

## *I've Been Thinking about . . . The Final Apologetic* by Pastor Chris

He looked like an Old Testament prophet in knickers. His bulging forehead, furrowed brow, scraggly hair and goatee conformed his personal appearance to his prophetic role as he proclaimed God's "true truth," warned the Church against succumbing to relativism, and portrayed Western culture as drifting away from its biblical moorings. His knickers seemed odd on American legs, but fit his residence in the Swiss Alps.

Francis Schaeffer, born 100 years ago this year, has been called "the great prophet of the 20<sup>th</sup> century."<sup>1</sup> His prescient extrapolations of relativism's disintegrative consequences have proven accurate over time.

Schaeffer's 1968 book, *The God Who Is There*, had a formative influence on me in the mid-1970s when, as a toddler Christian, I was learning how to think Christianly. In that book, Schaeffer analyzes the intellectual and cultural climate of the second half of the twentieth century, detailing the abandonment of "true truth" with tragic consequences in the whole culture and its constituent parts—philosophy, art, music, theology, language, literature. Schaeffer then instructs the Church on both speaking and living into this intellectual and cultural climate. This leads him to apologetics—the defense and communication of the historic Christian faith to the current generation.

Two additional books complete Schaeffer's trilogy, which forms the foundation for his life's work. In *Escape from Reason*, Schaeffer explains how the disintegration of Western culture grows from corrupted roots that reach far into the past. In *He Is There and He Is Not Silent*, Schaeffer returns to apologetics, using the philosophical disciplines of metaphysics (the inquiry into existence), morals, and epistemology (the theory of knowledge) to construct an apologetic for the biblical truths that God exists and that he can be known.

Given the profound impact of his trilogy, it would be easy to overlook Schaeffer's little book, *The Mark of the Christian*. Yet it is here that his apologetic resurfaces in a simpler yet profound trajectory that applies to each and every Christian.

In *The Mark of the Christian*, Schaeffer observes that believers have always employed many different symbols to show that they are Christians. Today we wear crosses around our necks and put fish symbols on our cars. While it is appropriate to use such symbols as signs that we are Christians, "there is a much better sign. . . . It is a universal mark that is to last through all the ages of the church till Jesus comes back. What is this mark?"<sup>2</sup>

To answer that question, Schaeffer draws on two statements of Jesus.

At the Last Supper, Jesus instructs his disciples:

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

—John 13:34-35

In his High Priestly Prayer, Jesus intercedes:

My prayer is not for [the apostles] alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

—John 17:20-23

Everyone will know that we are Christians if we love one another. We are to have unity with one another to let the world know that the Father sent Jesus. It is Christians' love-in-unity and unity-in-love that, more than anything else, commends Christian truth to a watching world. Thus, Schaeffer calls our observable love for one another "the final apologetic."<sup>3</sup>

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**“I Am Blessed”**

*Associate Pastor of Ministry Advancement & Adult Ministries*  
Howard Lundeen

***“Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD from the heavens, praise him in the heights above. Praise him, all his angels, praise him, all his heavenly hosts. Praise him, sun and moon, praise him, all you shining stars. Praise him, you highest heavens and you waters above the skies. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.” (Psalm 148:1-5 NIV)***

As I awoke early the other morning, the wonderful thought of how blessed I am consumed my thoughts. Have you ever simply lay in bed, or sat in a favorite location, and allowed the Spirit of God to bring to your awareness the limitless ways in which you have been blessed by God? As I lay in bed that morning the amazing reality that God has done so much to make himself and his truth known to me, was overwhelming. The mind-boggling truth that we can know and have a personal relationship with the Creator God seems almost too good to be true!

Does the fact disturb us that there are thousands of people living all around us who have no appreciation for all God has done for them? Many people have either rejected, or never understood, God’s revelation of himself through creation, his Word, or other means. Vast numbers of people seem to be clueless about God’s glory, majesty and love. They have never realized the living hope we have in Christ. The newness of life available through Jesus Christ is foreign to them. The rich reward, of living life in accord with the precious truths of God, has not blessed their lives.

In our Adult Sunday School class’s study of 1 Peter, entitled “How Than Shall We Live?” we have identified truth upon truth regarding that question. One principle is that if we suffer for doing evil, there is no reward, but if we suffer for doing good, we are blessed. However, the number of people who do not truly recognize the difference between good and evil is growing each day. In America there is less and less knowledge of God and truth. The fear of the LORD is off the mind’s radar for many. An understanding of God’s truth and how life can be filled with hope and purpose, have been nearly erased from the tablet of their life.

The morning as I lay in bed, the tablet of my life suddenly became amazingly full with energizing truth as I reflected upon blessing after blessing that God has showered upon me! Near the top of the blessings brought to mind, was the fact that I have readily available the greatest source of truth given to man, God’s word, the Bible. It is my prayer that this precious gift will become the limitless source of blessing it truly is. May it not only be a source of counsel and encouragement to all of us every moment of every day, but may the honor of making it known to all whom God brings into our lives become the passion of our hearts. As people heed its warnings, obey its commands and claim its promises, the blessings of the LORD will be showered upon them.

Please take time to count your blessings. As I was amazed and encouraged, I’m sure you will be blessed as well. Praise God - He is good!

*Pastor Howard*

## H.T.C. Heart Thoughts for Cornerstone

By: Zach Marino

Are you like me and typically have too many things to get done? You are always saying “If there were only more time in a day, I could accomplish everything I needed to!” That has become more of a reality for my life in this season of ministry, seminary, being engaged and just growing as an individual. How in the world can I see all these areas flourish with so much going on all at once?

Well, there are two pieces that come to mind which scripture speaks to: ***Live an excellent life, one day at a time.*** Now, you will not find that exact phrase in scripture but you will find the two components grounded in scripture. The two components are “excellent” and “one day at a time.” If we look at 2 Peter 1:5-7 we see some lifestyle attributes that should be coming forth from a person professing faith in Jesus Christ. The first attribute listed is “virtue” or “excellence.” Peter is saying here that a professing Christian must live a life that is marked by excellence. What does he mean here? I mean, by the world standards, the amount of things we are involved with measures how excellent or valuable, our life is. If you are helping with the Boy Scouts, serving as a sports coach and volunteering at church while working a 50 hour job, you are living an excellent life. Is that what Peter means here though? The word used here in the original language communicates a sense of moral excellence or living a life of “good quality.” Let’s be honest, when we get super-busy, we get tired. When we get tired, we get crabby and impatient. When we get impatient our fuse gets short and when our fuse gets short, we get angry and sometimes lash out or say things we don’t want to say. However, maybe it’s not anger for you, maybe it’s a sense of complacency. When we are living such crazy lives we start to lose passion because it’s spread out so thin. We tend to develop an “I don’t care” attitude and thus, when it comes to things that are really important that we should care about and want to care about; however, we physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually cannot do it; we cannot live excellent lives.

However there’s another part of this equation. We need our perspective adjusted on life. If we go to Matthew 6:34, Jesus commands us to not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry for itself; today has enough troubles of its own. The reality is, our hearts are filled with desires to serve, to help, to coach, to teach, to support our kids, etc. God wants us using our giftedness and sometimes we get into seasons of life that require a deeper, conscious effort to focus on what is before us today and not worry about tomorrow, the next week, the next year, etc. We need to plan, but not worry. When we start to worry we take control of our circumstances. When we start to worry, we fret and become scatter brained and lose the ability to make good decisions. When we can’t make good decisions we start to fail morally, we start to live sub-par lives; not excellent lives.

God’s Word encourages us to Live excellent lives one day at a time. God has called those who have professed faith in Jesus to live excellent lives that demonstrate Christ. Living Christ-like means obeying His commands, including the one that says not to worry about tomorrow. It’s easy to leave that one out, because by doing so it puts us in control. DO NOT DO IT! Ask for God’s grace to allow you to consciously decide to live an excellent life, one day at a time. For it’s only by God’s grace we are able to live each day; and live it to the fullest.

Pastor Zach



# WOMEN'S MINISTRY



## Upcoming Events

### Rachel

**April 14<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00 am**

Come for a great morning with Rachel and plan to stay for brunch!!

9:00 Coffee - 9:30 Rachel speaks  
Brunch following

Bob will be speaking to the men at 9:00.  
The two groups will combine for Brunch.

Childcare will be provided.

### DEVOTED HEARTS CONFERENCE

**Autumn Ridge Church  
Rochester, MN**

**April 20th & 21st**

**Tickets: \$45**

**Guest speaker:**

**Alicia Williamson Garcia**

**Musical guest: Selah**

**More information available at:  
[devotedheartsrochester.com](http://devotedheartsrochester.com)**

### May 5th

**Disciple Making Pathway Training**

**Cost \$25.00 per person**

***Check the Info Booth for sign-ups.***

## MAKS

*(Moms And Kids)*

MAKS is a moms & kids group that meets the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month in the Fireside Room from 10am to noon. There is no cost to attend. Meetings are geared toward mothers with small children at home; but all are welcomed and encouraged to attend. It is a blessed time to relax, unwind and enjoy spending time working and learning together as mothers. Then, we have the benefit of a meal together while our children are well cared for and having fun.



### April 3rd *"Easter Eggs"*

Join us as we learn some new & unique ways of decorating Easter Eggs! These will be a great addition to your Easter Decorating!

### April 17th *"Child Development"*

Come with questions you may have for a Medical Doctor. Dr. Dan Stahl will join us in a discussion about concerns you may have for you or your children.



**Come prepared to relax, laugh & meet other moms.**

*Our leaders this year will be Stacy Dufault, Aimee Miller & Stacy Anazagasty. Please contact any one of us with questions.*



## Honoring our Military

Christ Community Church may not be close to any military base or fort, but we do have those serving in the military in our midst . . . or within our immediate 'extended' family.



The Congregational Care Commission recently voted to approve a proposal to honor those currently serving in the military, as well as our Veterans. Current military personnel - whether Active Duty, National Guard or Reserves - will be honored for Armed Forces Day. Veterans will be honored for Veteran's Day. Current plans are for this information to be published in the *Cornerstone* as well as on an insert in the bulletin close to the celebratory date.

Dottie Salsbury will be contacting people to gather data. If you have not heard from her, give her a call at 835-5080. She would really appreciate it.



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*Continued from page 1 I've Been Thinking about . . . The Final Apologetic*

Schaeffer draws a stunning inference from this final apologetic: Since our love for one another informs the world that we are true Christians, then if we fail to love one another, the world has the right to conclude that we are not genuine Christians.

Schaeffer summarizes the final apologetic by concluding:

We are to love all true Christian brothers in a way that the world may observe. This means showing love to our brothers in the midst of our differences—great or small—loving our brothers even when it costs us something, loving them even under times of tremendous emotional tension, loving them in a way that the world can see.

Love—and the unity it attests to—is the mark Christ gave Christians to *wear* before the world. Only with this mark may the world know that Christians are indeed Christians and that Jesus was sent by the Father.<sup>4</sup>

Francis Schaeffer and his wife Edith practiced the final apologetic. In 1955, they began opening L'Abri, their home in the Swiss Alps, to people who needed answers to questions and practical demonstrations of Christian love. Over the ensuing decades, people from throughout the world streamed to L'Abri (a French word meaning "shelter"), where they found shelter from the pressures of an increasingly secular culture. Since the Schaeffers were convinced that Christianity is objectively true and therefore can be rationally defended, they welcomed all honest questions. Consequently, thousands of young people flocked to L'Abri to live, study, ask questions, and find answers within a loving community in which each individual was valued. Francis and Edith bore the cost of such persuasive hospitality out of their own finances. It was a great personal sacrifice. In such sacrificial hospitality, they bore the mark of Jesus. They lived the final apologetic.

The mark of Jesus is crucial to all our evangelistic outreach, all our extending for the kingdom, all our missionary effort, all our gospel teaching, all our alleviation of suffering, all our advocacy for justice. For how we Christians relate to each other determines whether the world will know that we are real Christians and that Jesus was sent by the Father. Love is the mark of Jesus demonstrating that we are his disciples. Love is the final apologetic that commends Christ to a watching world. What price will you pay to bear the mark of Jesus? What sacrifice will you make to live the final apologetic?

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1. Chuck Colson and Timothy George, "Flaming Truth," *Christianity Today*, February 2012, 45.
  2. Francis Schaeffer, *The Mark of the Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1979), 7.
  3. *Ibid*, 15, 17.
  4. *Ibid*, 35.

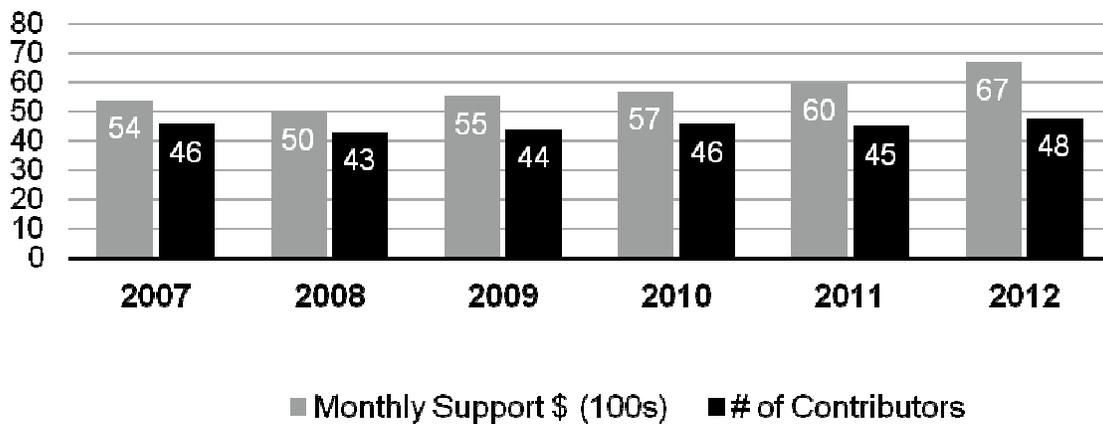
# MISSIONS BUZZ

## 2012 Faith Promise Missions Giving Update

It's been exciting to watch our 2012 Faith Promise pledge support building over these last few months. Our 2012 Faith Promise commitments now total \$6,691 in monthly financial support for our Missionaries, which is more than an 11% increase in our support levels compared to the beginning of 2011!

Our Faith Promise commitments to our Missionaries have grown over the last five years, as the following graph illustrates.

### Faith Promise Missions Giving



If you're not already involved in Faith Promise Missions Giving, it's not too late! Just grab a Faith Promise Mission form from the church office and start your giving today. You can contact Dolores Streich if you have any further questions. Remember, there is no minimum donation amount and each and every donation is greatly appreciated!

“THANK YOU!” to all who are currently participating. We praise God for his provision for our Missionaries through your faithful financial and prayer support!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> <u>8:00am</u> Worship <u>9:30am</u> Sunday School <u>10:45am</u> Worship <u>5:00pm</u> Prayer <u>6:00pm</u> 21 Laws <u>6:00pm</u> Love & Logic  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <i>"Last Chance" Production - 7:00pm each evening at CCC</i> </div>	<b>2</b> <u>10:00am</u> Women's Study	<b>3</b> <u>10:00am</u> MAKS	<b>4</b> <u>6:00-7:30pm</u> AWANA <u>7:30-9pm</u> Youth Group <u>7:30pm</u> Ensemble Practice	<b>5</b> <u>Noon</u> Men's Study <u>6:15pm</u> Worship Team	<b>6</b> <u>6:00am</u> Men's Group  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <i>Church office will be closed</i> </div>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> <u>9:30am</u> Worship  <u>5:00pm</u> Prayer 	<b>9</b> <u>10:00am</u> Women's Study <u>6:30pm</u> Precepts <u>6:30pm</u> Outreach	<b>10</b> <u>6:30pm</u> Worship Commission <u>6:30pm</u> Children's Commission <u>7:00pm</u> Property <u>7:00pm</u> Adult Disc.	<b>11</b> <u>6:00-7:30pm</u> AWANA <u>7:30-9pm</u> Youth Group	<b>12</b> <u>Noon</u> Men's Study <u>6:15pm</u> Worship Team	<b>13</b> <u>6:00am</u> Men's Group	<b>14</b> <u>6:00am</u> Journey Men <u>9:00am</u> Missions Event <u>1:00pm</u> Sparks Fun Day
<b>15</b> <u>8:00am</u> Worship <u>9:30am</u> Sunday School <u>10:45am</u> Worship <u>Noon</u> Youth Fundraiser <u>5:00pm</u> Prayer <u>6:00pm</u> 21 Laws <u>6:00pm</u> Love & Logic	<b>16</b> <u>10:00am</u> Women's Study <u>1:00pm</u> Quilt Group <u>6:30pm</u> Precepts	<b>17</b> <u>10:00am</u> MAKS <u>6:30pm</u> Elder Board Meeting	<b>18</b> <u>6:00-7:30pm</u> AWANA <u>7:30-9pm</u> Youth Group	<b>19</b> <u>Noon</u> Men's Study <u>6:15pm</u> Worship Team	<b>20</b> <u>6:00am</u> Men's Group	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> <u>8:00am</u> Worship <u>9:30am</u> Sunday School <u>10:45am</u> Worship <u>5:00pm</u> Prayer <u>6:00pm</u> Love & Logic	<b>23</b> <u>10:00am</u> Women's Study <u>6:30pm</u> Precepts	<b>24</b> <u>7:00pm</u> Adult Discipleship	<b>25</b> <u>6:00-7:30pm</u> AWANA <u>7:30-9pm</u> Youth Group	<b>26</b> <u>Noon</u> Men's Study <u>6:15pm</u> Worship Team	<b>27</b> <u>6:00am</u> Men's Group  <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> <i>Youth District Convention in Rochester - thru Sunday</i> </div>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <u>8:00am</u> Worship <u>9:30am</u> Sunday School <u>10:45am</u> Worship <u>5:00pm</u> Prayer <u>6:00pm</u> 21 Laws	<b>30</b> <u>10:00am</u> Women's Study <u>6:30pm</u> Precepts					

### **Christ Community Church Mission Statement**

As a local body of believers, we will seek to glorify God in worship, in evangelizing the unsaved and in teaching Christians to obey everything Christ commanded. To that end, prayer will be our foremost task, Scripture will be our authority, God's Holy Spirit will be our source of power and love will be our motivation.

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