that's what we are doing this year. No Good Friday service, we are having a Maundy Thursday observance. Read more on that in a separate article, below.

So, Passion Sunday. And what you need to know - this is a spoiler alert - Jesus passion is US. Not US as in the United States. US as in His children. And we are His children today. We will learn - and be reminded - this weekend - of the depth and breadth of Jesus love for US, His children, as He made His way to the cross.

So, come this Sunday, and learn about Jesus passion for YOU, His great love for you! Then, after what I pray will be a helpful sermon, you will never be able to again say 'nobody loves me, everybody hates me', because . . . Jesus loves you. He has proven it, with a love written in red.

Speaking of passion, what would really tickle me: A house full of people passionate about Jesus, this Sunday morning!

THE SALEM FUTURE UPDATE

So, we have had several meetings recently about our future at Salem, and these have been well attended. And, I must share with you, I have been very impressed with the tone and spiritual maturity of the conversations I have heard about the issue of our future, and whether it is best to relocate, or to bloom where we have historically been planted. I want to thank all the people of Salem for not trying to advocate for individual opinions and preferences, but rather, to seek the Lord and what He has for our future. Good job!



The Executive Board (comprised of Bob Diehl - Board Chair, Kathy Rohrer - Vice Chair, Jeff Knouse - Lay Leader, Bill Nye - Finance Chair, and myself as Senior Pastor) did prepare an offer letter to Orrstown Bank to explore the possibility of purchasing this bank property. Orrstown Bank has received the letter, and their accounting people are evaluating it.

Bob Diehl has also officially announced the start of a new capital campaign, stating that whether we relocate or stay planted right here, we have to raise much capital to proceed in either case. For example, for us to continue to be fruitful on Salem Hill in attracting new families, and making disciples, there is much work to do to stabilize, expand, repair, renovate and beautify our current campus.

Therefore, the campaign goal is \$ 1,000,000. One million dollars. Sounds like a lot, doesn't it? Well, factoring in that we have over 130 families participating at Salem, some very financially blessed, and that we have some time in which to raise these funds, it begins to look rather achievable.

Couple that with the fact that, as mature Christians, we understand that what we have been given to manage is in trust from God. We are stewards, not owners, of the resources that are presently in our hands (bank accounts, mutual funds, and stuffed under the mattress!)

I want to share with you a story. The film is old now, but perhaps you have seen it. Schindler's List. This film chronicled the heroic efforts of a German industrialist named Oskar Schindler. Through his unselfish activities, over a thousand Jews on the trains to the Auschwitz death camp were saved. Although the film has some very graphic and disturbing scenes, the message itself is profound.

After Schindler discovered what was happening at Auschwitz, he began a systematic effort to save as many Jews as he could. For money, he could buy Jews to work in his factory which was supposed to be part of the military machine of Germany. On the one hand, he was buying as many Jews as he could, and on the other hand he was deliberately sabotaging the ammunition produced in his factory. He entered the war as a wealthy industrialist; by the end of the war he was basically bankrupt.

When the Germans surrendered, Schindler met with his workers and declared that at midnight they were all free to go. The most emotional scene was when Schindler said good-bye to the financial manager of the plant, a Jew and his good and trusted friend. As he embraced his friend, Schindler sobbed and said, "I could have done more." He looked at his automobile, and asked, "Why did I save this? I could have bought 10 Jews with this." Taking another small possession he cried, "This would have saved another one. Why didn't I do more?"

One day Jesus is going to split the eastern sky and come for His own. It will not matter how much money we have in a mutual fund or how many bedrooms we have in our homes. The temporary satisfaction we have in vacations and nice cars will be gone. Only what we have done for the cause of Christ will matter.

At Salem, our legacy, our history, and our future - is making disciples. We are a church who has risen to the Great Commandment (to love) and the Great Commission (to make disciples of all nations).

In order to continue our fine history of the past, we need to step up into the future - and do the things that will produce a harvest of souls today and for the next generation. I sense we want our children, our children's children, and their friends, to be attracted to Salem - to be the ones who carry Salem forward into a living future.

We are stewards - caretakers - of God's assets. We cannot take anything with us when the Lord calls us home. So let's pray about how we can invest in the future mission of Salem Church. Perhaps that would be a much wiser investment than others we could make - an investment yielding treasure in heaven.

EASTER FLOWER SALE

We have the option of helping to decorate the church for Easter this year by purchasing Easter Flowers. This year, our purchases benefit our Royal Family Camp, the camp that provides a week of joy and the possibility of creating positive memories for young campers (age 6-12) who are related to the foster care system and have been abused and neglected.

The flowers will be delivered to the church and set up for Easter Sunday Services, and then you will be able to take them home at the end of the service you attend.

Available this year are tulips, hyacinths, daffodils, and Easter lilies. There are order forms in the church bulletins for this Sunday, or you may simply contact Angie Black for more information, at 369-5607. Thank you!





COMFORT KITCHEN AND MOVIE NIGHT!

Many of you will recall a few weeks back we had a beneficiary of our prison ministry, Comfort Kitchen, come and speak about how meaningful her time has been with our people on those Friday nights of a hot meal, good conversation, hugs, and even some board games.

This Friday evening, it's time once again for Comfort Kitchen, and you are welcome to come and minister to families of prisoners alongside Pam & Dave Osbaugh, and Sally Wadel, Clyde and Nancy Scott and Roby Backensto and other Salem regulars. That starts around 5 PM, in the Community Center.

Then, a movie! This will be shown in the Worship Center, and is a real life documentary entitled "A Justice That Heals." It reveals how God through His church, can heal people who have been through our justice system. The film will start at about 7 PM. Do come for the meal, or for the film or both. You will be blessed!

MAUNDY THURSDAY OBSERVANCE: ONE NIGHT, TWO SUPPERS!

Every year, we plan a service either for Maundy Thursday, or Good Friday. These can get rather repetitive, it seems as though there are only so many things you can do to observe these spiritual milestones in Jesus walk towards the cross.

However, this year, when we observe Maundy Thursday, we are doing something a little different. We are having one night, two suppers. First, we will have a covered dish supper (6:30 PM, Community Center). When we finish eating and clean up, we will return to our tables, and will share an intimate communion, family style, around the tables.

It seems to me that when Jesus gathered around His disciples for this final meal, it was a very intimate setting, very close fellowship. And, I imagine, they did eat a meal. It was more than ceremonial, more than a ritual observance of the Passover. So, we will gather around our tables, and we will all participate in serving one another by bringing most of the meal ourselves. You may bring a main course, or a hot or cold side dish, or a dessert. Just bring a dish, the church will provide the rest.

After our first supper, we will have our second supper; the 'last supper' remembrance, of sharing the loaf and cup. Rather than passing anodized aluminum trays down the rows of pews, we will stay around our tables, and enjoy communing more along the lines of how Jesus and His first group of disciples did. More intimate. More personal.

So, Maundy Thursday. You're invited. Bring a friend if you like. Ponder Jesus love for us, remember what He has done. He has won our souls, with the shedding of his own blood.



EASTER SERVICES

Easter services will be a little different this year - there will be a special program featuring a blend of traditional and contemporary worship songs, inspirational special music selections, and a re-telling of the events of Jesus life from the Last Supper through the Resurrection. This is a special time of year when people are more inclined to feel some pressure to attend a worship service somewhere, perhaps even here at Salem . . . if you make the invitation!

Please pull out and use the invitation cards that have been provided in the bulletin to perhaps open a door to someone who has not darkened a church door for some time! Perhaps that individual that comes to mind just now could become part of your 'treasure in heaven'!

The service schedule is as follows: 8:30 AM and 10:00 AM. There will be no Sunday School, and no refreshment period on Easter Sunday, April 16th. The services are timed to get you on the way home or to Aunt Betty's house for an Easter dinner in plenty of time. And the services are very nearly identical, so come to whichever one suits your schedule better. Happy Easter!

SALEM PRAYER CORNER . . . Please be in prayer for . . .

✠ Surgery and Hospital Stays:

- Mossie Sites, Rehab, broken hip
- Lorie Helman, hip replacement
- Gerald Rosenberry, Manor Care

✠ Adjusting to losses

- Preston Sellers, loss of nephew Anthony
- Family of Pastor Manny Diaz
- Stoltzfus family - loss of Phil

✠ Suffering from pain, discomfort, illness, treatment

- Lori Hogue, swelling behind optic nerve
- Essie Knouse, pneumonia
- Julianna Shubert, ongoing disorder

○ Frank Gaugler - blood transfusions

- Bob Paxton - heart and stomach trouble
- Doris Guyer, heart issues, CDIF, blood loss
- Curt Poper - recovery from foot surgery
- Brandon Kissinger, Chiari Malformation
- Sharon Spoonire, wound not healing
- Sharon Young - cancer care
- Ray Bricker, Parkinsons

✠ Travel Mercies

- Jonathan Diehl, Dominican Republic
- Roy College's grandchild Elizabeth

LAST WORDS: LEGACY

In the coming days and weekends we think a lot about Jesus - what He was going through as He bravely walked towards Jerusalem, and the cross.

He is not with us bodily today, but is very near and very present spiritually. And He has given us some gifts that keep on giving - the gift of forgiveness. The gift of salvation. The gift of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus has created a legacy - millions of souls now celebrating in heaven, that without His sacrifice, would never have been there.

As we wrestle with our future - individually - and our future as a church family - we should keep this word always before us: LEGACY. What will our legacy be? What is the thing that will be remembered about us, when we have been lifted up to heaven? What are the values that will continue to be passed on? What is the work that will continue - because of what we have done in this life? What will be our legacy?

May you be blessed with an enduring legacy, because you have prepared for it today!

Blessings to all, Pastor Art

