



NEWSLETTER

Tanglewood Bible Fellowship

EIC: Wendy Powers

The Mission of TBF is to glorify God (Psalm 86:11-13; 115:1 and 1 Peter 2:12; 4:16) by actively participating in the ongoing fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) as a body of believers (1 Cor 12:13; 1 John 5:1-5) who collectively/individually (Phil 1:27) serve our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 12:1-2) and one another (Phil 2:3-4) functioning as a spiritual Greenhouse (Eph 4:11-16) such that by our interactions together we are catalyzed to grow (Acts 2:42) and to reproduce (Acts 2:47) spiritually.

BLIND EYE

In His great Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ sometimes employed a literary tool known as hyperbole to make a point. In one such example, Jesus asked, "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye" (Matthew 7:3-5).

Jesus drew a brilliant word picture of someone struggling with the sensitive business of extracting a tiny speck of sawdust from a friend's eye. In contrast, a sizable plank of wood in that person's own eye completely obstructed his vision. Such a feat would be impossible. It's evident that Jesus was not speaking literally here. Instead, He used exaggeration to drive home the truth that people are often blind to their own faults while keenly focused on weaknesses in others. This segment of Christ's sermon addressed the natural human tendency to see shortcomings in others and to be judgmental of their sin while ignoring, minimizing, or excusing our own sin.

When the woman caught in adultery was brought before Jesus, He confronted the same issue by telling the scribes and Pharisees, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her" (John 8:7, ESV). Jesus wasn't excusing the woman's sin but instead pointing out the need for consistency, honesty, and humility when passing judgment.

The Lord would have us remember that the blade of judgment cuts both ways. When we judge others, we condemn ourselves as well. If we are not willing to evaluate ourselves honestly and accurately, we'll undermine our right to scrutinize the lives of others. Jesus said, "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged" (Matthew 7:1-2; see also Luke 6:37-42). Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 11:31, "If we were properly judging ourselves, we would not be judged" (CSB).

Con't on Pg. 3

Sunday Worship Service: 9:30 AM

Adult Services AND Children's (0-12 years) Programs

Youth (6th -12th grade) meets Sunday evenings at 6 PM

Wednesday P.M. Service: 6:30-7:30 PM

A Word from Pastor David Shields

TBF family,

I have been reading and thinking a lot lately about Mark Twain, as my recommended books this month will make clear. He was a complicated figure with much to admire and criticize. The primary thing I kept coming back to was Twain's own blindness. He was deeply critical of religion, especially Christianity, and certainly was not a believer. He ridiculed the foolishness of anyone who would fall for the beliefs of Christianity as utter fools. Yet, he continually fell for business scams, get-rich-quick schemes, and snake oil salesmen. There is a humorous irony about his own life that he seems to have failed to appreciate.

This part of his life continually reminded me of how sin blinds us. Twain mocked those he believed were falling for obvious scams while spending most of his life falling for scams himself. This is exactly what sin does to us. It makes us unable to see how sinful or lost we truly are. It is similar to how my children can play for an hour in mud and then be shocked when I tell them they are dirty and need a shower.

This trap is true even for believers. This is why Jesus commanded His disciples to "first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly" (Matthew 7:5). Even though we are a new creation, sin can still create blind spots. What is interesting is that sin never blinds us to the faults of others, but only our own. Satan has no problem with us being able to correctly diagnose the faults of others, as long as we do not notice our own.

If we are honest, we share in Twain's blindness. We can laugh and mock his inability to notice how often he was falling for another scam, and I certainly did. And yet, we can do the same thing. We will shake our heads and judge those people over there for being so sinful and idolatrous, all the while ignoring our own idolatry and sin.

The only cure for spiritual blindness is the help of the Holy Spirit. We need Him to reveal the logs in our eyes and our own sin. This is something I have recently been trying to put into practice. Every time I find myself judging or shaking my head at someone else's sin, I pray that God would show me how this sin is currently taking root in my own life. This helps turn a temptation to sin into an opportunity to become more like Christ.

Pastor David

And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Sadly, Christ’s instruction to “take the plank out of your own eye” is often misinterpreted as a general prohibition against all judgment. We can’t overlook the fact that Jesus said both the speck and the plank were to be removed. Believers are indeed called to help other Christians who become entangled in sin. Paul said, “Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path” (Galatians 6:1, NLT). But before we can help a fellow brother or sister onto the right path—before we can remove the speck from another’s eye—we must first deal honestly with our own sin.

In the Lord’s illustration, the fact that there is a “plank” in our eye, but only a “speck” in our brother’s eye, exposes the hypocrisy, self-righteousness, and pride at the heart of the matter. Somehow, we can’t discern that our own sins are more glaringly serious than those we concentrate on in others. We criticize others while absolving ourselves. Yet, often, those faults we pass judgment on in others are the very same flaws we can’t bear to admit in ourselves.

The Lord’s choice of an illustration involving the eye also ties in with a person’s overall spiritual condition: “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” (Matthew 6:22–23).

The Lord calls all believers to live holy, godly lives (1 Peter 1:14–16). To do that, we must never forget our propensity to overlook our own faults while arrogantly locking on to those same faults in others. All ungodliness is cause for concern, whether it be in ourselves or in others. If we hope to help and restore someone else, we must honestly face up to our own sins and confess them—we must first take the plank out of our own eye.

Gotquestions.org

What’s Happening at TBF

- WEDNESDAY NIGHT PRAYER AND SHARE Every Wednesday at 6:30 PM. Join us for a time of prayer and praise followed by a lesson from Pastor David.
- DAILY DEVOS WITH PASTOR DAVID - TBF Facebook Page
- MISS A SUNDAY? Check out the sermons on the TBF Facebook page or tbfduncan.org
- WOMEN OF TANGLEWOOD BIBLE FELLOWSHIP- Facebook page
- TBF WORSHIP TEAM MUSIC PRACTICE. Join Us! See Dale Corbin or Lana Sleeper for details.
- DISCIPLESHIP CLASS - THE PRAYER PRACTICE starts August 24th
- MEN’S BIBLE STUDY - On Break
- WOMEN’S BIBLE STUDY - New Study LUKE IN THE LAND Starts September 11th
- SUPER SUMMER SATURDAYS -August 15-16
- PARENTING CLASS - Resumes August 26th
- TBF YOUTH - Meets Sunday Nights at 5 PM (Jam Session) and 6 PM (Study)
- AWANAS - Kicks off August 20th
- COMMUNION - August 17th
- KINDRED COMMUNITY - Not meeting this month

Opportunities to Serve

Let’s give our moms a break....

Volunteers needed in the nursery and pre-school areas on Sunday mornings. Sign-up Sheet in the Foyer. Please see Brianna Shields

REV 4:8

TBF Family Ministries

AWANA

AWANA kicks off Wednesday, August 20th at 6:30 PM

We would love to have more friends join us, so invite kids you know to AWANA and their parents to come to Wednesday night prayer and share!

If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to Brianna.

Parenting Class

PARENTING GROUP WILL RESUME TUESDAY, AUGUST 26TH 5:30PM
CLASS WILL MEET IN THE CLASSROOM AREA, DINNER WILL BE PROVIDED.

Kindred Community

No KINDRED COMMUNITY this month.

If you are a TBF woman with a heavenly husband or know of a woman you would like to invite to this event, please RSVP Beautiful Day 580.786.6009

Discipleship Class

Starts August 24th

The Prayer Practice

by John Mark Comer

In the hurry, distraction, and noise of the modern world, few things are more difficult or more rewarding than developing a life of prayer. As an apprentice of Jesus, it is vital to set aside time to be more deeply connected with the Father.

The Prayer Practice offers spiritual exercises, reflection questions, guided readings, and additional resources to help you and your community. Be equipped to:

- Develop a daily rhythm of prayer using both liturgical and personal approaches
- Engage in various forms of prayer, including gratitude, lament, and intercession
- Listen to God's voice through practices like *Lectio Divina*
- Move beyond words to experience contemplative union with God

Discover how dedicating intentional time to communicate and commune with God can lead to a transformed life, deeper spiritual growth, and a renewed sense of partnership with God in the world.

TBF MEN'S MINISTRIES

ON BREAK FOR SUMMER

Be the reason someone smiles....

Barbara Head, Wanda's daughter, reported recently that Wanda is doing well. She still resides at Chisholm Trail Assisted Living and loves to receive cards from her church family. She reads and rereads her mail and looks forward to more. If you are able, please send greetings to her at the following address:

Wanda Skinner
Chisholm Trail Assisted Living
2205 Chisholm Trail Pkwy, Apt. 50
Duncan, OK 73533

Thank you, church family!

TBF Women's Ministries

New Ladies' Bible study
Beginning Thursday September 11th.

Luke in the Land

By Kristi McLelland

In our Bibles, we have four Gospels describing Jesus's time on earth: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Land of Israel-the place Jesus walked and taught during His earthly ministry-is often referred to as the "fifth Gospel." Follow Kristi McLelland through Israel as we study snapshots from the Gospel of Luke to see where the stories of the Bible took place. Over seven sessions, challenge the way you read the accounts of Jesus through teaching videos that take you to locations in Israel like Bethlehem, the Sea of Galilee, Gethsemane, Jerusalem, and the road to Emmaus. Along the way, you'll see how Jesus, the Messiah, brought His kingdom to earth for everybody.

Super Summer Saturdays - July



David's Book Recommendations

Like many pastors, I am a big fan of books. The following books are all books you can find on my bookshelf, and I would be more than happy to lend them to anyone who would like to read them.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

I was surprised at how funny and enjoyable this book was. It flies by, and the pacing is masterful. The last third of the book, after Tom Sawyer makes his appearance, is a step down, but it still has moments that made me laugh.

I listened to an audio recording narrated by Elijah Wood, which was incredible. His youthful voice made it sound like you were listening to Huck tell his story. It also made the repeated use of the N-word incredibly jarring. It is one thing to read it and skip over it, but to hear it over and over and over made part of it harder to listen to.

The entire racial aspect of this book is difficult for me to unpack, or even to know what to think. Parts of the book are incredibly transgressive and radical for the time. Twain has plenty of moments where he is criticizing slavery and humanizing Jim in a way that seems progressive and controversial for his day. At the same time, some moments still read and seem racist and are hard to get through. I can see why the book remains controversial and debated because it probably requires a nuanced discussion.

James by Percival Everett

This is a retelling of Huck Finn from the escaped slave Jim's perspective. You really should read or reread Huck Finn before diving into this retelling. It helped me understand more about what the book was doing and how it was reinterpreting certain scenes. The book has funny moments, but it is certainly heavier and serious than Huck Finn. It shows clearly what slavery was like at that time, with all the fear and terror that accompanied it.

Overall, you can see why this book won so many awards. You can tell Everett has deep respect and even love for Huck Finn. This comes through in the novel and makes the reimagining more impactful. Reading both of these books, one after another, was a wonderful experience of the best of American fiction.

Mark Twain by Ron Chernow

I have loved every biography I have read by Chernow and was excited for another entry, especially since I had just read Huck Finn and James. The book itself is over 1,000 pages and is one of the physically heaviest books I have ever read. The last half of the book moves at a glacial pace. It especially focuses on all of Twain's failed business schemes, which is especially ironic considering his mocking of those who fall for religion. It will probably tire out most readers, but it did provide plenty of irony. I was disappointed by how little time is spent examining and engaging with the actual novels Twain wrote at least compared to other subjects.

Even though the book is not always enjoyable and it is a step down from Chernow's previous work, it is a masterful exploration of this controversial and confounding character. He does not try to soften Twain and lets his various contradictions and idiosyncrasies stand on their own. He does a fair job of explaining his constantly shifting attitudes on race, praising what is noteworthy without letting him off the hook.

Overall, the book gives you a great sense of the kind of person Twain was. All of his failings as a father, businessman, friend, and more are put on display alongside his genius and gifts. My main takeaway from the book is that Twain is the quintessential American with all the strengths and weaknesses that entails.