



THE SANCTUARY AT KINGDOM SQUARE

TSAKS National News

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WITH TSAKS NATION

In This Issue...

- 1 Honoring Grandparents
- 3 Back to School
- 4 Grandparent Shout-outs
- 7 Sanctuary Happenings
- 12 Member Accomplishments
- 14 Youth Corner—What's the 411?
- 16 Theological Reflections

Mission Statement... Our mission is to promote the spread of the Gospel, the winning of souls to Jesus Christ, the changing of lives, and establishing the presence of the Lord in the world through evangelizing, biblical teaching, economic development, and community outreach. With faith in Almighty God, we seek to be a church preparing born-again believers for the Kingdom of God.

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Honoring Our Grandparents: Pillars of Faith and Family

by Carlette Y. Jameson

Grandma, Nana, Granddaddy, PopPop, Papa, Grandpa, G-Mom, Granddad, Gee-Gee, all of these names are synonymous for those special elders in our lives, our Grandparents. As we observe Grandparents' Day on Sept. 7th, we pause to honor the special people who have shaped our lives not only with their love and wisdom but also with their steadfast faith. Grandparents are a blessing from God—they are the heartbeat of our families.

Grandparents' Day is a reminder of the powerful role these individuals play. In many families, they are the glue that holds everyone together. Scripture reminds us of the deep value of generational influence: *"One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts"* (Psalm 145:4). Grandparents do exactly that. Through their stories, their continuous prayers, and their presence, they pass down not just family traditions, but spiritual truths that build strong foundations in our lives.

Some of our fondest memories often include the warmth of a grandparent's embrace, the smell of their cooking, or the sound of their voice telling stories that begin with, "When I was your age..." They pass down more than recipes or life lessons—they give us a sense of identity, history, and belonging. In many families, grandparents are the spiritual anchors—praying faithfully, teaching by example, and nurturing hearts toward Christ. They are the ones who slip a Bible verse into a birthday card, or who hum hymns while cooking, or who gently remind us of what truly matters, or who give us advice even when we don't realize it.

But being a grandparent today isn't just about rocking chairs and knitting. Many grandparents are full-time caregivers, stepping in when families need them most. Others are tech-savvy supporters, texting encouragement, video chatting across continents, and cheering for their grandchildren from afar. Whether it's a rocking chair conversation, a handwritten note, or a warm embrace after church, their love reflects God's unconditional, patient, and enduring love for all of us.

On this Grandparents' Day, let us lift them up in prayer and thanksgiving. If your grandparents are still living, reach out to them—share a kind word, give them a warm hug, write a note, send them a card or call them. If they've passed on, remember them with gratitude, think of all the things they have taught you, and reflect on the spiritual legacy they've left behind.

To all the grandparents in our congregation: we thank God for you. You have spoiled us with cookies, gifts, stories, and unconditional love. Your faith, your love, and your quiet strength are a light to your families and a gift to our church community. You are the heartbeat of our families, and we celebrate you today and always. May the Lord bless you and keep you, and may your influence continue to ripple through the lives of your children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Happy Grandparents' Day

Continued on next page—

Honoring Our Grandparents

Deacon
Ronald and
Toree Griffin



Deacon
Bruce and
Pastor Pam
Stanley

Rev. Betty
Carter



Yvonne Gant

Minister Eric
Williams

(center)
Carolyn
Coleman



Mother
Dorothy
Ford with
grandson
Daquan
Cannon

(center)
Deacon
Benjamin
Dashiell with
his 3 grand-
children



Rosalyn
Harrington
and Cherish
Williams

(bottom)
Paul and
Nancy
Fisher with
their 3
grand-
children



Back To School Tips 2025

Back-to-School Prep: Tips for Parents & Kids

As summer winds down, the new school year is just around the corner—bringing fresh opportunities for learning, growth, and new friendships. With a little planning, the transition can feel smoother and more exciting. Here are some helpful tips to get everyone ready:

For Parents:

- Set a Routine Early — Start adjusting bedtimes and wake-up times at least one to two weeks before school begins. This helps your child get back into a healthy rhythm. Try turning off screens at least an hour before bedtime to help them relax and rest well, which has proven to promote good sleep habits.
- Organize School Supplies — Check the supply list ahead of time to make sure your child has everything they need for a confident start to the year.
- Plan Healthy Lunches — Prepare simple, nutritious meals and snacks in advance to make busy mornings less stressful.
- Stay Connected — Get to know your child's teachers, read school updates and emails, and mark important dates so you can support your child throughout the year.

For Kids:

- Pack Your Backpack the Night Before — Get everything ready to avoid feeling rushed or overwhelmed in the morning.
- Choose Your Outfit Early — Lay out your clothes the night before to save time and reduce trying to figure it out in the morning.
- Set Goals — Think about what you want to accomplish this year—making friends, trying new activities, or learning new things.
- Keep a Positive Attitude — Every school year is a chance to discover something new and have fun.

With a little preparation, back-to-school can feel less overwhelming and more like an exciting fresh start. Here's to a wonderful year ahead for your whole family!

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

— Jeremiah 29:11



Grandparent Shout-outs . . .

SHOUT-OUTS

I am shouting out my **Grandparents.**

I'm shouting out my grandparents because, when we are together we always have the best time, and when we are together I always learn something new. I'm very lucky to have them as my grandparents, and I love them so much!

Amira Williams

I am shouting out my **grandparents Francine and Lanell Barnes.**

Francine (Mama) and Lanell Barnes (Pop-Pop), I just wanted to take a moment to tell you both how much you mean to me. Your love, wisdom, and kindness have shaped so many parts of who I am today, and I'll always be grateful for the way you've both supported me with open hearts. You've both shown me what unconditional love looks like, and I carry that with me every day. I love you both more than words can say, and I hope I make you proud in all that I do.

Love, Daisy-Danae Barnes

I am shouting out my **Grandmother.**

I am shouting out **Yvonne Gant.** Even though she's not my maternal grandmother, she has always been there for me. She accepted me as her granddaughter and I love her so much for that. She is so funny and loving.

Love, Alannah Jameson

We are shouting out our **Grandparents.**

We are shouting out our grandparents **Paul and Nancy Fisher** of Roseboro, North Carolina. Our grandparents are fun to be with and we've been to their house for summer vacation every year since I was a little kid. My brother and I enjoy spending time with them and helping them out with things around the house.

Love, Mackenzie and Everol Davis

We are shouting out my **grandparents Dainna Jones and Joe Jones**

Love, Isaiah, Christian, Ava, Mariah, and Laila Dawkins

I am shouting out my **Grandmother.**

I am shouting out my **grandma Yvonne** for being the funniest person on Earth. I think when she makes a joke, it is too funny and it makes everyone laugh. That is why I am shouting out my grandma.

Love, Malayna Wilson

I am shouting out my **Grandad Ronald Adams and Grandmothers Janet Adams and Brenda Dotson**

Love, Adam Withers

Grandparent Shout Outs—continued

All About My **Grandparent, Benjamin Dashiell**

My granddad's name is **Benjamin Andre Dashiell**. He was born in 1959. A fun fact is that Dwight Eisenhower was president when he was born. When he was my age, the Public Broadcasting System began operation and the EPA was created. My grandfather loved playing with his friends and his Hot Wheels tracks when he was a kid. To him, the best invention of all time is the internet. He doesn't quite remember what he wanted to be when he was growing up, but he knew it was something great—just like he is now! My granddad went to Delaware State University, and his advice to me is: "Always be kind to people, and do something good for someone every day."

Zoezy, Granddaughter

All About My **Grandparent, Ronald Griffin**

My granddad's name is **Ronald Griffin**. Unfortunately, I did not get a chance to know my grandmother; she died before I was born. My grandfather was born in 1957. A fun fact is that Dwight Eisenhower was president when he was born. When my granddad was my age, the Vietnam War was going on. It lasted 20 years, from 1955 to 1975. A favorite memory from his childhood was bike riding through D.C. during the hot summer days with his friends. My grandpa said the computer was the best invention during his lifetime. He said that he always wanted to be a father—not just any father, but a great father. His favorite toy as a kid was Hot Wheels. My grandpa did not go to college, but the advice he has for kids today is, "Don't be in a hurry to grow up, enjoy your youth for as long as you can."

Davy Griffin, Granddaughter

All About My **Grandparent, Rosalyn Raquel Harrington**

My grandmother's name is **Rosalyn Raquel Harrington**. She was born in 1970. A fun fact is that Richard Nixon was president when she was born. When she was my age, there were many things going on in the world. Ronald Reagan was in his second term as president, there was a threat of nuclear war hanging over the world, and the AIDS virus had just been discovered.

My grandmother said that her favorite memories were holiday celebrations. Those celebrations gave her family a chance to remember how special each of them was. She also told me that the dirt roads in the deep South of Cheraw, South Carolina were like white sandy beaches. According to my grandma, cell towers have been the best invention in her lifetime, because without them, internet access, telehealth appointments, Zoom meetings, and the ability to scan to an email would never have been possible.

My grandmother wanted to be many things when she was growing up. She wanted to be a Professional Singer, a hair and makeup artist, a Fashion Trendsetter, and an Office Administrator. Her favorite toy as a child was the entire Barbie and Ken doll collection. She did not go to college, but she attended a trade school for Business and Office Management in Primms, Pennsylvania. The advice she has for us youth today is *to stay in school and always be willing to learn more through continued education—but more importantly, to study the Word of God.*

Cherish Denise Williams

All About My **Grandparent, Minister Eric Williams**

My grandfather's name is Eric L. Williams. He was born in 1965. A fun fact is that Lyndon B. Johnson was president when he was born. George Foreman became the Heavyweight Champion of the World when my grandfather was my age. He loved playing outside when he was young, and Hot Wheels were his favorite toy. My grandfather told me that he thinks the World Wide Web was the best invention ever. He wanted to be an architect when he grew up. He attended Mable Springs Seminary. The one piece of advice my grandfather has for us young people is: "Never give up on your dreams."

Toni Williams, Granddaughter

I am shouting out my **grandparents Lanell and Francine Barnes**

Love, Dyson Barnes

Grandparent Shout Outs —continued

All About My **Grandparent, Yvonne Antionette Howard Gant**

My grandma's name is Yvonne Antionette Howard Gant. She was born in 1953. When I asked her who was president when she was born, she laughed and said matter-of-factly, "I have no idea." One major thing she did remember was that the Jonestown Massacre was happening when she was my age. A childhood memory of hers that wasn't so memorable (in a good way) was the time she was supposed to be doing the dishes, and her mom fussed at her and her siblings for "trying her." Her mom made them do chores, but my grandma started walking down the hallway singing a song she made up called "Try Me." About three minutes later, her mom walked up behind her and said, "Oh, you want to be grown," and gave her a beating with a belt.

My grandma said that cell phones were the best invention in her lifetime. She loved playing double dutch when she was a kid and wanted to be a daycare provider when she grew up. She went to Federal City College in D.C., and her advice to me and other kids is to get a full education and always listen to your parents. She also told me to "invest early so you will be sitting pretty when you are my age."

Zuri Perry, Granddaughter

I am shouting out my **Grandmother.**

She is very loving and kind. She loves spreading the truth about God. I really love my grandma!

Love, Mason Washington

We are shouting out our **Grandparents, Grandma and Grandpa P** for all the love they show us all the time. They come to our house, let us take over their house when we come, come to our ballet performances, and do so many other great, loving, and caring things for us. We love you Grandma and Grandpa P!

Love, Brynleigh & Harper Peterson

I am shouting out my **grandmother**

I am shouting my **Grammy, Rev. Betty Carter**. She is very supportive and is always ready to answer any question that I may have. As she said herself, "If I don't know it then I will talk to someone who does know, and get you that answer. She is very kind and gentle and someone that I can trust in my walk with God. Thank you Grammy, for always being there for me, for supporting me even behind the scenes. I love you very dearly.

Love, Ariyana Dockery

All About My **Grandparent, Rev. Dorothy D. Ford**

My **grandmother, Dorothy D. Ford**, was born in 1947 during President Truman's time in office. When she was my age in 1979, the world was experiencing major events like the Iran hostage crisis and the Three Mile Island accident. One of my Nana's favorite childhood memories is being a Girl Scout, where she learned many life skills. She believes one of the greatest inventions is the computer and the internet, which help connect people across the globe. As a child, Nana loved games like double-dutch, kickball, and jacks. She later attended Prince George's Community College and Maple Springs Baptist Bible College and Seminary. When I asked her for advice for today's youth, she said: **Honor your parents, respect godly elders, pray sincerely, enjoy learning and growing, discover your spiritual gifts, and let the Holy Spirit teach you that self-discipline is a lifelong friend.**

Words of wisdom from a life well lived in faith.

Daquan A. Cannon, Grandson

SANCTUARY HAPPENINGS . . .

A Heart to Serve: Inside the Usher Ministry The Usher Ministry- A Candid Talk with Gail Battle and Yvonne Gant

by Carlette Jameson

“First of all, it’s not my ministry. It’s the ministry of the Lord of this house. It’s not me that’s calling you. Have you been called by the Lord to serve in this ministry? That’s the first requirement.”

— Gail Battle, President of the Usher Ministry

I had the wonderful opportunity to sit down with **Sister Gail Battle** and **Sister Yvonne Gant**, the President and Vice President of the Usher Ministry. Both women embody what it means to serve with a joyful and willing heart. They have been active in ministry since their teenage years, and their passion for God’s house is unwavering.

“If you don’t want to serve, then you’re in the wrong ministry. Ushering is not for you,” Gail stated plainly, emphasizing the heart posture needed for this sacred role.

Gail shared a powerful insight about the origin of the usher ministry. She explained that the very first form of ushering can be traced back to the Wilderness Tabernacle, where only the tribe of Levi was permitted to go into the temple. The Levites were the first and original ushers because of their specific duties to the Temple and the tabernacle—entrusted with the care, order, and sanctity of the temple. While the term “usher” isn’t used explicitly in the Bible, their function and spirit of service are undeniably biblical.

“I just love God’s house,” Gail said with conviction. She has been an usher since the age of 12 - meaning that she has been serving in some capacity since she was little. Yvonne echoed that same devotion, saying, “I love being there if someone needs anything. Serving from my heart means making others feel welcome in our house.”

When asked if there was anything they would change or improve within the ministry, both women smiled. While they wouldn’t change anything specific, Gail did mention the value of formal training through the International Church Ushers Association (ICUA). “There’s a certain spirit and standard of service that comes with that training,” she explained. “The method may change, but the message and purpose remain the same.”

Yvonne and Gail agreed that a strong relationship with God is essential for anyone serving in ministry. For Yvonne, ushering is not just something she does—it’s something she’s *called* to. Though she’s served in many capacities over the years, the usher ministry has remained her steady place of joy, purpose and passion.



**Sister Yvonne Gant and
Sister Gail Battle**

Continued on next page—

**The Usher
Ministry (Inset:
Sister Yvonne
Gant and Sister
Gail Battle)**



Gail, ever the diplomatic leader, spoke about the commitment involved in serving. “God doesn’t get burned out, so how do you get burned out?” she asked rhetorically. “We depend on each other. Ushering is a team ministry. I’m relying on you to be where you say you’re going to be—when you say you’re going to be there.”

They both agreed that one of the most memorable moments for them was when we used to celebrate National Ushers Day. They loved when they would march around the church, “even when we would march to the offering plate, that was something.” Unfortunately, they don’t get to march as often as they would like to, but when they do, it certainly does lift everyone’s spirits and gets people in a jubilant mood. One specific

memory that Yvonne recalled was when she used to dress up a manikin for Ministry Day. She dressed the manikin up so specifically that Pastor Maclin thought it was Gail.

At the heart of it all, the goal of the Usher Ministry remains the same: to maintain order, create a welcoming atmosphere and ensure every person who walks through the doors feels the love of Christ.

The Usher Ministry is more than just standing at the door, or passing out envelopes, or helping members/visitors find a comfortable seat—it’s a divine calling to serve with grace, dignity, and love. Gail and Yvonne’s leadership is a beautiful reminder that ushering is a sacred duty, rooted in Scripture and fueled by a passion for God’s people. Their example challenges

us all to consider not just where we serve, but *how* we serve. May we all approach any ministry with the same heart: one that seeks to welcome others into God’s presence with joy, passion, reverence, and unwavering love.

If you feel called to serve and have a serving heart for hospitality, the Usher Ministry may be the perfect place for you. Sister Gail Battle and Sister Yvonne Gant would be delighted to welcome you to the team. Whether you’re new to the Sanctuary ministry or looking for a fresh way to serve, they invite you to reach out and learn more. There’s always room for willing hearts to serve in God’s house.

We Serve Weekend: Love in Action

by Carlette Jameson

This Summer, The Missions Ministry and the Kingdom Agents joined forces for *We Serve Weekend*, a special time of outreach and compassion. With hearts full of purpose, volunteers served in impactful ways—filling Summer Fun and Faith goodie bags for children, preparing meal bags for *Kids Against Hunger*, assembling blessing bags for the *Lott Carey Convention*, and hosting a men's clothing drive. It was a beautiful expression of faith in action as our church family came together to be the hands and feet of Jesus in our community and beyond.

We Serve 2025

Getting ready to prepare the Rice Meal packs. The goal was 10,000 packs. We packed 10,836 meal bags.

Pastor Maclin helps by adding the protein mix to the bags.

Packing the meals.



Continued on next page—

Packing the
meals.



(Inset heart:
Sister Tamara
Dukes, Minister
Charlene
Anderson,
Minister Lydell
Hagans)



Adding more
rice...



Love in Action

TO AG IN ACTION

Sanctuary Happenings Continued—

We Serve 2025

Packing goodie bags for the children



Clothing for the men.



Packing goodie bags for the children



Writing an encouraging note to one of the recipients of the goodie bag

We Serve 2025
M 6 26 L A G 30 S 2

MEMBER ACCOMPLISHMENTS . . .

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE GRADUATES OF THE CLASS OF 2025

In June, we joyfully celebrated a remarkable group of people—the graduating Class of 2025! We are so proud of all they have accomplished and how they have grown—not just in knowledge, but in faith, character, and purpose. As a church family, we honor their hard work, perseverance, and trust in God through every challenge and triumph they have faced.

This is not just the end of a chapter—it’s the beginning of a new journey. The journey hasn’t always been easy, but as James 1:12 reminds us, *“Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”* Wherever God leads you next, remember: you are never alone. He goes before you, walks beside you, and lives within you. Stay rooted in Him, shine your light boldly, and never stop pursuing the purpose He has placed in your heart.

Congratulations again, GRADUATES! Your Church Family celebrates you, we love you, and we can’t wait to see all that God will do through you!

OUR GRADUATES OF 2025

Pre-K Graduates:

Riyah Khaalid
Austin Braun
Madison Davis

Elementary School Graduates:

Everol Davis

Middle School Graduates:

Cyne’ Whitlow
Cameron Montague

High School Graduates:

Destiny Van Buren
(attending Old Dominion University in the fall)

Modesty Golden
(attending Norfolk State University in the fall)

Jerrin Poyner
(attending Morgan State University in the fall)

Dest’N Montague
(attending Morehouse College in the fall)

College Graduates:

Alexis White
(graduating from Louisiana State University-LSU)

Terrence Rainford
(graduating from Bowie State University)

Arrie Solomon
(graduating from Oberlin College)

Rev. Rashaad A. Khaalid
(graduating from Samuel Dewitt Proctor School - MDiv)

Rev. Dr. Adrene Hill
(graduating from Texas Woman’s University-PhD)

congratulations!
congratulations!

Continued on next page—



**“AS IRON SHARPENS IRON, SO ONE MAN SHARPENS
ANOTHER.” PROVERBS 27:17
ABOUT THE MEN’S MINISTRY CORRECTION**

by Carlette Jameson

Minister Darryl Butler joined the Men’s Ministry in 2019, not 1998.

WHAT'S THE 411? KINGDOM AGENTS



Alannah Jameson is one of TSAKS newest Kingdom Agents! She has only been a part of the Sanctuary Family for about a year and a half. When asked what she loved about being a part of the Kingdom Agents, she said, “We sometimes get to do fun activities and games. I also love how me and my fellow youth get to learn about God and His son Jesus Christ.”

Alannah is a rising 8th grader at Forcey Christian School in Silver Spring, MD. She is 13 years old. She thoroughly enjoys school, and her friends. But she has made it clear that she is not a fan of a lot of homework. Her favorite subject is Math. Alannah is a soft-spoken student but extremely compassionate towards others. Alannah lets her light shine at school by encouraging her classmates who are struggling in school or in life

in general. She always tries to make others feel better about what they may be going through.

When she is not in school, Alannah wants to spend time with her friends or have sleepovers. That always means a lot to her since she lives in a different county than her friends.

Alannah loves singing, dancing, reading (it just depends on the book or genre) and talking to her friends. She enjoys being active, but also loves to sleep. Spending time with her family is also something she loves to do. Alannah enjoys doing her fingernails as well.

When Alannah was asked what her aspirations were, she said, “An aspiration I have is to keep having awesome grades until I graduate from college. I also want to get better at singing. I also have to keep training to be a star player on my basketball team next season.”

During her quiet time, she said she loves listening to worship music and talking to God. She said that **“Prayer is important to me because I just want God to help with everything that is going on in my family’s life, my friend’s life, and in the world.”**

Alannah said that her Grandpa Carl is someone she would want to interview and meet. “He passed away a year before I was born.” When asked why, she said, “I would interview my grandfather because he seemed like a funny and kind man. I would ask him about his past and what it was like doing what he did. He was an actor and a cop. He also worked for US Customs and the FBI.” She also said she would ask him “Why he changed his last name in the military.”

Alannah Jameson is a bright, compassionate, and motivated young lady who leads by example—both in her faith and in her everyday life. With her kind heart, creative spirit, and dedication to helping others, she has a bright future ahead.

Fun Facts about Alannah...

- If she could go anywhere in the world, she would go to Paris for about 2 months because the city seems so beautiful and bright. She also wants to see the famous landmarks there- the Eiffel Tower and The Louvre.
- Having another day to make a difference and her family makes her happy!



Makenzie Davis is one of TSAKS' rare gems from the Kingdom Agents! Makenzie has been a part of the Sanctuary Family since the spring of 2023. When asked what she loves about being a part of the Kingdom Agents, she said, **"I enjoy the takeovers because it gives us an opportunity to show the main congregation what we do."**

Makenzie is a rising 8th grader at Theodore G. Davis Middle School in Waldorf, MD. She thoroughly enjoys school and spending time with

her friends. She likes chatting with them during during breaks and attending school dances. However, she admits she doesn't like how long her classes are.

When she's not in school, Makenzie loves hanging out with her friends and playing video games. She also enjoys helping others through volunteering. She has served at a soup kitchen and visited a senior citizen home, where she helped plant flowers with her Girl Scout troop.

Makenzie loves to draw and hopes to improve her skills. She also enjoys reading fantasy novels. A dedicated student, Makenzie is on the honor roll and aims to make the **Principal's Honor Roll** next school year.

Makenzie says prayer is important to her because **"It's a good way for me to communicate with God."** She strengthens her relationship with God by talking to Him regularly and using His teachings to guide her decisions. **"I also like to talk to Him about my problems,"** she says.

If Makenzie could interview anyone, it would be Queen Elizabeth. "She was one of the world's most well-known queens, and I'm sure she saw many things during her lifetime." When asked what one question she would ask her, Makenzie replied, **"I would ask her what she would have done had she not become Queen of England."**

Makenzie Davis is a shining light in the Kingdom—full of faith, kindness, and creativity. Whether she's serving others, chatting with God, or leveling up in her favorite video game, Makenzie shows that you can love Jesus and still have fun! She's growing into a strong young woman of God, and we can't wait to see how He continues to use her to impact the world around her.

Fun Facts about Makenzie...

- If she could go anywhere in the world, she would go to Dubai for 12 months because it is very clean and luxurious.
- God makes her happy!

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS . . .

EIGHT CHARACTERISTICS OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

by Minister Robert Hines
TSAKS Minister to the Seniors

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Love is patient, love is kind, love is not jealous, it does not boast, it does not become conceited, it does not behave dishonorably, it is not selfish, it does not become angry, it does not keep a record of wrongs, it does not rejoice at unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

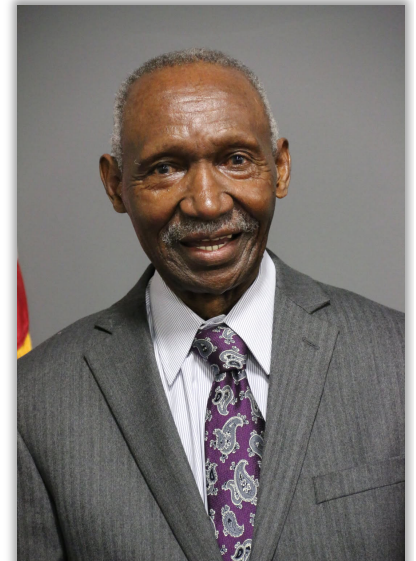
My brothers and my sisters, Paul begins by declaring that we may possess any spiritual gift, but if it is unaccompanied by love it is useless.

First. Love is patient. The Greek word (makrothumein) used in the New Testament always describes patience with people and not patience with circumstances. It describes people who are slow to anger, and it is used of God himself in his relationship with men and women. In our dealings with others, however difficult and however unkind and hurting they are, we must exercise the same patience as God exercises with us. Such patience is not the sign of weakness but the sign of strength; it is not defeatism but rather the only way to victory.

Second. Love is kind. The third-century biblical scholar Origen had it that this means that love is ‘sweet to all’. Writing about a century later, Jerome spoke of what he called ‘the benignity’ of love (The quality or condition of being kind and gentle). So much Christianity is good but unkind. Quite apart from that persecuting spirit, there is in so many good people an attitude of criticism. So many good church people would have sided with the rulers and not with Jesus if they had to deal with the woman taken in adultery.

Third. Love knows no envy. It has been said that there are really only two classes of people in this world, ‘those who are millionaires and those who would like to be’. In the same way, there are two kinds of envy. The one covets the possessions of other people; and such envy is very difficult to avoid, because it is a very human failing. The second is worse—it resents the very fact that others have what it does not. It does not so much desire things for itself as it wishes that others did not have them. Meanness of soul can sink no further than that.

Fourth. Love is no braggart. Love is not boastful. There is a self-effacing quality in love. True love will always be far more impressed



Continued on next page—

Characteristics of Christian Love... continued from previous page—

with its own unworthiness than its own merit. Love is kept humble by the consciousness that it can never offer its loved one a gift which is good enough.

Fifth. Love does not behave gracelessly. There is a kind of Christianity which takes a delight in being blunt and almost brutal. There is strength in it, but there is no grace or charm. However, there is a graciousness in Christian love which never forgets that courtesy and tact and politeness are lovely things.

Sixth. Love does not insist upon its rights. In the last analysis, there are in this world only two kinds of people, those who always insist upon their privileges and those who always remember their responsibilities; those who are always thinking of what life owes them and those who never forget what they owe to life. It would be the key to almost all the problems which surround us today if people would think less of their rights and more of their duties. Whenever we start thinking about 'our place', we are drifting away from Christian love.

Seventh. Love never flies into a temper. The real meaning of this is that Christian love never becomes exasperated with people. Exasperation is always a sign of defeat. When we lose our

tempers, we lose everything. My brothers and my sisters, those who can control their tempers can overcome anything.

Eighth. Love can endure anything. It is just possible that this may mean 'love can cover anything', in the sense that it will never drag into the light of day the faults and mistakes of others. It would far rather set about quietly mending things than publicly displaying and rebuking them. More likely, it means that love can bear any insult, any injury, any disappointment. It describes the kind of love that was in the heart of Jesus himself.

The Bible says in verse eight, "*Prophecy and speaking in unknown languages and special knowledge will become useless. But love will last forever!*"

One thing remains to be said: When we think of the qualities of this love as Paul portrays them, we can see them made real in the life of Jesus himself. Amen

Have a wonderful and blessed day in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

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Source: William Barclay (Bible Commentary)

WISDOM

by Minister Robert Hines
TSAKS Minister to the Seniors

James 3:17-18

TRUE WISDOM

But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere. And those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of righteousness.

Continued on next page—

The Jewish sages (a man recognized for his wisdom) always agreed that the true wisdom came from above. It was not the result of human attainment but the gift of God. Wisdom describes this wisdom as ‘the breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty’ (Wisdom of Solomon 7:25). The same book prays: ‘Give me the wisdom that sits by your throne’ (Wisdom 9:4); and again: ‘Send her forth from the holy heavens, and from the throne of your glory’ (Wisdom 9:10). Ben Sirach began his book with the sentence: ‘All wisdom is from the Lord, and it remains with him forever’ (Sirach 1:1); and he makes Wisdom say: ‘I came forth from the mouth of the Most High’ (Sirach 24:3). With one voice, the Jewish sages agreed that wisdom came to men and women from God.

James uses eight words to describe this wisdom, and everyone has a great picture in it.

(1) The true wisdom is pure. He who would enter the divine temple must be pure [hagnos]; and purity is to have a mind which thinks holy thoughts.’ The true wisdom is so cleansed of all ulterior motives and of self that it has become pure enough to see God. Worldly wisdom might well wish to escape God’s sight; the true wisdom is able to bear his very scrutiny.

(2) The true wisdom is eirēnikos. We have translated this as peaceable, but it has a very special meaning. Eirēnē means peace, and when it is used in a human context its basic meaning is right relationships between individuals, and between individuals and God. The true wisdom produces right relationships. There is a kind of clever and arrogant wisdom which separates people from one another, and which makes them look with superior contempt on others. There is a kind of cruel wisdom which takes a delight in hurting others with clever but cutting words.

There is a kind of depraved wisdom which seduces men and women away from their loyalty to God. But the true wisdom at all times brings people closer to one another and to God.

(3) The true wisdom is epieikēs. Of all Greek words in the New Testament, this is one of the most untranslatable. Aristotle defined it as that ‘which is just beyond the written law’ and as ‘justice and better than justice’ and as that ‘which steps in to correct things when the law itself becomes unjust.’ The person who is epieikēs is someone who knows when it is actually wrong to apply the strict letter of the law. Such a person knows how to forgive when strict justice dictates that there is a perfect right to condemn. Such a person knows how to make allowances, when not to stand upon individual rights, and how to soften justice with mercy, and always remembers that there are greater things in the world than rules and regulations. The poet Matthew Arnold called it ‘sweet reasonableness,’ and it is the ability to extend to others the kindly consideration we would wish to receive ourselves.

(4) The true wisdom is eupeithēs. Here we must make a choice between two meanings. (a) Eupeithēs can mean always ready to obey. The first of the eighteenth-century churchman William Law’s rules for life was: ‘To fix it deep in my mind that I have but one business upon my hands, to seek for eternal happiness by doing the will of God.’ If we take the word in this sense, it means that the truly wise are always ready to obey whenever God’s voice comes to them. (b) Eupeithēs can mean easy to persuade, not in the sense of being pliable and weak, but in the sense of not being stubborn and of being willing to listen to reason and to appeal. Coming as it does after epieikēs, it probably bears this second meaning here. The true wisdom is not rigid but is

Wisdom... continued from previous page—

willing to listen and skilled in knowing when wisely to yield.

(5) We take the next two terms together. The true wisdom is full of mercy (eleos) and good fruits. Eleos is a word which acquired a new meaning in Christian thought. The Greeks defined it as pity for the one who is suffering unjustly; but Christianity means far more than that by eleos. (a) In Christian thought, eleos means mercy for those who are in trouble, even if the trouble is their own fault. Christian pity is the reflection of God's pity, and that went out to men and women not only when they were suffering unjustly but also when they were suffering through their own fault. We are so apt to say, of someone in trouble, 'It is his own fault' or 'She brought it on herself,' and therefore to feel no responsibility ourselves. Christian mercy is mercy for all who are in trouble, even if they have brought that trouble on themselves. (b) In Christian thought, eleos means mercy which produces good fruits, that is, which results in practical help. Christian pity is not merely an emotion; it is action. We can never say that we have truly pitied anyone until we have given our help.

(6) The true wisdom is adiakritos, undivided. This means that it is not wavering and swaying; it knows its own mind, chooses its course and abides by it. There are those who think that it is clever never to make one's mind up about anything. They speak about having an open mind and about suspending judgment. But Christian wisdom is based on Christian certainties which come to us from God through Jesus Christ.

(7) The true wisdom is anupokritos, without hypocrisy. That is to say, it is not a pose and does not deal in deception. It is honest; it never pretends to be what it is not; and it never acts a part to gain its own ends.

(8) Finally, James says something which every Christian church and every Christian group should have written on its heart. 'The harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.' This is a highly compressed sentence. Let us remember that peace, *eirēnē*, means right relationships between individuals. So, what James is saying is this: 'We are all trying to reap the harvest which a good life brings. But the seeds which bring the rich harvest can never flourish in any atmosphere other than one of right relationships between individuals. And the only people who can sow these seeds and reap the reward are those whose life work it has been to produce such right relationships.'

That is to say, nothing good can ever grow in an atmosphere where people are at variance with one another. A group where there is bitterness and strife is a barren soil in which the seeds of righteousness can never grow and out of which no reward can ever come. Those who disturb personal relationships and are responsible for strife and bitterness have cut themselves off from the reward which God gives to those who live a godly life.

My brothers and my sisters, I pray that you will write these eight points of wisdom described here in your hearts. Amen.

Have a wonderful and blessed day in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Source: William Barclay (Bible Commentary)

Wisdom... True Wisdom...



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