

THE EVANGEL VOICE

Spring 2021

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*Now more than ever
people need to hear
the magnificent
message of
"Amazing Grace."*

It's spring! I know, I know. You're probably wondering how I was able to figure that out. There are a couple of clues. First, it's time for the Evangel Golf Tournament. Last year's event had to be canceled because of Covid. Make sure to check out all the details for this year's event. (see p. 3) We hope you can join us! Second, I have a record crop of dandelions growing in my lawn. It almost looks like my lawn is completely yellow.

As spring blooms around us, we're beginning to emerge from a year-long Covid hibernation. Many of us were able to attend Easter services at our houses of worship. Now with the Covid vaccine much more available, life seems to be returning to some kind of normalcy. Still whether we like it or not, life has changed forever. There's a question running around our minds. "What do we do now?"

A few nights ago I went to bed a little early. I decided to watch a few videos. I picked up my phone and went to YouTube. The 1st video was from the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson. It was from 1973 and was an interview Johnny did with Billy Graham. Billy had just returned from his Crusade in Seoul, South Korea. He shared about the huge crowds that attended. The smallest was 500,000 and the largest was one million. As the video progressed, Johnny asked a couple of probing questions about how we deal with the fear of death. Billy simply and concisely shared how the power of the Gospel changes lives and erases the fear of death. There were probably a couple of hundred people in the studio audience and who knows how many millions watching on television. All of them heard the Good News of Jesus that night simply because Billy Graham was not going to let an opportunity pass by.

A 2nd video was of Andrea Bocelli performing last Easter. In the midst of the global pandemic and the lockdown of almost every nation, the city of Milan invited him to perform a live stream event from their cathedral. Inside the cathedral, with no one in attendance and accompanied only by the organ, Andrea began to sing several classical pieces. To conclude the concert, he walked down the aisle and went outside to the plaza in front of the cathedral. Normally, there would have been thousands of people gathered to celebrate Easter. Last year, however, there was no crowd and no noise.

Andrea stepped to the microphone and began to sing "Amazing Grace." I've probably heard that sung thousands of times but there was something different about this rendition. As he sang, the words seemed to be more powerful than ever. Mixed into the shots of him singing, were images of cities around the world. It was so eerie seeing those cities that would normally have been teeming with people, completely empty.

As Andrea sang, 3 lines jumped out at me. From verse one, **"was lost but now am found."** In verse two, **"and grace my fears relieved."** To conclude, he repeated verse one and another line jumped out, **"was blind, but now I see."** Those 3 lines encapsulate....(cont. p.4)



Golf Is Back

After completely missing last year's Evangel Benefit Golf Tournament due to Covid 19 restrictions, we are thrilled to announce that we will once again be hosting this annual event here in the Harrisonburg area. This year's tournament is scheduled for June 18th and will be played at Lakeview Golf Course.

This will be our 14th year to host this wonderful tournament and although our venue has changed, we are very excited to provide an event where golfers will enjoy many of the same great features as tournaments in past years. We expect a large field of players based on the desire many people have to be outside enjoying great fellowship, food and fun; all for a very worthy cause.

Our focus is to provide a "safe" environment that recognizes the reality of the virus issues we face, while still allowing for a really enjoyable golf experience. Brochures providing much greater detail along with contact information are available to download and print from our web site: www.ets.edu. You may also email us at: info@ets.edu and request a golf brochure and we will get one to you.

If you are a golfer, we hope you will plan to join us. If you don't play, but know others who do, please encourage them to participate in this tournament. If you are a business owner and would like to become a sponsor, we would love to talk to you about that opportunity. Simply email us and we'll get in touch with you.



With the ever-evolving landscape of electronic media, it has become apparent that Evangel's current web site can no longer meet the increased demands. For Evangel to remain relevant, especially to a younger generation who communicate quite differently than previous generations, we must leverage the proper use of technology to our advantage.

With that in mind, we have undertaken the task of totally rebuilding the web site using a different software platform. This will allow for greater flexibility and a more streamlined approach especially for mobile users, which now account for 61% of all web site visits.

Although web site design and development can be quite expensive, we are working hard to keep costs reasonable while providing a sleeker, more efficient site for the future. Our desire is to have this newly developed site up and activated by mid-summer.

In actuality, all of this is taking place behind the scenes. You won't notice any disruption in your visits to Evangel's web site. Once the newly designed site is activated, the web address will remain the same, (www.ets.edu) but your web browsing experience should be greatly improved.

Connect With Evangel



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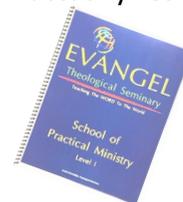


www.ets.edu

SOPM Opportunity...Coming in September

After an extensive revision of this extremely popular School of Practical Ministry (SOPM) training material, Evangel is thrilled to announce that we will offer Level I of the SOPM here in the U.S. for the first time since 2017. The School of Practical Ministry was initially developed by Evangel as a way to train lay people here in America, who didn't want to pursue a seminary degree. However, in 2009, this program was used to train pastors and church leaders overseas for the first time and since then, God has shifted our primary focus to this international training opportunity.

Now it's your turn, but this may be the only opportunity available to take this class for the foreseeable future. Class size will be limited and we will utilize the Zoom platform to teach the program, so you can actually reside anywhere in the continental U.S. and be able to participate.



Program Dynamics:

3 Primary Sections – Building the Foundation, Understanding the Call, Serving the Kingdom

Seven Learning Modules – ①What Do I Believe ②What Does the Bible Say To Me ③What Is My Spiritual Heritage ④What Role Does The Holy Spirit Play In My Life ⑤What Are My Spiritual Gifts ⑥What Strategies Will Make Me A More Effective Leader ⑦How Do I Effectively Communicate The Gospel.

Things you will learn in the SOPM class include: Hearing the Voice of God, Looking at the Biblical Timeline, Basic Interpretation of the Bible, Forgiveness, Leadership Essentials, Social/Electronic Media and the Gospel, Kingdom Living, and much more.

This is a once-a-week class which will be held over the course of 24 weeks. The class will be taught on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 9:30 beginning on September 7th. Class size will be limited and an early bird registration discount will be available.

If you are interested in being a participant in the School of Practical Ministry, we will be glad to send you additional information. Simply send us a short email saying "Please Tell Me More" to: info@ets.edu and as new details become available, we will send them to you first. In addition, we will post new information on our web site and on Facebook.

International SOPM Update

Although the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic have been more severe in developing nations, our ministry partners in Cameroon and Sierra Leone have continued to reach out to their respective nations to bring hope, peace and encouragement all while offering much needed humanitarian relief as well. We are humbled and grateful to have such great friends and co-workers in these ministries who are actively demonstrating the love of Christ on a daily basis.

As an example, in Sierra Leone, our ministry partner, Gethsemene Evangelical Ministries (GEM) has been providing food for people whose livelihood has been taken away through Covid lockdown policies. Because there is no "safety net" for these families, if they don't earn money, they don't eat. GEM has stepped in to help, even though they too have limited resources. **In addition, GEM has seized the opportunity to RESCUE 57 women from Sierra Leone caught up in the sex traffic trade in a Middle Eastern country. They have brought these women back home and provided them with food, clothing, shelter and medical treatment while they minister healing to these ladies in Jesus name.**

On the home front, we are pleased to report that the Board of Trustees for Evangel has agreed that some of the donations to Evangel for International Training will be sent to our partnering ministries to help provide much needed resources for the extraordinary work they are engaged in. **Thank you for helping to make this possible!**

It's Spring (cont. from p.1)

.....the essence of the Gospel and what Jesus accomplished through his death and resurrection. It was like, in the midst of all the craziness of last year, God broke through and said to a fearful world, "I'm still here. My love is greater than this. My Son died for you. He was resurrected and for all time destroyed the power of sin and death. Will you trust me?"

There are so many opportunities around us. The cities of Indianapolis, Kenosha, and Austin are reeling from horrific mass shootings. As I write this, there is a humanitarian crisis at our southern border. Almost 600,000 families are grieving the loss of a loved one who succumbed to the Covid virus. Others have lost their jobs. Business owners have lost their businesses. People are living in fear and loneliness and discouragement and despair.

Unfortunately, many of us who are followers of Jesus have become distracted by peripheral issues. However, we are seeing a new day and it's time to refocus. The writer of Hebrews tells us what we need to do. *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.* (Heb. 12:1,2).

Jesus addressed this situation. *You know the saying, "Four months between planting and harvest." But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest.* (John 4:35). He is clearly saying that the time is now. We used to think we had plenty of time to reach out to others. Covid has clearly shown us that there is now immediacy to life. Tomorrow isn't guaranteed. We need to be about our Father's business today.

Paul told the Ephesian believers to live their lives differently. *So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do.* (Eph. 5:15-17). You can read all about our host ministries in Cameroon and Sierra Leone taking advantage of opportunities God has presented to them. (see International SOPM p.3)

In his 2nd letter to the Corinthian Church, Paul talks about what should be our motivation. *Either way, Christ's love controls us.* (II Cor. 5:14). The overwhelming love of God that we have experienced, should catapult us out of our lethargy and comfort zones.

Jesus is our example. *When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields."* (Matt. 9:37,38). Our prayer shouldn't just be, God send someone. Instead it should be God send me.

What an incredible responsibility we have been given. Now more than ever people need to hear the magnificent message of "Amazing Grace." Because of what Jesus has done, those who are lost can be found. Those living in fear can have those fears relieved by God's overwhelming grace. Those who are spiritually blind can have their sight restored. They just need someone to show them. Are we going to be the ones to do that or will we continue to sit on the sideline hoping that someone else will jump in. It's my heart's desire that we will once again be people of action who live out the Gospel in our neighborhoods, communities, cities, and nation. Let it be so Lord!

Grace & Peace,



Robert H. Reichard, III
President, Evangel Seminary

Did You Know:

- ✓ That over 1,300 pastors from 7 developing nations have been trained through Evangel's School of Practical Ministry?
- ✓ More than 4,000 Community Programs have been started by SOPM graduates?
- ✓ Over 2,000 churches have been started by former SOPM students?
- ✓ 100,000+ lives have been impacted through the proclamation of the Gospel by those going through the SOPM training?

Your Gifts, no matter the size, help to make this all possible!