

by David Nelson
Pastor of Discipleship

The Answer Has Always Been Jesus

Many spend their life in religious confusion... letting mixed, contradictory ideas about God - Who He is, what He's like, and what He requires to color their thinking. There's so much out there - so much information, so many conflicting views, and more access to those ideas than ever in history.

How do you know what's right? How do you know who to believe?

The Bible is thick. It takes a lot of time to understand. It's much easier to read *Time* magazine, watch *Oprah*, or read Dan Brown's novel. After all, they're easy to take in and they're so clear and confident!

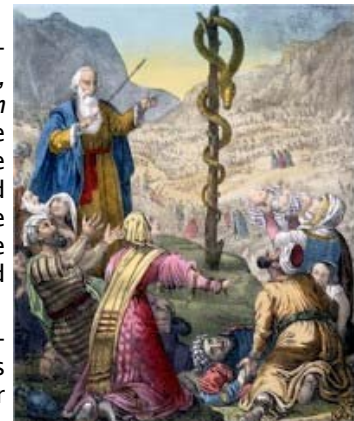
Sometimes, it's good to step back and look at the big picture. Hebrews chapter 11 explains how faith works. In v 1 it says, *'faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.'* and in verse 6, *'without faith it is impossible to please God.'*

The chapter is filled with examples of **faithful living** by Old Testament people. It says of Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, David and others, *'All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth... they were longing for a better country-- a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.'* (verses 13 & 16)

So, what was the **object** of their faith? In what or Whom was the faith for which these people were commended by God? The answer is the same for them as it is for us and it's found in Hebrews 12:2, *'Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.'* As Jesus is the object (the author and perfecter) of our faith, so He was the object of theirs.

What did these Old Testament people have to point them to Jesus? **Plenty!**

For example: In Genesis 3:15, God says to the serpent, *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel."* This is the first prophecy of Jesus dying on the cross. On the cross, Satan struck Jesus' heel... he thought he'd really done something spectacular when Jesus gave up His life. But, three days later, Jesus rose from the dead and in that, He showed His victory over sin and death and thus, He, Jesus, crushed Satan's head.



This scripture is depicted in the garden of Gethsemane in Mel Gibson's *Passion of Christ* movie. As Jesus prays, he is bitten on the heel by a snake after which He crushes the snake's head with His foot.

Other Old Testament things point to Jesus as well: In Numbers 21, people must look to a bronze snake Moses holds up on a pole to be saved from the bites of venomous snakes; In John 3:14-15, we're told, *'Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life.'*

Moses saved the people from slavery in Egypt; Jesus saves people from slavery to sin. God fed the wandering nation of Israel with manna [bread] from heaven; Jesus is the 'bread of life.'

God gave the thirsty people water from a rock; Jesus is both a Rock and 'the living water.'

Paul wrote, *'our forefathers ... were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.'* (1 Corinthians 10:1-4)

So, we see by these and many more, the **Answer** has *always* been Jesus. Do you know the **Answer**?

Upcoming Youth Events

Youth Group

Middle & High School

Sunday Night

Bible Study
6:00 - 7:30pm

Wednesday Night

Open Gym, Eat Out, etc.
6:30 - 8:00pm

Children's Ministry

Infant - 5th grade

Sunday Nights

Nursery

Infant - 2 yrs.
6:00 - 7:30pm

Preschool Age

3 yrs. - Kindergarten
6:00 - 7:30pm

Imagebearers

1st - 5th grade
6:00 - 7:30pm

Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, March 22nd
Ages 3 - 5th grade
10:30 - 11:30am
Bible Story & Refreshments

Kids ask tough questions...

At the Volleyball clinics, players were given an "Open Mike" opportunity to ask our pastors a question. Here's one answered by Pastor Dave.



Q. Why does Jesus give everyone a second chance?

Jesus gives everyone a 'second chance' because without it, no one would make it to heaven.

God sent Jesus to 'purchase men for God,' thus, His entire reason for becoming a man and coming to earth was to *give everyone a second chance* by living a perfect life, suffering & dying to pay the deserved wages OR sentence we owe to God for our crimes against Him.

It's really not a "second chance" ... Jesus provides the ONLY chance anyone has to be with God.

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

John 14:6

Volleyball News

Important Dates

Season Finale

Friday, March 13th

Division III Finale 7pm - 9pm

Saturday, March 14th

Division I Finale 9am - 11am

Division II Finale 2pm - 4pm

Finale Events

- Round-Robin Style Tournament
- Keynote Speaker
- Trophy Presentation
- Bible Verse Presentation



SOAR is thrilled to announce our Finale Keynote Speaker:

Chris Graham

Chris is a member of the Volleyball Committee and the coach of "peGOace" ... talk to Chris about that one!

At the Finale, look for information on:

- East Gaston Summer Volleyball Camp
- SOAR Summer Camp
Soccer, Basketball, Cheerleading
June 22nd - 26th
Ages 6 - 12



We're so glad you participated with us this year!

John 14:3

Jesus said, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."

What Now?

Dear Parents -

Throughout the season, your coach has led devotions and prayer time with the team, teaching the players about Jesus. At our Finale, everyone will be given an opportunity to respond to what they've heard. What would it mean for you should your child make a commitment to Christ? As parents, we all want the best for our child. We are here to help. Come and join us **Wednesday, March 18th**, from 6:30pm - 8:00pm and find out how you can promote healthy spiritual growth for your child.

Activities for the whole family!

No Reservations Required!

Contact the church office for more info.



SOAR Youth Soccer

☺ Registration is Sat., March 28th
10:30am - 12:00pm

☺ Ages 4.5 - 11

Division I Ages 4.5 - 6

Division II Ages 7 - 8

Division III Ages 9 - 11

☺ More info and Registration Forms available at the Church Office or visit us online at www.fpcstanley.org.

☺ Registration Fee is \$35

☺ Season runs through June 6th



Presenting Everyone Complete in Christ

Morning Service

8:30 Worship Service

9:45 Sunday School

11:00 Worship Service

Evening Service

6:00 Care Groups

Image Bearers

6:00 Youth Group

Call us at 704.263.4275

Visit us online at

www.fpcstanley.org

Team Rosters

Game Schedule