



# OAK GROVE CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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SPONSORED BY WOMEN'S MINISTRY

APRIL 2011

## PASTOR'S CORNER

Rev. A. L. Downing

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### Dig Another Well

C. Philip Green writes, what do we do, as Christians, when opposition comes? What do we do when the critics try to shut us down? What do we do when our detractors try to thwart or discredit what God wants to do through us?

Genesis 26:12 Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the LORD blessed him. (NIV) Now, the normal yield in a good year was 25 to 50-fold. Isaac reaped 100-fold – i.e., 100 times what he planted!

Genesis 26:13-15 The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy. He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines envied him. So all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped up, filling them with earth. Now remember, these are days of drought and famine (vs.1). Water is very scarce, so these wells are very important! The Philistines are trying to starve Isaac out of existence, because they are envious of his success.

Genesis 26:16 Then Abimelech said to Isaac, "Move away from us; you have become too powerful for us" (NIV) – i.e., too numerous. In a land with limited resources, there is not enough to sustain both Abimelech's people and Isaac's vast and growing household.

Genesis 26:17-18 So Isaac moved away from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar and settled there. Isaac reopened the wells that had been dug in the time of his father Abraham, which the Philistines had stopped up after Abraham died, and he gave them the same names his father had given them. (NIV)

Instead of fighting, Isaac simply moves on and reopens the wells his father had dug years before. You see, Isaac is trying to establish his presence in the land, claiming his father's wells by right of inheritance. That's why he gives them the same names. Then he goes on to dig another well. Genesis 26:19 Isaac's servants dug in the valley and discovered a well of fresh water there (NIV) -- Literally, a well of living water. This was an artesian well with running water – a very valuable and important find in the midst of drought.

Genesis 26:20 But the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen and said, "The water is ours!" So he named the well Esek (which means contention or dispute), because they disputed with him. (NIV)

Genesis 26:21 Then they dug another well, but they quarreled over that one also; so he named it Sitnah (which means enmity or opposition). –NIV Actually, the name, Satan, comes from this very word. For you see, he IS the adversary. He IS the hostile opposition to every believer. But not even Satan can stop God's people from accomplishing God's will in their own lives.

Genesis 26:22 He moved on from there and dug another well, and no one quarreled over it. He named it Rehoboth (which means room), saying, "Now the LORD has given us room and we will flourish in the land." (NIV)

Isaac doesn't fight back. He just moves on and digs another well until the Philistines finally give up and let him have his space.

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## Dig Another Well (cont )

The past few Sunday I have been preaching on Joseph and how he had to go to Egypt to accomplish God's plan for his life. He refused to allow the pit, being sold to the Ishmaelites by his brothers. The Ishmaelite sold him to Potiphar. Potiphar's wife lied on him and he was placed in the king's prison. While in prison he interprets two dreams (the baker and the cupbearer). After he interprets Pharaoh's dream he is placed as second in charge. He in essence was digging another well. When you're confronted with opposition don't argue or fight, move on and dig another well. Besides, the battle is not yours, it's the Lord. Remember, it's the enemy's job to distract you, to try to hinder or stop you.

The Lord is BLESSING us at Oak Grove, pouring out His spirit, healing and adding to the church, so what are we going to do when opposition comes...."keep moving and dig another well".

### **Congratulations:**

Let's applause our youth that made the honor roll for this semester.

Because of her outstanding academic achievement at Columbia High School, Kayla Haynes has been nominated for membership in The National Society of High School Scholars. She has also been invited to attend the Congressional Youth Leadership Council's National Young Leaders Conference in Washington DC this summer.



### Happy Birthday

- Sis. Maggie Ross 7<sup>th</sup>
- Sis. Gwen Brunson 10<sup>th</sup>
- Sis. Alisha Smith 10<sup>th</sup>
- Bro. Anthony Vann 10<sup>th</sup>
- Sis. Annette Kendrick 14<sup>th</sup>
- Bro. Jacob Pearson 16<sup>th</sup>
- Bro. Orlando Givens 18<sup>th</sup>
- Bro. Isaac Strong 20<sup>th</sup>
- Bro. Travis Gibbs 28<sup>th</sup>

Congratulations to those couples celebrating anniversaries this month of April.

### **UPCOMING EVENT**

April 7<sup>th</sup> church meeting 7:30pm



## Food for Thought (from email)

### An Obituary printed in the London Times - Interesting and sadly rather true..

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
- Why the early bird gets the worm;
- Life isn't always fair; and
- Maybe it was my fault.

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

Common Sense finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap, and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death, by his parents, Truth and Trust, by his wife, Discretion, by his daughter, Responsibility, and by his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 4 stepbrothers;  
I Know My Rights  
I Want It Now  
Someone Else Is To Blame  
I'm A Victim

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

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## To Our Youth: A thought to ponder...

There is a popular saying I want to bring to your attention today. "It is what it is", what does this saying mean? Does it mean that what you can see is all you can have? What you see may not be all there is to a situation or a person's character. Don't be too eager to settle for what you see or what others see for you. Seek what God has for you. It may not be visual yet, but keep seeking God and it will be revealed to you. Make plans, but also plan to allow God's plan to cancel out your plan.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." Matthew 6:33

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## EASTER (Did you know)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Easter** is the central feast in the Christian liturgical year. According to the Canonical gospels, Jesus rose from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion. Some Christians celebrate this resurrection on **Easter Day** or **Easter Sunday** (also **Resurrection Day** or **Resurrection Sunday**), two days after Good Friday and three days after Maundy Thursday. The chronology of his death and resurrection is variously interpreted to be between AD 26 and 36, traditionally 33.

Easter also refers to the season of the church year called Eastertide or the Easter Season. Traditionally the Easter Season lasted for the forty days from Easter Day until Ascension Day. The first week of the Easter Season is known as Easter Week or the Octave of Easter. The week from Palm Sunday to Easter is known as Holy Week. Easter also marks the end of Lent, a season of fasting, prayer, and penance.

Easter is a moveable feast, meaning it is not fixed in relation to the civil calendar. The First Council of Nicaea (325) established the date of Easter as the first Sunday after the full moon (the Paschal Full Moon) following the northern hemisphere's vernal equinox. Ecclesiastically, the equinox is reckoned to be on March 21 (even though the equinox occurs, astronomically speaking, on March 20 in most years), and the "Full Moon" is not necessarily the astronomically correct date. The date of Easter therefore varies between March 22 and April 25. Eastern Christianity bases its calculations on the Julian Calendar whose March 21 corresponds, during the 21st century, to the 3rd of April in the Gregorian Calendar, in which calendar their celebration of Easter therefore varies between April 4 and May 8.

Easter is linked to the Jewish Passover by much of its symbolism, as well as by its position in the calendar. In most European languages the feast called Easter in English is termed by the words for passover in those languages and in the older English versions of the Bible the term Easter was the term used to translate passover.

Secular customs, such as the Easter Bunny and Easter egg hunts, have become part of the holiday's modern celebrations and are often observed by Christians and non-Christians alike. There are also some Christian denominations who do not celebrate Easter.



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## Scripture of the Month

“As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”  
(Acts 1:10-11 NLT)

Jesus is coming again soon, be ye ready. Don't forget to encourage others with the hope of His return.



## SHOES IN CHURCH

I showered and shaved..... I adjusted my tie.  
I got there and sat..... In a pew just in time.  
Bowing my head in prayer.....As I closed my eyes.  
I saw the shoe of the man next to me..... Touching my own. I sighed.  
With plenty of room on either side.....I thought, 'Why must our soles touch?' It bothered me, his shoe touching mine... But it didn't bother him much.  
A prayer began: 'Our Father'.....I thought, 'This man with the shoes, has no pride.  
They're dusty, worn, and scratched.  
Even worse, there are holes on the side!'  
'Thank You for blessings,' the prayer went on.  
The shoe man said.....A quiet 'Amen.'  
I tried to focus on the prayer.....  
But my thoughts were on his shoes again.  
Aren't we supposed to look our best.  
When walking through that door?  
'Well, this certainly isn't it,' I thought, Glancing toward the floor. Then the prayer was ended.....And the songs of praise began.  
The shoe man was certainly loud..... Sounding proud as he sang. His voice lifted the rafters....His hands were raised high.  
The Lord could surely hear. The shoe man's voice from the sky.  
It was time for the offering.....And what I threw in was steep.  
I watched as the shoe man reached....Into his pockets so deep.  
I saw what was pulled out.....What the shoe man put in.  
Then I heard a soft 'clink,' As when silver hits tin.  
The sermon really bored me... To tears, and that's no lie.  
It was the same for the shoe man...For tears fell from his eyes.  
At the end of the service...As is the custom here.  
We must greet new visitors,  
And show them all good cheer.  
But I felt moved somehow.....And wanted to meet the shoe man.  
So after the closing prayer.....I reached over and shook his hand.  
He was old and his skin was dark.....

And his hair was truly a mess.  
But I thanked him for coming.....For being our guest.

He said, 'My names' Charlie.....I'm glad to meet you, my friend.'  
There were tears in his eyes.....But he had a large, wide grin.  
'Let me explain,' he said.....Wiping tears from his eyes, 'I've been coming here for months...And you're the first to say 'Hi.'  
'I know that my appearance.....'Is not like all the rest.  
'But I really do try.....'To always look my best.'  
'I always clean and polish my shoes..  
'Before my very long walk.  
'But by the time I get here....'They're dirty and dusty, like chalk.'  
My heart filled with pain.....And I swallowed to hide my tears.  
As he continued to apologize.....For daring to sit so near  
He said, 'When I get here.....I know I must look a sight.  
But I thought if I could touch you..  
Then maybe our souls might unite.'  
I was silent for a moment.....Knowing whatever was said would pale in comparison...  
I spoke from my heart, not my head.  
'Oh, you've touched me,' I said.....  
'And taught me, in part;  
That the best of any man.....  
'Is what is found in his heart.'  
The rest, I thought,.....  
This shoe man will never know.  
Like just how thankful I really am.....  
That his dirty old shoe touched my soul.

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