

in this issue >>>

News Brief

Free from Fear of Death

Prayer Needs

Zoom Meetings

Financial Update



Issue

EIGHT

Ebenezer Baptist Church,
6858 Fraser Street,
Vancouver, B.C.,
V5X 3V1

Tel: 604-324-7674
www.rockofhelp.com

Thursday, May 14, 2020 – Ebenezer Baptist Church, Vancouver

EBC Update



News Brief

- ❖ As the COVID-19 outbreak slows and the BC “Restart” plan unfolds, our leadership is monitoring developments closely. We will be updating everyone about eventual steps to reopen Sunday services when we have a full plan and timeline.
- ❖ Our online services are available [here](#) on YouTube. They can also be accessed through our Facebook page and website. The next will be Sunday, May 17, from 10:30 a.m.
- ❖ Our Prayer Chain remains fully functional. Confidential prayer requests can be made by phone or email to Sharon Iseli or Freda Ross.
- ❖ Pastor John can be reached in the event of an emergency at any time on 604-779-2356. His email is: seniorpastor@rockofhelp.com.

Free from Fear of Death

“Since the children have flesh and blood, [Christ] too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death . . . Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.” (Hebrews 2:14–15, 18)

Benjamin Franklin is credited with the famous saying that “in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.” He may have exaggerated about taxation, but his point about death is hardly open to discussion. We will all face it some day, and for many, it’s a great object of fear.

And we can be scared of dying, even when we don’t think we are. I can well remember discovering that personally in 2012, when I found myself lying on a stretcher in a New England hospital, virtually unable to move and about to undergo serious tests in the middle of the night. My condition turned out to be relatively minor, as it happened. But sometimes, it’s not until we actually consider death as more than an abstract possibility that we come to realise that we’re afraid of the process, if not the ultimate outcome.

Yet these verses from Hebrews 2 remind us that we have no reason to be afraid. When we come to faith and know Christ as our personal Lord and Saviour, he brings amazing gifts and benefits into our lives. And one of the most powerful can be to release us from the fear of death.

We sometimes focus almost so much on Jesus’s divinity that we neglect his humanity. But Scripture does not let us get away with that—at least not for long. Because the New Testament confronts us with the fact that Jesus was and is a very human individual, who faced all the challenges and temptations that we do.

“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity,” we read in verse 14. “He had to be made like his brothers [and sisters] in every way,” verses 17 and 18 tell us, and “he himself suffered when he was tempted.”

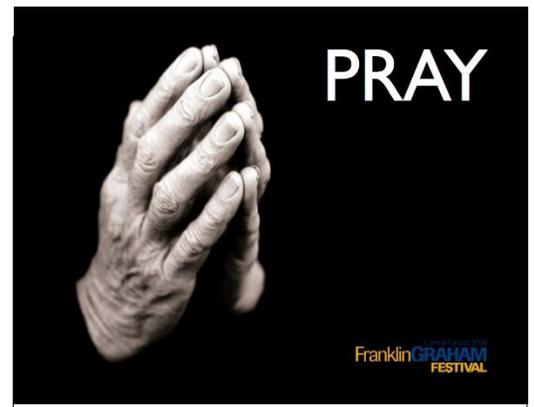
No, what is so different about Jesus lies not so much in his circumstances, as in how he dealt with them. For unlike anyone else in human history, he lived a perfect life. He may have gone through almost unimaginable pain and suffering and even temptation, but he emerged completely victorious.

In his death on the cross, from which he rose again, Jesus was able to win total victory over the powers of darkness. According to verse 14, the purpose was that “by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death, that is, the devil.” And that’s precisely what Jesus has done. He has made Satan a defeated foe, even though he still has great power in our world.

More than this, by breaking the hold of evil in this way, Jesus has robbed death of its right to make us afraid. He came to “free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.” So when we know Christ, we can be confident that physical death, which we must all one day face, need not mean spiritual death. Instead, it can be the gateway to a wonderful new life with God.

So as Christians, we have no reason at all to fear dying, however difficult and potentially worrying the process, because death will ultimately have no hold over us. And that can be a tremendous source of strength and consolation. For wherever we are and however fearful we may sometimes feel, God is with us every step of the way and Jesus has already gone ahead of us to ensure absolute victory over all that the enemy may throw at us.

Pastor John Oakes



Prayer Needs

- Our sick & shut-ins
- Government leaders
- Doctors, nurses and care workers, especially those from our own community
- Our online services
- All who are anxious, depressed or lonely
- The complete defeat of COVID-19

Zoom Meetings

The Friday Zoom Bible Study and Prayer Meeting has become weekly, starting at 7:00 p.m. We’re studying Paul’s letter to the Galatians. Tomorrow’s passage is Gal. 2:11-21. To participate, please go to this [link](#) on your computer. The meeting ID is: 851 704 4556. You can call in by phone, if you prefer, to 778-907-2071, using the same meeting ID when requested.

Also continuing weekly is a Zoom Women’s Prayer Meeting, hosted by Rhea Ravanera on Saturdays at 5:00 p.m. To join, please go to this [link](#) and use meeting ID 349 890 420, or call 778 907 2071.

Financial Update

Reflecting the unique circumstances, latest figures from our Treasurer, Graham Gertz, show that overall offerings were close to \$25,000 below budget for the first four months of the year. But giving in April and for Easter was relatively strong.

Offerings to the church can now be made by Interac e-transfer through online banking, as well as by cheque in the mail to the church address. Details about e-transfer are on the church website [here](#).

2020 OFFERINGS: YEAR TO APRIL (Budgeted Weekly Goal: \$4,420)

	<u>Received</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>
Jan–Feb	\$25,782	\$35,360
March	\$ 7,402	\$22,100
April	\$16,167	\$17,680
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$49,351</u>	<u>\$75,140</u>
<u>Easter</u>	<u>\$11,185</u>	<u>\$10,000</u>
<u>YTD. Total</u>	<u>\$60,536</u>	<u>\$85,140</u>

Thank you for your faithful giving to the Lord!