

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Hungry

The Beatitudes found in Matthew and Luke illustrates in plain talk the paradox of God's plan for humanity and as compared to the outcome when we do it our way. In Luke's version we learn that the Kingdom of God belongs to the poor. Why? Because the poor, the hungry and those who are in tears will experience God's power in ways that the well-off, the comfortable and the privileged cannot. If I already have everything materially that I need; if I am already too full to take another bite; or if I am already celebrating, I am likely to miss out on what it is like to experience a *breakthrough*.

We all know that it's better not to shop for food when you are hungry. But



it's worse. According to a Forbes article on this topic researchers have found that any shopping that we do when we are hungry will result in our spending more money. Hunger increases our desire to buy more stuff — even things that we can't eat. One study found that when people were offered free binder clips, those who were hungry took home 70% more binder clips. Apparently, when we are hungry we want to take anything that isn't

nailed down. Hungry people will load up their plate at a buffet with way more food than they should eat at one sitting and are often oblivious to how many others are in line to eat.

But I prefer to go shopping for groceries when I am hungry. I've noticed that when I'm not hungry, even worse if Cyndi and I go to the grocery store right after we eat a big meal, it is all I can do to motivate myself enough to put something in our cart. I'm in a hurry to get only what we came for and get out. On the other hand, if we go to the grocery store when I haven't eaten in a few hours

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Speechless

Our message last week was about God using ordinary people like us to do extraordinary things. And one thing that all of us ordinary have in common even with the extraordinary people is that we communicate. Most of us can speak audibly. A lot of us can write. Some

of us can sign. We can all make joyful noises even if they are silent to the human ear. We ordinary people are not speechless.



While there are some who do not have an ability to speak audibly we all have an innate ability to communicate. Our very survival depends on communication. Even without audible words the exchange of energy that place between each of us and the rest of creation speaks

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Volume 19 Issue 24
February 24, 2019

Special points of interest:

>>> **Church Women United of Greater Flint will meet on Friday, March 1st from 10am-12:30pm in the Asbury Sanctuary. Annual day of prayer.**

>>> **United Methodist Women will meet on Thursday, March 7th at 1:00pm in the Wesley Room. All are invited to attend.**

>>> **2nd Annual Nutrition/Wellness Health Expo will be held on Saturday, March 16th from 10am-2pm in the Asbury Fellowship Hall. (see enclosed flyer for more info)**

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Speechless ...cont. from Page 1

volumes. Yet we are too often speechless when we ought to speak up and talking when there is nothing that need be said. This is part of the human condition but like all matters of this world, God is not speechless when it comes to helping the world to know about Him.

God, speaking through the prophet Isaiah tells us that His words are never lost and never impotent. *“So also will be the word that I speak — it will not fail to do what I plan for it; it will do everything I send it to do” (Isaiah 55:11 GNT)*. When God speaks the words we hear can render us speechless as our brains tries to digest the magnitude of our experience, but soon our speech returns. And we are called on to speak in turn. But what do we say?

How can we articulate a sentence that could capture even a moment of insight that God has spoken to us? Surely, our words, unlike the word of

God will fall short. Who are we any way that we can say anything of significance about God? Won't others simply dismiss us as too ordinary?

The honest answer is that some, maybe even most, of the persons that you tell will doubt what you have to say. In the Gospel of Luke, we read a story about Jesus, after His baptism and after overcoming the enemy's tempting Him in the wilderness, paid a visit to His hometown. While He was there, Jesus participated in worship and was given the Scroll of Isaiah to read from. Jesus read a prophetic text from the scroll about God empowering a person with the Holy Spirit who will set the prisoners free ushering in the Year of Jubilee — the Year of the Lord.

It's likely that everyone present had heard that scripture before. But Jesus added His own prophetic statement about God's Word spoken to Him. Jesus told the gathered commu-

nity that this prophecy from Isaiah was filled in His reading the text that day. Jesus was the One. God is speaking through Him and all gathered were therefore hearing first hand the Word of God.

By the time Jesus was finished speaking that day an angry mob was ready to throw Him off the cliff. I'm guessing that none of us want to have our words heard in such a way that the crowd wants to throw us off the cliff. I have felt this sort of anger toward me because of things I have said and done more than once. It's a very uncomfortable feeling and I prefer not to make this a habit.

My father had a favorite saying for my oldest brother and I. We were the “talkers” of the family. Put the two of us in a room and the sun may be coming up before we run out of words for each other. I would like to think that the reason it takes us so long to wind down is that we also listen to each other. A lot of words get exchanged. We explore most of the dictionary through our stories.

But my father knew that our words reveal a lot about the person speaking them. And sometimes what our words reveal is not so flattering. My dad would say to us, “Sometimes it is better not to say anything and let people think you are a fool then to open your mouth and verify it.” Dad's advice would leave us speechless. At least for a moment.

Hungry... cont. from page 1

my imagination goes wild and our cart fills up. I'm looking closely at every aisle just knowing that I might miss something that we will need for our next meal.

I thought about this quirk mine as I read Jesus' words in Luke chapter 6 during what we sometimes call Jesus' sermon on the plain. Jesus said that day, *“Happy are you poor; the Kingdom of God is yours! Happy are you who are hungry now; you will be filled! Happy are you who weep now; you will laugh!” (Luke 6:20-21)*.

Happy are you who are hungry now; you will be filled!

Luke 6:21 GNT

It is like when we are hungry we are more motivated to experience God's Kingdom. But if we are full we just pay lip service to the experience.

I don't think that Jesus glorified the idea of being poor. I don't believe that being anxious about keeping your heat and water turned on and keeping shelter is the life that Jesus has in mind for us. In fact, Jesus else where tells us not to be anxious about anything. This is what happens when we are full of the Holy Spirit. But unless we are first hungry for God we walk away satisfied with ourselves and our place in the world.

Hungry...cont. from page 2

Here is the paradox facing us. We like to be in control. God has gifted each of us in special ways but these gifts are intended for us to build a community together that realizes the source of all that we have and thus worships the One who provides for us. Instead, we seem determined to use our gifts to satisfy ourselves. We get in the buffet line ahead of our neighbors to satisfy our hungry. We overfill our plate with food that, in the end, will not satisfy us.

Jesus in His debate with the enemy reminds us that the bread, anything that is not of God, will not satisfy our hunger. Jesus was physically hungry that day after not eating for forty days but the enemy wasn't just offering food to satisfy Jesus' hunger. The enemy was offering control so that Jesus could satisfy His own hunger. Most of us would take the bread.

The metaphor of hunger and food can be confusing, particularly when we are hungry. So imagine a mother and a son sitting at their table. There is only one item of food for a meal. The mother hasn't eaten in days but she knows that her son must eat to stay healthy. She feeds her son and goes without.

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In Our Prayers

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Curtis Young | Christopher Lewis |
| Rachel Bastine | Sarah Tanner |
| Norma Buzzard | Elizabeth Wright |
| Virginia Bigger | Judy Tanner |
| Barbara McIvor | Mary Lyons |
| Jonathon Misner | Richard Oram |
| Nancy Auger | Merle Supernaw |
| Austin & Mary Suffle | |
| Shirley Craig | |

FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| Sharon George | Mary Russell |
| Elaine Lamoreaux | Mary Nations |

Speechless...cont. from page 2

My dad had personal experience with words. As a forward observer in WWII he once was faced with a decision where his words would have resulted in a school being destroyed. He decided to remain speechless and suffer the consequences. His gamble worked that time. But my dad did speak up at Town Hall and church meetings, and more than once there were at least a few angry people who thought my dad to be a fool. Frankly, I'm proud of my dad. But his warning wasn't lost on me. Sometimes I am speechless too.

Then the Lord reached out, touched my lips, and said to me, "Listen, I am giving you the words you must speak".
Jeremiah 1:9 GNT

Knowing when to speak and when to remain speechless is quite an art unless we put all of our trust in the One who will speak through us. I believe that my dad knew when to remain speechless because deep in his spirit he knew what had to be done. Likewise, the Holy Spirit will resonate with our own spirit and guide our speech. But we

need to trust. We need to have the courage of a soldier whose life and the lives of many others are on the line. Words matter.

In another message we will focus our attention on doing. Speaking through our actions. But this week we take some time to consider moving from speechless to words given to us by the Spirit of God. Words that will not return empty. Words given to and spoken by ordinary people like you and me that have the power to heal. The power to save lives.

We need to have the courage of a soldier whose life and the lives of many others are on the line.

As we continue our worship series, Love does, I pray that you will join us each Sunday morning at 10:30 am for worship. Even better, plan to arrive by 9:30 am and join us in the Café where we will discuss the scripture that underlies the message in more depth. Invite a friend. Invite a stranger. Your words could be life-saving for them.

Pastor Tommy

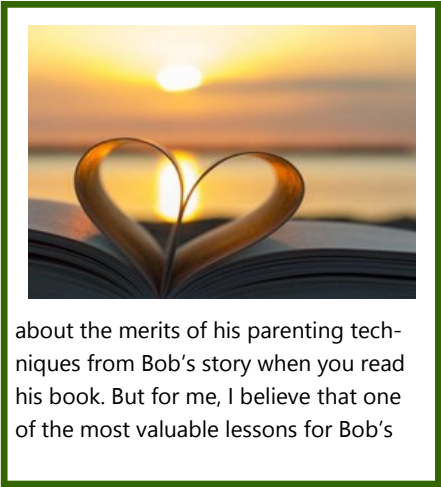


Prayer is at the heart of our beliefs

Asbury Worship Series
Love does
Living a Breakthrough Life

Bob Goff established a tradition with his children that merits examination. On their 10th birthday the child chooses an adventure go to on. And they just go. No advanced planning. No preparation. As the Nike slogan mandates. Just do it! *

You can draw your own conclusions



about the merits of his parenting techniques from Bob's story when you read his book. But for me, I believe that one of the most valuable lessons for Bob's

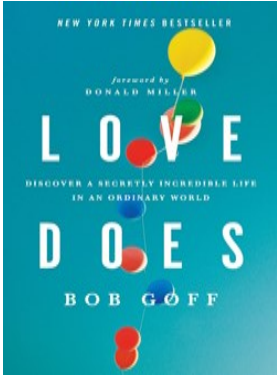
children was to have a taste of what it is like to follow Jesus. It is the adventure of a lifetime. And while I'm convinced that God knows the plan, we who follow Jesus seldom know much more than what is happening right now and perhaps a next step. Our adventure unfolds without us knowing anymore than that God has promised a life lived with Him that lasts forever.

Let's face it. People too often say

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Book Club News

Our next book for discussion at our weekly Book Club is *Love Does* by Bob Goff. This book is an easy read and a great joy that is hard to put down. Bob's view of life comes through the pages and his literary skills allow his readers to feel a part of the action. And a part of the life lessons.



See Pastor Tommy, contact the office, or just show up for Book Club to receive a copy. A donation of \$10 is encouraged for each book and we appreciate any help with purchasing books for those unable to pay for

one. Please refrain from taking a copy if you don't intend to read and discuss the book with us. Copies are readily available through Amazon and other sellers.

Bob writes that he keeps his office on Tom Sawyer Island at Disney World. Sporting a season pass he spends time in a place where many people who visit Disney World don't bother. One travel guide listed Tom Sawyer Island as an oasis within the madness of long lines, crowds and the hot sun. But our writer uses this getaway as a metaphor for missing out.

Tom Sawyer Island is no amusement ride. You bring your imagination to the attraction. And apparently it is one of those attractions that most visitors to Disney World leave on their "if I get around to it" list and they are fresh out of "round tuits" and pass — and miss out on an adventure. "Tom Sawyer Island is like most people's lives, I think: they never get around to crossing over to it" writes Bob Goff.

In his assessment of "people" the writer brings the words and stories of Jesus into his analysis as well as his own journey that began with a couple of believers who seemed to live out their faith to a relatively unimpressive high school student. While Jesus told parables and stories to illustrate truth Jesus also spoke plainly about a lot of very important topics. For one, Jesus made

it clear to the people around Him that it isn't enough to just look like you love God. Instead, Jesus pointed out that the way to tell how much we love God is by how well we love people.

Let's face it. People can be hard to love at times. But if we truly believe that God created us and wants what is best for us, this makes God rather easy to love. And I suspect a lot of people — most people stop there. They love God but not so much God's people. And let's face it, church people can be hard to love. But this isn't the point.

Perhaps this is one of the challenges for those who don't believe that God lived among people as Jesus Christ. They may even like Jesus but they don't care much for what Jesus told them they needed to do. In one of the stories Jesus tells a young man with a lot of belongings that he needed to get rid of his stuff. It must have been getting in the way of the young man loving others. He went away sad we read. Most of us go away sad at the thought of giving something up.

Bob takes the Gospel seriously by living whimsically. A contradiction? Not really. We can never quite know what God is up to so even our best laid plans may get interrupted by a God request. Are we willing to drop everything, or sell everything, or just change our mind about what we plan to do tomorrow? This is how love does.

Since God is insistent that we love one another, this state of feelings toward another person we call "love" must move from a noun to a verb. We do because we love. We go because we love. We respond because we love. This all looks quite whimsical to the world outside the Kingdom of God. But this is how love does.

Leadership in Worship & Service

- Welcome Team Tony, Mirium,
- Ushers Anthony, Jim
- Production Team Mark
- Children Mirium & Emily
- Worship Leaders Cyndi
- Café Christine & Norma

- Jim Craig Leadership Chair
- Connie Portillo Office Secretary
- Kevin Croom Farm to Table
- Israel Unger Business Operations

Asbury Staff

- Rev. Dr. Tommy McDoniel Pastor
- Mark Vorenkamp Children & Youth
- Sylvia Pittman Worship Arts

Asbury Café

Plan to meet outside the sanctuary each Sunday before worship for coffee, tea, snacks, conversation and so on. The music will start when it is time to wrap up and head in for worship.

Asbury Worship Series- Living a breakthrough life.. Cont. from page 4

and do another. People say one thing and mean another. We have all put our faith in another person only to be disappointed. It's easy to grow callous and indifferent. It is admirable that Bob kept his promise to his children. It is even more important that his children learn that he may sometimes fail them but God never will. Bob loves his children. God loves Bob's children, and Bob, even more.

But love without an accompanying action is first of all a noun. It gives a label to something without sufficient detail to know much about the thing it names. It leaves a rather empty feeling as though something important is missing. Love requires action to be full. Love as a verb is life-giving and life-saving when animated with God's Holy Spirit. Love does rather than sit back or hold back. While love honor's the Sabbath love does not hide behind rest to avoid hard work. Love is a light shining in the darkness that finds a way forward even where brokenness casts shadows. *Love does.*

We can read in the Gospel how Jesus chose His first followers and the

- Coming up this week -

- Feb 25 Mon** 6:00pm Worship Design
- Feb 26 Tues** 10am-2pm Water Distribution
- Feb 27 Wed** 12Noon Pastor Book Club
6pm Beginners Bible Study
- Feb 28 Thur** 6pm Worship Band Practice
- Mar 1 Fri** 10am-2pm Asbury Cafe Open
6pm Asbury Youth Group

- Feb 24 SUNDAY**
9:30am Café Opens
10:30am New Beginnings
Contemporary Worship

**Last Week for Worship:
Attendance 34 Offering \$ 468**

invitation that they received. "Come and see" is the prevailing message. Rather than offer His followers a detailed itinerary of their adventure Jesus knew that words without action are just words. Followers need to do and not just hear. If this sounds a bit whimsical then you get the point. Come and see.

My children, our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action.

1 John 3:18

God established early on that Words spoken by our Creator never return empty. We read that God spoke through the Prophet Isaiah the following: *So also will be the word that I speak — it will not fail to do what I plan for it; it will do everything I send it to do* (Isaiah 55:11 GNT). And Jesus Christ is God's Word that was sent that we might know the nature of God more completely. But this requires trusting that our plans are only as good as our willingness to trust God with the outcomes.

The leadership of Asbury believes that 2019 will be a breakthrough year for Asbury. We believe that God has taken us on a wild adventure that has seen God's love in action. While there has been heartbreak and disappointment, aren't these a part of what makes an adventure an adventure?

The outcomes are still not certain. God alone carries the weight of foresight. But this we have learned. *Living a breakthrough life* requires the courage to take the next step, trusting that Jesus is who He says He is and will do everything He said he will do. Jesus Christ is, because God loves the world and wants to save us. God is love. And *love does.*

Join us each Sunday for our new series, *Love does*, and learn about *living a breakthrough life*. Invite your friends, family and everyone that you meet. They will thank you.

Pastor Tommy

* Goff, Bob. *Love Does: Discover a Secretly Incredible Life in an Ordinary World*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012.

Book Club News.. Cont from page 4

Author Donald Miller, writes this about his friend and colleague, "Bob Goff loves people with a force that is natural, and by natural I mean like nature, like a waterfall or wind or waves on the ocean. He loves effortlessly, as though love packs annually in snow on a mountain, melting and rushing through him in an infinite loop. There's no explanation for a man who can love this well save God. I think Bob Goff knows God, and I think God's love flows through him."

The review on Amazon writes that "When Love Does life gets interesting. Each day turns into a hilarious, whimsical, meaningful chance that makes faith simple and real. Each chapter is a story that forms a book, a life. And this is one life you don't want to miss. Light and fun, unique and profound, the lessons drawn from Bob's life and attitude just might inspire you to be secretly incredible, too."

Jason Russell, Co-founder of Invisible Children writes "If all people loved the way Bob Goff loves all people, the world would change overnight. In this book, he reminds us of the truest virtue the kingdom calls us to practice: Love Does. It's active. The Jesus we serve is surprising and subversive. Bob knows this because he himself is both paradoxically wise as a wizard and as joy-filled as a toddler."

We encourage you to come to our Wednesday gatherings. Our small group hopes to widen our circle and so we hope that you will join in on our discussion. We meet each Wednesday at Noon. Come join us for a light lunch, fellowship and discussion. Our food selections have been fantastic and we always have plenty to share. And we are always on the lookout for our next book, video lesson or topic. Your participation and suggestions are greatly appreciated.

Pastor Tommy

* Goff, Bob. *Love Does: Discover a Secretly Incredible Life in an Ordinary World*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2012.

GARDENING TIPS

MEDICAL

INSURANCE

2ND ANNUAL

NUTRITION, WELLNESS AND HEALTH EXPO

FOOD

ASK

A

DIETICIAN

GAMES



**HERE'S
TO YOUR
HEALTH**

PRIZES

MINDFULNESS

SATURDAY MARCH 16TH, 2019

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

ASBURY U.M.C.

1653 DAVISON RD.

Asbury Farm to Table



While turning blight into beautiful and productive landscape is good on its own, transforming a food desert into abundance is life giving. But Asbury wants to make sure that produce is available on the tables of our residents. Our culinary arts and nutritional education programs offer residents the know how just as our farms offers nature's bounty. In addition, the Asbury Café is a culinary experience accessible to our neighbors and anyone with an appetite. Our "pay what you can" approach means that no one is turned away. Those who can help either on the farm or in the café are offered special MyFlintStones tokens that can be used either in the Asbury Café or in exchange for produce to prepare at home.

We proudly accept MyFlintStones

The Asbury Café is open Fridays 10am to 2pm & Sundays 10 am to 12 Noon

ASBURY CAFÉ MENU

Open Fridays 10am to 2pm

Pay what you can

DELI SUBS

Lettuce, onions, tomato plus choice of ham, turkey or beef

STIR FRY

Local grown garden vegetables sautéed with love and herbs

GARDEN SALAD

Local grown greens & vegetables. Ham, turkey or beef upon request

WRAPS

Lettuce, onions, tomato plus choice of ham, turkey or beef

MUFFINS

Chef Kevin's special recipe with fruit, love and other delights baked in.

SMOOTHIE

Assorted flavors of the day

COFFEE

Regular or decaf

Welcome to the Asbury Community

1653 Davison Rd
Flint, MI 48506



Phone: 810-235-0016
Fax: 810-235-0016 (call first when faxing)
E-mail: FlintAsburyUMC@gmail.com
CircuitRider@FlintAsbury.org

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PERMIT #151

Neighborhood Connection



We envision a community in love with God, each other, and our neighbors evidenced by the transformation of ourselves and our neighborhood. We are a center for worship & spiritual growth, a center for connections and a center for health & wellness.

Our goal is a revitalized community where every resident can use their talents and passions for the common good, where children grow into citizens who contribute to building and maintaining a vibrant neighborhood, and all residents are able to enjoy safety, good health, a culture that fosters life long learning and satisfying lives.

We believe that such an ambitious goal can never be attained without God's grace and abundance and Christ calls each of us to be disciples willing to share our witness through words and acts.

Hungry... cont. from page 3

The mother is in control of who eats. But her love for her son is stronger than her hunger. The child eats and the mother is satisfied. Not because she is no longer hungry but satisfied because she has eaten spiritually. The Kingdom of God is like this.

Jesus does not intend for mothers to go hungry so sons can eat. So here is where we come in. The mother in this illustration is imaginary. Yet there are mother's everywhere that are facing this sort of challenge. What is not the Kingdom of God is that in another home there is a buffet with people overfilling their plates taking too much for their own well-being. While a mother starves. In the Kingdom of God we are all just poor enough, just hungry enough, just sad enough that we never lose sight of the love that God has shown us and we offer this love to others in our community.

In the Kingdom of God, when our neighbor is lacking we are also lacking. In the Kingdom of God when our neighbor's child is hungry, we are also hungry. In the Kingdom of God, we don't look for ways to build bigger walls to keep others out. We look for way to build bridges so that God's Kingdom is available to all of God's creation.

We do not own that which God has given to us. We do not own our houses and cars, our cell phones nor our bank accounts. Nor do we own our gifts. All that we have is a gift from a God who loves us enough to die for us. A God who will go hungry so that we can eat.

In the Kingdom of God we are all just poor enough, just hungry enough, just sad enough that we never lose sight of the love that God has shown us and we offer this love to others in our community.

There is nothing else that this world offers, nothing else that we can create by our own power, nothing else that can satisfy our hunger except the One who gives us the gift of life and all that comes with it. But God has a better plan than each of us filling just our own plate. We who are just poor enough, hungry enough and sad enough to know Jesus Christ, are given all that we are given, including this gift of insight that Jesus Christ is God, with a hungry world.

The enemy said to Jesus, "If you are God's son, order this stone to turn into bread." But Jesus would know that His hungry can only be satisfied by that which God offers. Jesus answered,

The scripture says, 'Human beings cannot live on bread alone' (Luke 4:3-4). And we can't. We can never be satisfied with less than the Kingdom of God living in us.

This is the third week of our worship series *Love does*. We began with the realizing that God does extraordinary things through ordinary people like us. In our message last week, titled *Speechless*, we explored how God gives us the words that we are to share through our experiences. Through our testimony. And that rebuilding our neighborhood begins with worship. This week we consider what it is like to make a *breakthrough* and realize that unless we recognize that we are poor, *hungry* and sad without Jesus Christ, without living in the Kingdom of God, we can never really experience a breakthrough.

Come join us each Sunday at 10:30 am to worship together. It is through worship that building a vibrant community begins. We discuss the underlying scripture in the Café each Sunday at 9:30 am. Bring your appetite. Come *hungry*.

Pastor Tommy