

HENLY TODAY

A WORD FROM PASTOR DON: A TIME for NEW BEGINNINGS

There is something refreshing about a new start. I guess for that reason, I always look forward to the beginning of a new year. Perhaps it falls into the category of out with the old and in with the new. Does anything feel better than having a new slate before us? That is particularly true when it comes to problem solving and conflict resolution.

Perhaps some of you, like me, have stumbled in the gate before you were really off-and-running. Instead of brushing off the dirt and giving it another try, you intuitively beat yourself up for failure and put on a layer of shame that renders you with a sense of brokenness.

We don't handle conflict resolution very well, particularly when it is our perception that the other person is mostly at fault. Sometimes with the best of intentions to mend fences, relational interactions carry the impact of brunt trauma rather than a sense of real connection.

The good news of the Gospel is that God never intended that we be limited to our own resourcefulness to orchestrate change. There are some things we simply can't negotiate effectively without God's help. Seriously, if we could do it on our own, we wouldn't need God. It was never God's intent that we take a "sink or swim" approach when, with the best of intentions, we dive headfirst into whatever we hope to accomplish without recognizing our need for God's support and sustaining grace.

God is like a loving parent who isn't going to allow a two-year-old to walk on the sidewalk next to a busy street without holding his hand. Seriously, from a grandparent's perspective, is there anything more enjoyable than walking hand-in-hand with a two-year-old? Is there anything more frightening than when the child jerks his hand out of yours and starts to run saying, "I want to do it by myself!"?

Protectively and lovingly, we're not going to let that happen until we have every confidence the child can handle the independence and safely stay on the sidewalk. If we, as earthly fathers and mothers, ensure that for our children, how much more so does God protectively care for His own?

If we need a fresh start, no one is more in our corner than God. He equips us to offer forgiveness rather than resentment, love instead of hate, and inclusion rather than separation. Truth be told, the desire to change is probably something God placed on our heart. Of course, He recognizes that it is with our recognition of His presence that we can more effectively respond with love.

We are all in the process of becoming. Don't let a snag be the impetus for throwing in the towel. God provides us an opportunity for a fresh start every day of the year. Scripture says: "Great is His faithfulness, His mercies begin afresh every morning."

God isn't going to leave us to our own resourcefulness. Of course, Satan will try to let the air out of our sails by attempting to convince us that we don't have the capacity to love the unlovely. The truth of the matter is, with the Lord's help, we do. Great is His faithfulness!

"If we need a fresh start, no one is more in our corner than God."



Don

FAMILY FOCUS: BOBBY & WANDA DALBY

Bobby and Wanda grew up in the small town of Nederland, outside Beaumont. They started first grade and graduated high school at the same time. Although friends, they never dated and eventually went their separate ways. Wanda worked for Southwestern Bell, marrying and moving to New Orleans. Bobby went to the University of Houston on a track scholarship, then worked in several sales jobs in addition to managing a large cattle ranch outside Houston (which he says was a dream job, an indicator of his lifetime love of the outdoors).

Wanda says that she has always been a mom and homemaker who likes to work, and so when her children started school, she “felt lost in life.” She remembers looking out the kitchen window and thinking, “Surely God created me for more than washing dishes, vacuuming, scrubbing the bath or folding clothes.” So, she decided to get a part-time job and interviewed with Mary Kay Cosmetics. Confession: “I only wanted the training to get cute enough to go on some job interviews to get a *real* job!”

While in training, Wanda took to heart the company’s philosophy of “God first, family second and career third,” as well as the importance of working according to the Golden Rule. But the most long-lasting benefit, she says, was this: “Mary Kay Ash was a believer in God and totally walked that walk. She became my mentor in everything from family to kids to work. My business grew and thrived beyond my belief.” Wanda loved her work. And, eventually, she would inspire thousands of women to be all that God created them to be.

By the time Wanda and Bobby discovered each other again, and married, they each had two teenage children. She was a top Mary Kay achiever, and he was the top salesman for Pentax Camera Corp. Over the years, Wanda had worked her way through all the Mary Kay positions and was honored along the way: no-cost company cars (yes, the pink Cadillacs) and vacations that took them around the world. Bobby had been deservedly promoted to a management position within Pentax ... but it turned out that the rewards were far less satisfying.

Then one year, when Wanda was attending a Mary Kay conference in San Antonio, she returned to her hotel room and was surprised to see Bobby’s luggage in her room. After all, she had taken him to the airport for a business flight to Miami that morning. When she found him socializing with the other conference attendees like nothing was unusual (yes, the women had always flocked around him because of his gentlemanly persona), Bobby announced that he had resigned his position from Pentax because Wanda’s job was “more fun.” That wasn’t the real reason, of course, but it was an important new beginning.

Bobby got his real estate license and began another successful career in both commercial and residential real estate. Although he worked 24/7, he always managed to find time for hunting and enjoying the outdoors. Still, Wanda says, “I think he slept with his cell phone. My rule, and what I taught others, was if you’re having a conversation or a meal with your family and the phone rings, you don’t answer it. So, one day I told him that we don’t need this in our life. I said, why don’t you retire?”



Bobby listened. And Wanda, a senior executive national sales director, retired after 40 years from the highest position you could attain in Mary Kay.

After a few years of enjoying life in Flower Mound, northwest of Dallas, but driving four hours each week to a football game here in the Hill Country in order to cheer on their “No. 1” grandson (and never missing a game), Wanda and Bobby, now work-free, thought it might be easier just to move.

Today, the Dalbys live within a one-hour drive of their four adult children and four grandchildren – all boys. Bobby finally has his own ranch, which Wanda fondly refers to as “the boys club.” She says she’s convinced it’s not just all about hunting, but also mentoring a younger generation of boys on how to “do life” as they grow into manhood.

Wanda and Bobby say they attend Henly Baptist Church because “it is perfect in our eyes,” and the friendliest they’ve ever known. Well, we say, “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” We are the ones most blessed. Welcome, Wanda and Bobby, to our family of faith!

Henly Today is a monthly publication of Henly Baptist Church. Pastor and Executive Editor: Don Forrester. Our mission is to report on and encourage participation in all church activities, share stories of our church family, and to support the fulfillment of our church’s 100-year-plus mission “to be a spiritual lighthouse in the community through the practice of Christ’s teachings, evangelism, outreach, and social and benevolent ministries.” Please send your news, comments and address updates to: HenlyToday@gmail.com.

REFLECTIONS ON CHRISTMAS EVE

Shortly before our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Service was scheduled to begin, I told my wife, "It won't be the same this year." Several of our members had shared with me a week or two earlier that family commitments and other plans would keep them away from the service. Then, on Christmas Eve, I received an email from another family to let me know that they, too, were providentially hindered from being in attendance. I fought back a sense of disappointment by telling myself that it would be okay anyway. The time shared with a small group would still be time well spent.

The theme for our service was based on this proclamation from Isaiah: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness, a light has dawned." I had invited three people to briefly share how that light had altered their lives.

How do I say this? I was right: It wasn't "the same" this year. For starters, I looked out over a vast crowd of people who were mostly unknown to me. Who were these people and from where had they come? I truly didn't know, but every seat was taken and we had to scurry to bring in more chairs to accommodate the crowd. For all I know, half of those present on Christmas Eve could have been angels unaware. Seriously, how does one know?

The one thing I do know for certain is this: Like that first Christmas, Christmas Eve in Henly proved to be a Holy Night.

- Don Forrester

OUR LEGACY IN COLOR AND LIGHT



As you enter our sanctuary, look to your left and you'll see this month's featured stained-glass window. It is in honor of the Charles and Sally Jo Gravenor family. Like the windows featured in last month's *Henly Today*, the design reflects the unique landscape of our Texas Hill Country. But instead of cattle, this one features goats. In addition, three butterflies and a cross vie to capture your attention. It is an incredibly beautiful window.

Sally Jo is currently the most long-tenured member of our family of faith. Her life has perpetually been intricately woven into the fabric of things associated with Henly Baptist Church. Her dad was a deacon and her mother was the church pianist during her childhood years. When I first came to Henly as pastor, Sally Jo and June McCarty, her dear friend, immediately sensed that I would need structure and a moderate level of supervision. Both lovingly signed on to assist with the task.

Sally Jo currently is enjoying an active lifestyle in an assisted living facility between Austin and Dripping Springs, but you can rest assured that nothing transpires at Henly Baptist Church that doesn't subsequently need to pass the litmus test of her approval. She is as sharp as a tack and still senses a calling to provide some level of oversight. In addition, she has proven to be a dear friend.

Charles and I also came to be friends, but the friendship and connection wasn't immediately forged when I showed up as the pastor in early 1979. In the long history of our church, there had been a number of different pastors; sometimes almost like a revolving door. By day or by night, most of them came and went in a couple of years. Of course, there were exceptions. For example, Bro. Dale Linder was pastor for 12 years. Regardless of their tenure, I had the sense that Charles was more comfortable keeping his distance rather than extending his friendship.

I can't really tell you when the tide changed, but Charles and I came to have a mutual respect for one another and developed a genuine friendship. I was honored to officiate at his funeral in 1989. His was a graveside service. It seemed highly appropriate because Charles had such a deep appreciation of nature. He was most at home in the outdoors and frequently found refuge in the beauty of his environment. He also was at peace with God.

Charles and Sally Jo were the first couple married in Henly Baptist Church. They were blessed with four children: Cathy, Sandy, Bill and Diann. All four still have very close ties to Henly, and I continue to be grateful for the gift of their friendship.

- Don Forrester



WANTED

Your Best Bowl of Chili

Join Us! 1st Annual Cook Off

Whether you want to Cook & Compete

or just Want to Eat, you're bound to

have a whole lotta **FUN!**

* Prizes Awarded *

Sunday, January 26, 2020
High Noon

Henly Baptist Church
200 Henly Loop

Dripping Springs, Texas 78620

200 Henly Loop

Henly Baptist Church