

West Valley Church of God  
P. O. Box 343  
San Fernando, CA 91341

## Pastors & Elders

Pastor: Wayne and Patty Mitchell  
West Valley Elders  
Carlton & Judy Green  
Cornell Smith

## Quotes



Contributors: Jane Hickok, Susan Thompson, Lil Dratler

"Death is not the greatest loss in life. The greatest loss is what dies inside us while we live."  
--- Norman Cousins

" People may hear your words - but they feel your attitude. "  
~~John C. Maxwell

"Did you ever notice that in the middle of SIN there is the letter " I ?" Amazing how it brings to mind that all sin is self-centered!!  
~~Lil Dratler

We mutter and sputter, we fume and we spurt -- We mumble and grumble, our feelings get hurt -- We can't understand things, our vision grows dim -- When all that we need is communion with Him.  
~~Anonymous

In today's bright sunlight basking, leave tomorrow's cares alone  
Spoil not present joys by asking: "Who shall roll away the stone?"  
Oft, before we've faced the trial we have come with joy to own  
Angels have from heaven descended and have rolled away the stone.  
~~Anonymous

All too often we have the stones in life prevent us from living!



Artist: Mary Cassatt

**HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY**  
**SUNDAY, MAY 12, 2019**

## Editor's Corner

● Submissions for inclusion in "The Vine" are welcome **at any time**. We need your input! Please email to the editor (See right column) - in **10 point type, Arial font**, for easier placement.

Send submissions to:  
**TheVineEditor@aol.com** -  
*Subject Line:* Title of Article. **Time sensitive** submissions due **5th** of month for following month's issue. **News and Inspirational articles welcome any time.**

**NOTICE...** Many paintings shown in this publication are for sale. Check your old copies. Contact Editor.

# The Vine

"I am the Vine, you are the branches: He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing."  
John 15:5

May 2019

West Valley Church of God -- "Come worship with us..."  
**Submissions: TheVineEditor@aol.com**  
We meet at the Congregational Church of Northridge  
9659 Balboa Boulevard, Northridge, CA 91325  
**Saturday Service 10:30 A.M. - [www.westvalleywgc.org](http://www.westvalleywgc.org)**

## Soul Survivor

By Marion Stroud

*This was so inspiring to me I wanted to share it! It is from the book - **Dear God, It's Me & It's Urgent** (Prayers for Every Season of a Woman's Life).  
~~ Lil Dratler*



Sometimes, Lord, I must admit that there appears to be an awful lot that can give rise to anger, when you alone among your family are still committed to holding onto faith, however tentative your grasp may be.

Life can seem unfair when all the rest walk into church with smiling Sabbath faces, outwardly compliant partners and well-behaved children. There seems to be so little thought for those of us who slip into the back row on our own week after week or rush out immediately after the benediction because services have run overtime.

It cannot be so hard to be holy, when nobody hints to you that if you were "more spiritual" or a "better witness" (which could be interpreted, Lord, as "a better wife") then all your problems would be resolved!

It is so easy, then, to gather up these "little twigs" of irritation or sheer frustration and slip them into that invisible sack on your back. When you add the bigger logs, formed from a lack of understanding and mockery at home, and the pain and disappointment of prayers seemingly not answered, before long you can be bent almost double with the ugly weight of anger and of bitterness.

## Upcoming Events

- Bible Studies, Letters and other Events...see Weekly Bulletin and Bulletin Board.

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*Soul Survivor(cont.)*

But thank you, Lord, that there is a remedy for backs bowed and broken by burdens that are self-inflicted. For you are always ready to lift these sins, along with all the rest, from anyone who is prepared and willing to be released.

## Brotherly Love Letter

– by John Brown

*A Love letter I sent to a very dear brother*

I hope you are up and doing well enough to read this “Good Morning to you”.

I was thinking about you this Sabbath, as well as other times, thinking about how much alike we are, alike in our physical sufferings, but more in our spiritual rejoicing. And, maybe more importantly, our relationship with our brother Paul, and our Brother Yeshua. We, you and I, they include in their sufferings, because we are of the same mind and Spirit. In my mind, those two suffered more physically than any others I can think of, because of their mind and spirit. The thing about their sufferings, they were by choice. We, as physical human beings, don't want to hurt. But they, along with many of those we read about in Scripture, were able to look beyond themselves to that ultimate outcome of rejoicing in the actual presence of our Father and all our Family.

I thought about giving you lots of scriptures, of which you are well aware, and of which I am sure you are claiming at this time of hurt. But at this time I just

wanted to share in our mutual physical pain. I have endured two separate heart attacks, and Yehovah has seen that I have endured and recovered from them, for whatever His purpose is. The hurt is the thing that is most all-encompassing, when it's being endured. You just want it to be over. And whatever the purpose, it is not in your thoughts. At least it was not in mine.

And this is what I wanted to write to you about. Paul and Yeshua. and all those who have chosen to live His Way, have done so knowingly. I say knowingly, not in any way implying that they know that they are going to suffer, but choosing to live His Way, EVEN IF it means hurting, because they believe in the outcome, that we will live FOREVER with Him in His kingdom and we will BE HIS FAMILY.

### From Our Daily Bread, "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" -

A poor man in Ireland was carrying a huge bag of potatoes toward home. A horse and wagon pulled up and offered him a ride. After getting on the wagon, the man continued to hold the heavy bag of potatoes. When the driver suggested the man set the bag down, he replied, "I don't want to trouble you too much, sir. You are already giving me a ride, so I'll just carry the potatoes.

*How often do we continue to hold on to our burdens rather than share them with the Lord - even though He has offered to carry them for us? Sometimes my pride is really foolish! ~Lil Dratler*



## About GRACE

In Romans 9:15–18, Paul lays out the absolute sovereignty of God over all human willing: [God said,] “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion” [quoting Exodus 33:19]. So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, “For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth” [quoting Exodus 9:16]. So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills.

Sovereignty of God, for Paul, did not make the pursuit of sinners pointless. It made it hopeful.” Paul puts God's sovereignty in a phrase in Ephesians 1:11: God “works all things according to the counsel of his will.” And he gives the most sweeping statement of all in Romans 11:36: “From him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever.”

Paul knew that all of us are spiritually dead and blind in our sin, and that our only hope is that an all-powerful God would create in us new light and life (2 Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 2:5). Human agents are crucial in the process of our conversion. But God's sovereign grace is decisive: “I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth” (1 Corinthians 3:6).  
~~John Piper



And grace does not make us instantly justified, for we seek to be justified in Christ. Gal. 2:17. It is through God's unmerited favor, grace, that we receive help in purification through repentance, which over time can result in righteousness and salvation. We approach God through faith in Christ, allowing us access to his unmerited favor, grace, to rid us of our darkness to a sinless state. True grace teaches us what to deny (repent from) and how to live, and by true grace Jesus purifies us from our lusts and affections for the pleasures of the world. Titus 2:11-14. And we seek this help from God expecting to receive it, not based on anything we have done to deserve it, but only by our faith in the name of Jesus Christ. We don't even know from what to repent, until grace shows us and teaches us.

Repentance is a humbling experience, certainly not one to claim any merit for ourselves. It is like having a disease that requires a doctor to perform surgery. If we get the surgery, we can take no pride in that. The doctor did the work. It is like that with God, except the doctor charges, and God doesn't - it is freely given by grace. For by grace you are saved through faith; and that not by yourselves. It is the gift of God. Not by works, lest any man should boast. Eph 2:8-9. Do we take pride in going humbly to God as a sinner, and asking for his help? Of course not. To ask for help is the opposite of pride.

~~John Brown

## Men's Ministry



Sunday April 14, 2019, at Marie Callendar's on Tampa, in Northridge, seventeen of West Valley's finest men assembled for fellowship and a delicious brunch for this April's monthly meeting. All men are invited, and encouraged, and even encouraged to bring a guest. Part of our purpose in gathering is to strengthen one another that we may better serve our families and the congregation.

In getting to know one another more, typically, one of brothers shares a bit about their lives after eating. After which time, we discuss issues touching real life, as understood from a Biblical perspective.



Dave Foote, who is part of our sister congregation in Ventura, has made the trek to Northridge to participate with the group. On this occasion, he shared part of his life story with the men. He explained that despite physical injuries experienced at an early age and in adult life, God has blessed him to actively participate (swimming hundreds miles yearly) and compete in long distance aquatic racing to this day.

Ralph Lyman, also a member of West Valley, also shared with the men the status of his present health trial. After sharing with



the group, all the men gathered around to support him in prayer while he was anointed.

All the men were involved, and everyone contributed to the discussion of topics presented as well. Responses were thoughtful, insightful, reflecting a depth of perspectives and broadness of life experiences. The meeting ended with prayer and an anticipation of meeting again, at the same location, on the first Sunday of the next month--Cinco de Mayo!

*(Report written by Carl Parker; Joe Bohannon and Gary Glasford took the photos.)*

Some of the interesting topics of discussion involved "life" "God" and the "American dream" - as well as being sensitive to others and considering what life has taught us so that we can teach one another.