

ASBURY CIRCUIT RIDER

Final Judgement (The God you did not make up)

Volume 2 Issue 3

October 3, 2021



One bible story I remember learning about as a child in Sunday School is the Tower of Babel. Perhaps I remember this story because of the funny-sounding

word for what we hear when someone doesn't stop talking. If so, I may have missed how closely this word can fit my own propensity to keep talking long after the people

around me quit listening.

But as an adult, I've come to appreciate this story in a totally different light.

I'm guessing most of you are familiar with this story But just in case I'll summarize by saying that the people living on earth were at one time all very much alike. They spoke the same language, used the same slang terms,

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Please continue to wear your masks when in the building. If you don't have one, let us know we will provide one for you.

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Your Best Selfie (You are enough)



From [FaceTuneApp.com](https://www.face-tune.com) website

According to the makers of FaceTuneApp, the best selfies require a little pre-planning and the help of their app. In a promotional article titled

"How to Take a Selfie," the writers blame the problem on technology. Our phone simply fails to portrait our authentic selves.

I read their advice after spending time researching what is often called the world's oldest vocation. The story of Brenda Myers-Powell caught my attention. Brenda did not choose prostitution out of a catalog of college courses. Instead, she entered the often violent world of trading sex for money at the age of 14. ²

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Your Best Selfie (You are enough) ..cont from page 1

Brenda explained to a BBC reporter that prostitution was a natural next step for her. By then, she had two children with different fathers when she discovered that men were willing to pay to have sex with her. This was an improvement over the sexual abuse she experienced by the men her grandmother brought home.

According to surveys, over 42 Million prostitutes work in the \$1.8 billion spent annually in sex-trade. It's estimated that approximately 1% of women living in the United States participate in prostitution to various levels.

Closely associated with the sex trade is human trafficking. According to the non-profit WorldsChildren.org, there are over 21 million victims of human trafficking. The arrest of Jeffrey Epstein and public photos of numerous high-profile individuals associated with him indicate the obstacles facing authorities in prosecuting the guilty. Human trafficking is not always about abducting men and women into prostitution, but the connection is clear.

Prostitution has a prominent place in scripture both as a vocation and a critique of specific persons and societies. As such, scripture generally uses prostitution with negative overtones.

Rahab, according to scripture, was bi-vocational. She operated an Inn in Jericho that allegedly included her services as a prostitute. Grouping individuals by vocation and socioeconomic circumstances to make a significant point is common in scripture. For example, prostitution was a common vocation for women without a father, husband, or brother to represent them. As such, there are often overtones of divine justice for the most vulnerable whenever scripture references this particular vocation.

The traditional understanding of Rahab's place in the biblical narrative illustrates the universal application of divine grace. For example, the writer of Matthew includes her name in the genealogy of Jesus. And she appears again in Hebrews as a role model for faith in God's protection.

Indeed, the history of women's role in society is a testament to the activity of divine grace in the world and the strength, courage, and wisdom of feminine nature. Both wisdom and the natural creation are characterized as feminine, highlighting the intelligence and power of the feminine attributes of humankind.

Rahab apparently took a considerable risk based on God's reputation of keeping divine promises made to the former Hebrew slaves. She did not allow society's assessment of her to keep her from asking for divine protection and favor. The use of a scarlet cord as the sign of protection, rather than a color-coded branding representing promiscuity, is seen by Christians as a foreshadowing of Christ's sacrifice for all humanity.

Rahab answered a call to a divine appointment without fully realizing the significance of her act of bravery. And her response left a legacy that continues to celebrate her decision.

Abigail's story has little in common with Rahab. The wife of a prominent and wealthy businessman, Abigail, took immediate action to clean up the mess created by her husband, Nabal. The stories in scripture frequently use names with symbolic meanings. In this case, Nabal was both his name and his shortcoming — Nabal was a fool.

In Our Prayers

Kevin Croom
 Sylvia Pittman
 Shirley Craig
 Richard Oram



FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES WHO ARE HOMEBOUND OR IN NURSING CARE

Nancy Elston Elaine Lamoreaux
 Norma Buzzard Mary Nations

Coming up this week

*** PASTOR BOOK CLUB NEWS:**

Pastor Book Club is still meeting via Zoom. Please call the Church Office for more info 810-235-0016 as it changes.

Meanwhile, as a lot of you are already aware, sharp increases in new infections of COVID are pushing us back into isolation. While our regular attendees are vaccinated, we realize that a large number of persons are not vaccinated.

Therefore, we reinstated our policy to require masks in our building for all persons when not eating or drinking. If you don't have a mask, we can provide one for you, just ask the office.

Thank you and everyone stay safe!

*** CHARGE CONFERENCE:**

With Charge Conference just around the corner, please remember to try to get your reports in to me, by the date stated on your notes. Any questions, just call me.

*** CHECK OUT OUR OPEN MIC NITE ON PAGE 14 FOR MORE INFORMATION!!**

- Oct 4 Mon
- Oct 5 Tues 10:00am-12:30pm
 Food/Water Distribution
- Oct 6 Wed 12Noon Pastor Book Club
 11:00am-12Noon Food Giveaway at
 South Flint Soup Kitchen
- Oct 7 Thu
- Oct 8 Fri
- Oct 9 Sat 12Noon Food Not Bombs
- Oct 10 Sun 10:30am
 New Beginnings
 Contemporary Worship

(We are live on [Facebook](#) and our newly launched [YouTube channel](#). You can find these links along with more information about us on our website at FlintAsbury.org.)

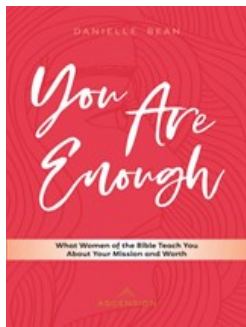
Asbury Worship Series Better Together Coming this October



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Book Club News

We're concluding our discussions of Barbara Brown Taylor's book, *Holy Envy*, so we're ready to jump into our next topic. Barbara is clearly a stand-out among women of her generation. A priest, professor, and frequent speaker, her words and stories continue to inspire us.



Over the past year, we've experienced

the election of our first woman Vice President. The election of Kamala Harris places her both in the history books and in the spotlight. Kamala was one of six women who sought nomination as President. A 2019 survey conducted by LeanIn.org found that 53% of registered voters were either "very ready" or "extremely ready" for a woman president.

Leadership in Worship & Service

Tony, Mirium
Anthony, Jim
Jonathon, Terrance
Mirium
Cyndi
Christine & Norma

Welcome Team
Ushers
Production Team
Children
Worship Leader
Cafe

Asbury Staff

Rev. Dr. Tommy McDaniel Pastor & Exec Dir
Connie Portillo Office Manager
Sylvia Pittman Empowerment Arts
Jim Craig Board & Leadership Chair
Kevin Croom Exec Chef & Dir Opers

You can't make this stuff up. And you don't have to because it's right there in print. Turn to the book of Judith, and you'll find an intriguing story of sacrifice, deceit, and bravery by a woman willing to risk her life to save her country. A woman with her own book, Judith was a faithful, wealthy widow. When her country is threatened by the Assyrian army, and the people are ready to surrender, Judith

hatches a plan, confident that God will protect her from harm.

But I don't want to spoil the ending.

Better together is a 2-part worship series based on women found in the Old Testament. Much of the content for this series comes from the book,

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For our new series, *Better together*, our life group chose a book by a lesser-known yet influential female writer named Danielle Bean.¹ She is the brand manager for CatholicMom.com and former publisher and editor-in-chief of Catholic Digest. Danielle is also the creator and host of a weekly Catholic women's television talk show called *The Gist*. In addition, she has published several books, is a popular public speaker, and hosts her own podcast.

From the back cover of *You are Enough*, we read that Danielle Bean's book is an "invitation from God for belonging and love." Each of us is unique, worthy of love, and called to greatness. But in a divisive world, we get distracted from that truth and begin to doubt God's love is real.

Sadly, too many of us, particularly women, are told that we are not smart enough, pretty enough, sexy enough, or thin enough. So it is no wonder that so many forget that we are already made perfect. We are already enough. And God has made each of us for a unique purpose.

In her book, Danielle Bean introduces us to several women found in the Old Testament. She invites us to see how God's love for each of us shines forth through their stories. She invites us to connect with these remarkable women's hopes, dreams, struggles, and experiences. And to learn how their lives offer valuable lessons for our lives today.

Recent increases in new infections of COVID among the unvaccinated are pushing us back into isolation. While our regular attenders are vaccinated, we realize that a large number of persons are not vaccinated. Therefore, we reinstated our policy to require masks in our building for all persons when not eating or drinking.

We strongly urge all persons to get vaccinated as soon as practical unless advised by your doctor. Avoid news sources that promote baseless claims and pay closer attention to the experts we depend on to keep us safe.

We each make our own arrangements for lunch at this point. However, we look forward to returning to pot-luck lunches when infection rates fall. We anticipate this happening as the number of vaccinations reaches herd immunity levels, and the CDC relaxes precautionary measures.

If you prefer to avoid groups or live too far away I encourage you to [join us online](#) for our Wednesday gatherings. Alternatively, you can call in by phone, be heard, and hear what others say by calling (929) 436-2866 -- enter the meeting ID, 282 039 5568#.

We are a diverse group, and we are delighted when new persons join us. I hope that you will join in on our discussion.

You can contact our office with questions, by phone or simply type your question on our website's homepage — [FlintAsbury.org](#).

Pastor Tommy

¹ [Danielle Bean](#). *You are Enough: What Women of the Bible Teach You about Your Mission and*



Better Together (Coming this October) ... Asbury Worship Series

You are Enough, a book about many of the women found in the Old Testament.¹

Our worship team is inviting you to share your favorite women of the Old Testament. Perhaps you identify with a particular story or character. Why? What fits? What doesn't fit? Send a selfie video to ArtsCenter@FlintAsbury.org so we can share your story with others.

Check out Rahab, Abigail, Bathsheba, Tamar, Judith, Delilah, Sarah, Hannah, the un-named Widow helped by Elijah, the Shunammite Woman, Miriam the Princess, Rachael and Leah, Ruth and Naomi, and of course, Eve. Which of these stories intersect with your story?

Man, woman, non-binary, or any combination, you're invited to participate in our series. Share what you admire about one or more of these women. In what ways do they remind you of a particular person in your life? What do you have in common?

Our Book Club plans to follow along in Danielle's book during our series if you want deeper discussions on our weekly themes. We have a few books available, or you can check with the library or order your own copy from several sources.

The latest variants of COVID are more contagious. As a result, there is a resurgence of new infections among the unvaccinated. It's time to come out of whatever fears or biases keep you from being a part of the solution. Get vaccinated!

I pray that you will join us each Sunday morning at 10:30 am. We share our weekly explores live on our [YouTube channel](#). We go live at 10:30 am. You can find these links along with more information about us, or join our live broadcast on our [website](#) at FlintAsbury.org.

Pastor Tommy

¹ Danielle Bean. *You are Enough: What Women of the Bible Teach You about Your Mission and Worth*. West Chester, PA: Ascension Publishing,

Final Judgement (The God you did not make up)... *cont. from pg 1*

dressed similarly, and so on. You get the point. Can you spell B-O-R-I-N-G? It was like a meg-church with no small groups.

Their boredom finally reached a point that they decided to start a massive building project. First, the plan was to build a tower that reached heaven. Then, perhaps they planned an insurrection and takeover. This way, they could make sure that everyone in heaven was like them. Sound familiar?

Regardless, God had a different plan. The tower was destroyed by God before it was finished, and the people scattered. Instead of the same language, multiple languages emerged. Instead of one way to dress, people started going to someplace other than the Gap to buy their clothes. You get the point. Instead of one large group that looked, talked, and thought alike, they became many different groups.

Can you spell D-I-V-E-R-S-I-T-Y?

Of course, there were consequences. There are always consequences.

If you aren't familiar with this story, you may not realize that I embellished the story of Babel quite a lot. I even made some of it up. Nevertheless, it's a good story, and my version may be closer to the truth than the

way others tell it — or not. But I take comfort in knowing that the technical details of the story aren't the point.

Part of what it means to be human is filling in the blanks when trying to make meaning out of vagueness. And we have little choice but to fill in the blanks with whatever insights we've gathered from other sources. So when detail is missing, we make the rest up often without realizing that it's happening.

This is how our vision works all the time. Our eyes miss a lot of detail because our eyes have a lot of blind spots. So our brain fills in the missing pieces for us based on past experience. As a result, we see a partially accurate and somewhat inaccurate version of what actually exists.

We go through a similar process when we describe God. What we don't know about God we make up. Including persons who don't believe there is a God. They don't know for sure, so they make up a story to convince themselves that how they see the universe is the real thing. This means that other versions of the story are less valid for them.

Barbara Brown Taylor writes that:

Spirituality is the active pursuit of the God you did not make up. My view of God is my

creation, made from bits and pieces of received or perceived knowledge about divine reality that I hope or fear are true. Love God in the person standing right in front of you, or forget the whole thing, because if you cannot do that, then you are just going to keep making shit up. The one who does not look, think, or act like the rest of us may offer us our best chance at seeing past our own reflections in the mirror to the God we did not make up.¹

The simple answer for Christians is that we turn to Jesus Christ to fill in the blanks. But the simple answer has a lot of blank-filling that's needed to complete the picture. The Bible contains all that we need to know for salvation. Not just what we need to know for eternal life but also what we need to know to live abundantly right now.

And a lot of us stop there and claim we know all the answers. But ask anyone what they know about God and you're going to learn more about the person than you learn about God.

This is because our spiritual eyes are very much like our physical eyes. We still fill in the blanks to

However, Nabal's refusal to offer hospitality was an offense that struck deep into societal expectations. More important, Nabal offended God when he refused to return kindness as retribution for the safety he received. Moreover, in David's intent to exact revenge without regard to the collateral loss of innocent lives, foolishness was prepared to battle with arrogance to the death.

Abigail rose to the occasion. The presence of her story in scripture is evidence that she responded in the affirmative to divine appointment. She was more than a trophy wife to an arrogant and foolish man. Abigail was a God-appointed hero.

Prostitutes vary significantly in their stories and reasons for their place in the sex trade. The vast majority arrived circumstantially as victims. Over 90% of prostitutes work for a middle-person negatively referred to by the slang term "pimp." Prostitution is not limited to women, nor are feminine attributes a qualifier. At least 20% of prostitutes identify as male in their gender identity.

The stories in scripture affirm that regardless of whether a person is a victim or believes they are whatever they have chosen to become, God sees past our vocations and choices. Whether a "real housewife" with an attitude and a bank account, a

single mother uncertain of herself, or an addict, God has an opportunity in mind for each of us to consider.

What is the opportunity that God is offering you?

Plan to join us this month for Part one of our new series, Better together. We plan to hear from several women found in the Old Testament and their contemporary versions we can actually see and hear from between now and Thanksgiving. Bring a friend with you.

We have a new button on the homepage of our [website](#) - [Click here to watch](#). This button takes you to a viewer to allow you to join live or watch later in the week. We're also live on our newly launched [YouTube channel](#). You can find these links along with more information about us on our website at [FlintAsbury.org](#).

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Pastor Tommy

¹ Much of the content of this series is based on the book: Danielle Bean. *You are Enough: What Women of the Bible Teach You about Your Mission and Worth*. West Chester, PA: Ascension Publishing, 2018.

² Brenda Myers-Powell . "My 25 years as a prostitute," © BBC News, June 39, 2015.

Whenever you did this for one of the least important...you did it for me!

Matthew 25:40

Life groups questions & notes:

When Abigail saw David, she quickly dismounted and threw herself on the ground at David's feet, and said to him, "Please, sir, listen to me! Let me take the blame.

1 Samuel 25:23-24 (GNT)

NOTES FROM WORSHIP

QUESTIONS FOR LIFE GROUPS

1. Read 1 Samuel 25:2-42. Have you ever had to clean up someone else's mess? If so, you may be able to identify with Abigail. Do you ever find yourself wanting revenge? If so, perhaps you can identify with David in this story. Have you ever refused to return a favor? What were the consequences? What are some of the potential consequences of revenge?
2. Read the article in this week's Circuit Rider, *Your best selfie*. Do you ever take a selfie of yourself? If not, think about pictures others have taken of you. What do you look for in your selfies? Does your selfies show your authentic self? What do you have in common with Abigail? Have you ever considered your role in the world to be a divine appointment?
3. How can the members of your group help you this week and on-going to help you to be more receptive to hearing and understanding the Word of God? Pray for each other to have the Holy Spirit bless you with more courage.

“Feed Flint”



“Feed Flint”

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A meal goes a long way for a senior living alone, a family struggling to make ends meet, or a child fearful of empty shelves at home. But for the residents of Flint who carry the effects of lead-tainted water, nutrition is critical. Feed Flint provides locally grown, chemical-free, fresh produce to residents living in and around Flint. And we're hoping that you can help us provide 10,000 meals this summer.

Feed Flint includes takeout meals, produce boxes with recipes, and home deliveries as part of our work to guide and support families in moving to sustainable abundance. The reality is that Michigan's food insecurity levels got worse during the COVID-19 pandemic, and this summer's recovery is leaving behind those at the most risk of having to miss meals.

Flint families continue to struggle with the ongoing effects of the water crisis.

We're bringing together the resources of the Asbury Community Development Corporation. This includes Asbury Farms, the South Flint Soup Kitchen, the Asbury Community Help Center, multiple food pantries, and our Sizzling Culture Mobile Food Trailer. Our plan is to care for our neighbors when they need it most. We accept all people as they are, and our doors are always open to anyone.

Asbury Farms provides locally grown produce used to create fabulous and nutritious meals. Our seed-to-table approach is community-based. This not only helps families make it through emergencies and crises. We help move families towards sustainable abundance.

Our Sizzling Culture program provides jobs and new skills to our city's youth. This includes year-round employment. Our staff and most of our volunteers come from the neighborhoods we support. We call this sustainable abundance because families move from need-based on scarcity to enough based on community-generated abundance.

Our work is also about food and justice. Our vision is a revitalized community where every resident can use their talents and passions for the common good, where children grow into active citizens. And all residents can enjoy safety, good health, and a culture that fosters life-long learning and satisfying lives. This summer, help us address food insecurity and strengthen Flint's budding local food system by supporting the Feed Flint campaign. Thank you for taking the time to see what we're doing and considering how you can help.

**Donate to our Feed Flint Campaign by visiting:
flintasbury.org/feed-flint-donate**

SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN
PRESENTS...

**OCTOBER
FOOD GIVEAWAYS &
ANGEL CLOSET**

3410 Fenton Road, Flint, MI 48507

Food Giveaways - October 6th & 20th
11am-noon

Angel Closet - Appointment only,
October 12, 13, 14

A list of items needed, sizes and a
mask required for entry.

To book an Angel Closet appointment, call or
email:

810-239-3427

SOUTHFLINTSOUPKITCHEN@GMAIL.COM



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Select what goes in your box from each week's harvest. Get \$5 off your next order when you fill your box with \$15 of produce.

WANT US TO DECIDE FOR YOU?

Choose Veggie Box Subscription and we will fill your order with a variety of each week's harvest. Pay when you pick up your box. **A \$15 VALUE FOR \$10.**

*** CONVENIENT PICKUP AT ASBURY OR AT THE SOUTH FLINT SOUP KITCHEN ***

create the version of Jesus that most agrees with what we choose to believe. Some of us tune in to the "Fox News" version, while others look to sources with less bias. Meanwhile, we miss the other side of each story which brings us back full circle to Babel.

My all-time favorite story from scripture may be the most demanding of all. I suspect that it is common for us to wonder if there really is a day of reckoning. Death presents such a finality to all that we know. Yet, who doesn't hope for something beyond that moment when our life is over? But will there be a day of reckoning?

Jesus filled in some blanks for us about a final judgment on several occasions using stories to illustrate what to expect. For example, in Matthew's telling of one story, Jesus uses livestock as a stand-in for people. The very name "live-stock" infers being alive. So I don't mind Jesus comparing me to an animal, depending on which animal He chooses.

Whenever you did this for one of the least important...you did it for me!

Matthew 25:40

At the end of our life here, according to Jesus, there will be a sorting out. The sorting will be like a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. Jesus must have liked sheep but may have gotten butted by a goat at some point. Because in this story, it far better to be a sheep.

One fascinating point in this story is that neither the sheep nor the goats knew that they were sheep or goats. Perhaps it's like a fish that doesn't realize that it lives in water, but there are birds overhead that live in the sky. Until the day they become fish food.

The deciding factor for whether I am a sheep or goat, according to Jesus, is determined by how we respond to persons in peril. But in His telling, Jesus uses a very subtle test. He says to the sheep that when you saw me thirsty, hungry, naked, a stranger, in prison, or sick, you didn't just ignore me. Instead, you treated me with dignity, offered hospitality, or sometimes you took action to help relieve my suffering.

The confusion comes from the lack of recognition that any of us, sheep or goats, actually recall seeing Jesus in peril. The gut-punch comes when Jesus says that whenever we take action to help the most vulnerable among us, we're actually doing something for and to Jesus. When we see a person in peril, we should see the very God who determines our fate. But we must look closely to see God.

This, my friends, is the God that we didn't make up. This is the God who created diversity among us to be a unique image of our must look closely to see God.

This week is the final episode of our series we called *Holy Envy*. Join

us each Sunday as we navigate life's challenges using the Word of God as our guidepost. And recognizing that none of us have a monopoly on knowing the mind of God. So we're better when we work together.

In this month's series we looked for God in the faith of others. In doing so, we expect to experience holy envy from time to time. We anticipate once in a while wondering whether the water might be a bit sweeter coming out of our neighbor's well.

Plan to join us next month for Part one of our new series, *Better together*. Between now and Thanksgiving we will be hearing from several women found in the Old Testament and their contemporary versions we can actually see and hear from. Bring a friend with you.

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**ASBURY CHURCH
PRESENTS....**

OPEN MIC

LIVE STREAM OPEN MIC
07 PM TILL 10PM

**RAFFLE
\$1**

10.22.21

LOCATED AT ASBURY CHURCH

**1653 DAVISON ROAD
FLINT, MI 48506**

**No need to sign up ahead
of time!**

ALL ARE WELCOME!!!

**SNACKS
PROVIDED!**

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