



# 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.*

## Holy, Holy, Holy

The phrase "holy, holy, holy" appears twice in the Bible, once in the Old Testament (Isaiah 6:3) and once in the New (Revelation 4:8). Both times, the phrase is spoken or sung by heavenly creatures, and both times it occurs in the vision of a man who was transported to the throne of God: first by the prophet Isaiah and then by the apostle John. Before addressing the three-fold repetition of God's holiness, it's important to understand what exactly is meant by God's holiness.

The holiness of God is the most difficult of all God's attributes to explain, partly because it is one of His essential attributes that is not shared, inherently, by man. We are created in God's image, and we can share many of His attributes, to a much lesser extent, of course—love, mercy, faithfulness, etc. But some of God's attributes, such as omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence, will never be shared by created beings. Similarly, holiness is not something that we will possess as an inherent part of our nature; we only become holy in relationship to Christ. It is an *imputed* holiness. Only in Christ do we "become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21). God's holiness is what separates Him from all other beings, what makes Him separate and distinct from everything else. God's holiness is more than just His perfection or sinless purity; it is the essence of His "other-ness," His transcendence. God's holiness embodies the mystery of His awesomeness and causes us to gaze in wonder at Him as we begin to comprehend just a little of His majesty.

Isaiah was a firsthand witness of God's holiness in his vision described in Isaiah 6. Even though Isaiah was a prophet of God and a righteous man, his reaction to the vision of God's holiness was to be aware of his own sinfulness and to despair for his life (Isaiah 6:5). Even the angels in God's presence, those who were crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty," covered their faces and feet with four of their six wings. Covering the face and feet no doubt denotes the reverence and awe inspired by the immediate presence of God (Exodus 3:4-5). The seraphim stood covered, as if concealing themselves as much as possible, in recognition of their unworthiness in the presence of the Holy One. And if the pure and holy seraphim exhibit such reverence in the presence of the Lord, with what profound awe should we, polluted and sinful creatures, presume to draw near to Him! The reverence shown to God by the angels should remind us of our own presumption when we rush thoughtlessly and irreverently into His presence, as we often do because we do not understand His holiness.

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**Sunday Worship Service:** 9:30 AM

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

Youth (6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade) meets Sunday evenings at 6 PM

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

# A Word from Pastor David Shields

TBF Family,

As we prepare to dive back into the book of Revelation, I want to remind us of what proper Biblical interpretation looks like. One of our desires when we read the Bible is to understand it. We have questions and we want them answered. Revelation confuses and confounds us, and so we want to be able to piece it together. This is a good desire, and we should want to understand what the Bible means.

However, problems can arise when we only approach the Bible out of an attempt to understand it. We can begin to treat Revelation like a puzzle to solve instead of something to apply to our lives. When we do this, we allow a good thing to distract us from the best thing. We can actually forget the very purpose of the Scriptures, which are meant to transform us into the likeness of Christ.

1 Corinthians 13:2 says, "If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing." How much does this apply to Revelation? Can you imagine being able to understand every mystery of Revelation and know everything there is to know about it? That would include unpacking the mystery of the thunder, which John is told not to include in the book. It would mean being able to understand everything about the most difficult part of the Bible. I would give plenty to be able to understand a small portion, let alone every mystery.

And yet God's Word tells us that doing all of that without love means we are nothing. What if we took this verse seriously? What if we approached Revelation, and the rest of the Bible, for that matter, as something that should lead to an increase in love? The point of reading God's Word is to grow in love for God. It is to grow in love for our neighbors. And growing in love does not require understanding mysteries. Maybe you will understand less of Revelation than before we began our series. But if you have grown in love, then it is not wasted time.

As a church, I hope that our study of the book helps us to grow in love. I wanted to put this back on the forefront of our minds. We will seek to understand the mysteries of God's Word. But more importantly, we are going to try and grow in love for God as we engage with His Word. As we do this, we will continue to become more like Christ.

In Christ,  
Pastor David Shields



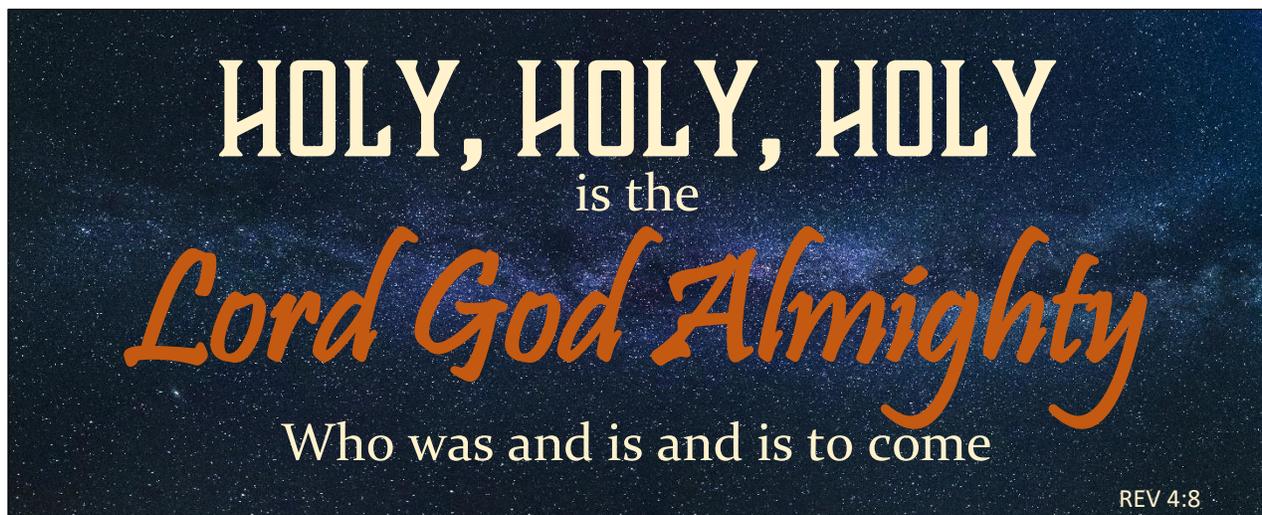
John's vision of the throne of God in Revelation 4 was similar to that of Isaiah. Again, there were living creatures around the throne crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty" (Revelation 4:8) in reverence and awe of the Holy One. John goes on to describe these creatures giving glory and honor and reverence to God continually around His throne. Interestingly, John's reaction to the vision of God in His throne is different from Isaiah's. There is no record of John falling down in terror and awareness of his own sinful state, perhaps because John had already encountered the risen Christ at the beginning of his vision (Revelation 1:17). Christ had placed His hand upon John and told him not to be afraid. In the same way, we can approach the throne of grace if we have the hand of Christ upon us in the form of His righteousness, exchanged for our sin at the cross (2 Corinthians 5:21).

But why the three-fold repetition "holy, holy, holy" (called the *trihagion*)? The repetition of a name or an expression three times was quite common among the Jews. In Jeremiah 7:4, the Jews are represented by the prophet as saying, "The temple of the Lord" three times, expressing their intense confidence in their own worship, even though it was hypocritical and corrupt. Jeremiah 22:29, Ezekiel 21:27, and 2 Samuel 18:33 contain similar three-fold expressions of intensity. Therefore, when the angels around the throne call or cry to one another, "Holy, holy, holy," they are expressing with force and passion the truth of the supreme holiness of God, that essential characteristic which expresses His awesome and majestic nature.

In addition, the *trihagion* expresses the triune nature of God, the three Persons of the Godhead, each equal in holiness and majesty. Jesus Christ is the Holy One who would not "see decay" in the grave, but would be resurrected to be exalted at the right hand of God (Acts 2:26; 13:33-35). Jesus is the "Holy and Righteous One" (Acts 3:14) whose death on the cross allows us to stand before the throne of our holy God unashamed. The third Person of the trinity—the Holy Spirit—by His very name denotes the importance of holiness in the essence of the Godhead.

Finally, the two visions of the angels around the throne crying, "Holy, holy, holy," clearly indicates that God is the same in both testaments. Often we think of the God of the Old Testament as a God of wrath and the God of the New Testament as a God of love. But Isaiah and John present a unified picture of our holy, majestic, awesome God who does not change (Malachi 3:6), who is the same yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8), and "with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning" (James 1:17). God's holiness is eternal, just as He is eternal.

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.
- DICIPLESHIP CLASS - May 4th and 18th
- MEN'S BIBLE STUDY - On Break
- WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY - On Break
- SUMMER FOOD AND FUN - June 23rd - 26th
- SUPER SUMMER SATURDAYS - Coming in June, July, and August Food, Fellowship, and Fun
- PARENTING CLASS - Every other Tuesday
- TBF YOUTH - Meets Sunday Nights at 5 PM (Jam Session) and 6 PM (Study)
- AWANA CLUBS - Meets Wednesdays at 6:30 PM Ages 2 yr. old - 5<sup>th</sup> Grade
- COMMUNION - May 18th
- KINDRED COMMUNITY - May 8th Palace Theater Hosted by Tanglewood Bible Fellowship

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**Cubbies Recognition May 11th**  
  
**End of Cubbies May 14th**



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## Opportunities to Serve

### **Awana Volunteers Needed.**

Looking for fun on Wednesday nights? Have a love for God and want to plant seeds in the lives of children? Be a TBF AWANA Volunteer. There's something for everyone. Please see Pastor Rob Girvin for details.

### **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 Pastor Rob Girvin.

### **Kindred Community**

TBF will be hosting Kindred Community on May 8th. Please pray how you may volunteer and serve. Sign-up sheet in the foyer.

# Discipleship Class

# The Real Heaven

by Chip Ingram

Meets May 4<sup>th</sup> and May 18<sup>th</sup>

TBF Youth Room, Immediately following the morning service.

Discipleship class led by Mike Palovik

What comes to mind when you think of heaven? Clouds? Harps? Angels? Singing? Now, honestly, does that really sound like a great way to spend eternity? The good news is, that is NOT what heaven is like. And when you discover what really awaits you there, it will radically change your view of your future and of heaven. In this 3-part series from Living on the Edge, Chip Ingram digs into scripture to reveal what our heavenly home will be like, what we'll do there, what we'll experience, and how we're to prepare for eternity today. If you've secretly thought that heaven sounded kind of boring, well, think again. In this series, you will discover the amazing truth of what awaits you there.

## TBF MEN'S MINISTRIES

Next Bible study to be announced.. stay tuned.

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## Kindred Community



Tuesday, May 8th 6-8 PM  
Palace Theater -- Duncan, OK  
Hosted by Tanglewood Bible Fellowship



KC guests are encouraged to eat dinner together and then enjoy a movie with refreshments

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 by May 1- Beautiful Day 580.786.6009

# *TBF Women's Ministries*

Next Bible study to be announced... stay tuned.

## **Looking Forward...**

- TBF hosting Kindred Community in May 8. Pray about how you can volunteer to help!
- Super Summer Saturdays in June, July, and August. Fun, Food, and Fellowship!
- Summer Food and Fun June 23<sup>rd</sup> – June 26<sup>th</sup>. This is the ministry of One True Light to feed the children of Duncan who are in need. We will spend the mornings that week preparing sack lunches and breakfasts for the children.

## **“FEAST” with Kristi McLelland**

We are considering attending the Kristi McLelland event "Feast" as a group in Fort Worth, Texas on August 15th and 16th. This will be a Friday evening/Saturday morning event.

Jesus often taught through stories, and many times He taught as people gathered around a table or meal. Imagine sitting around that ancient table filled with a feast, hearing stories come to life.

While we can't go back to sit at that table, there is a table we are invited to. Join Kristi McLelland at Feast—an event where we gather to feast upon God's Word. This is a journey that's more than an event—it's an experience to taste and see the goodness of God that has nourished souls for generations.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the foyer. If you are at all interested in attending, please sign up. A generous, anonymous donor has offered to help defray the cost of the event. No commitment at this point if you sign up. We are wanting to gauge the level of interest and once we know how many women would like to join us, we can give more info on the cost to attend. We hope all TBF Ladies will consider attending and make this an event to spark new fellowship and life into the women's ministry. It will be a memory maker!

# TBF Family Ministries

Happy May, Church Family!

I cannot believe it is already May; it seems like it was just New Year's, and we are halfway through the year. It feels like time is always speeding up. While the days may seem long, the weeks and months seem to blink away. This past month, I have been thinking about the first part of Ecclesiastes and how time is slipping away, but because God is sovereign over all things, He blesses our time for our good and His glory.

Vanity of vanities, all is vanity. This is the opener of the book, and it is well known and quoted by even unbelievers. But what does it mean? The word vain is an interesting one; it almost exactly migrates from Latin to English. The Latin word "vanus" means empty. The Hebrew word "hēbēl" can also refer to vapor or mist. This vanity is emptiness and but a shallow breath or a vapor. Here one moment and gone the next. With three little babies in the house, a lot of things break. We'll buy a new toy only for it to be broken next, gone, and destined for the dump. Everything, including us in this physical world, breaks down: our goods, our riches, and even our bodies fall apart. Everything is but a mist, here one moment and gone another. While this does not seem like a good thing, it is! We live in a world of vanity, of nothing. This world, in all of its airs and latest iPhones, is nothing that can fill us. It only leaves us empty and longing for more. The only thing that will not change is the King who was, is, and is to come. The world was created by Him, and everything is meant to point to Him.

Chapter 3 begins with "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven", then the teacher lists a multitude of seasons that we may find ourselves in. Everything that happens, happens in its season. Just like a year has its defined seasons that will end, the bitter cold will not continue into August, and the heat will not make it to January. God has planned different seasons for our lives, and even in the hardest seasons we can rely on and hope that God will work all things together for our good and His glory (Romans 5:8). Verse 14 of chapter 3 brings out this truth better than I ever could: "I perceived that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it, so that people fear before him."

We are called to be anxious for nothing, but rather in joy bring all things to Christ in prayer and supplication. When we are focused on worldly things, we miss the point. God blesses us with times of plenty and times of little, and both seasons are from God and they are meant to refine us so that one day we can stand before the Lord as His bride, the church, dressed in the works of the saints, and be told "Well done my good and faithful steward." One of Pastor Brad's favorite sayings was "God cares more about your character than your circumstance." I think we can even add to that that God puts us in circumstances for a season to refine our character to make us look like our older brother Jesus. I want to leave you with this question: What are you focused on? The vanity of this world or the permanent goodness of God?

In the Love of Christ,  
Pastor Rob

## Parenting Class

Tuesdays at 6 PM  
Meets at TBF in classroom

**\*\*Youth Bible Study -- Sundays 6-7 PM TBF Youth Room -- Journey Through the Bible**

# TBF's 2025 Graduating Seniors



## *Tylar M. Sleeper*

Tylar Sleeper is a Durant High School graduate. She has been actively involved in HOSA, STUCO, FCCLA, NTHS, and NSHSS. She was an honor roll student all 4 years of high school and took AP biology, chemistry, algebra, and calculus.

Tylar's future plans include attending college for a degree in business.

Tylar is the granddaughter of Tommy and Lana Sleeper.



# Congratulations to all our Graduates!!

*We're So Proud of You!*

## Remember What You Have Been Taught

"Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving." | Colossians 2:6-7

"He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." | Micah 6:8

"But those who wait upon the LORD will renew their strength. They will mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint." | Isaiah 40:31

"Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed." | Proverbs 16:3

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." | Romans 8:28

"Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." | Joshua 1:7-9

"Look to the LORD and his strength; seek His face always." | Psalm 105:4

"Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching, for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck." | Proverbs 1:8-9

## Be Happy in the Lord

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." | Philippians 4:7-8

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." | 1 Corinthians 15:57-58

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." | Philippians 4:4-6

"The LORD has done great things for us; we are glad." | Psalms 126:3

"The LORD is my strength and my shield; in Him my heart trusts, and I am helped; my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to Him." | Psalms 28:7

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice." | Philippians 4:4

## Walk Forward in the Lord

"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." | Philippians 2:3-4

"Delight yourself in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart." | Psalms 37:4

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths." | Proverbs 3:5-6

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men." | Colossians 3:23

"You will seek Me and find Me when you seek Me with all your heart." | Jeremiah 29:13

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them." | Ephesians 2:10

"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men" | Colossians 3:23

## Our Prayers for You

"And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ" | Philippians 1:9-10

"And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" | Colossians 1:9-10

# 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.

## **Evangelism: How the Whole Church Speaks of Jesus by J. Mack Stiles**

I rarely read books on evangelism because they usually devolve into stories of constantly sharing your faith with every stranger or are theologically inept. This book completely breaks the mold. It is theologically and biblically rich without brow-beating. It is also focused on building a natural culture of evangelism in the church. Every book in this series has been great.

## **Preaching in Hitler's Shadow: Sermons of Resistance in the Third Reich by Dean G. Stroud**

This is an incredibly moving book examining faithful pastors who resisted the Third Reich, not just in the shadows but in public sermons. Some of the pastors in the collection were killed for their words.

The book is split into two parts. The first portion is an overview of the religious situation in the Third Reich. It was the most valuable part, and I could have read 400 more pages unpacking these ideas. It provides much-needed context to understand the pressures pastors faced and how radical some of their sermons were.

The second portion is the collection of sermons from well-known Christians (Bonhoeffer, Barth, and Bultmann) and relatively forgotten Christians. It was incredibly powerful to read these sermons. I was even surprised by how much I appreciated Bultmann and Barth. There are sermons in this collection that I will return to again and again. We are privileged to hear these words from the cloud of witnesses.

What stood out to me the most was how these men responded to the Third Reich in their preaching. They did not become more overtly political but more Biblical and gospel focused. Their return to the Scriptures and to the gospel was a radical move. They explicitly preached how the government was denying the fundamentals of the gospel. It helped demonstrate that sermons do not have to become more partisan or political in order to convict and be prophetic in the midst of a depraved government.

I can't recommend this enough. It is one of the most moving books I have read in a while. It gave me plenty to chew on as a preacher in our country's current political climate.

## **A Light on the Hill: The Surprising Story of How a Local Church in the Nation's Capital Influenced Evangelicalism by Caleb Morell**

Most Christian biographies follow individuals like pastors or missionaries, but this book follows the story of one church. It traces the 150-year history of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. Each chapter follows a different period of time, the pastor, and the individuals who helped make the church what it was. It does not just focus on the pastors, some of whom were famous, but also on the hidden faithfulness of ordinary members.

While the church has been largely faithful, this is not a triumphal account, but it covers the down years and more embarrassing episodes in the church's history. The honesty and openness were refreshing and encouraging. I would read 100 books like this one.