



The Harvest Times

A Quarterly Publication of The Susquehanna Valley Baptist Church

ISSUE 26.3 | 09/30/2026

Summer Happenings

- **Vacation Bible School** - This year, our theme was "Castle Conquest." The children learned about the Bible through puppets, chalk drawings, music, and Bible lessons. There were 81 children that participated over the 5 days of VBS. We had one young person believe on Jesus Christ as their Savior!
- **National Night Out** - This year, we had booths at 5 local municipalities (Harrisburg, Susquehanna Twp., The Hanovers, Lower Paxton Twp., and Swatara Twp.). It was a wonderful night of interacting with our community and sharing the truth of God's Word.
- **3rd Annual Rally in the Valley** - We joined together with one other church to hold a special day for our teenagers. They enjoyed fine preaching from Evangelist Glenn Stevenson, great food provided by church members, and some fun and exciting games.
- **Promotion Sunday** - We celebrated the beginning of the school year with pierogies & popsicles after the AM service (special thanks to the Potato Coop for the pierogies).
- **Friend Day** - We had 138 in attendance on our Friend Day. Despite the rain, it was a great time in church with our friends.

Man's Great Duty

by W. Brandon Starnes, Pastor

Many consider the purpose of our life to be one of the great philosophical questions of human existence. Those who are seeking answers and purpose in life can often feel lonely and depressed. The truth is that these seekers are not alone in their search. King Solomon spent many resources of time and wealth while searching for the purpose of life. He sought for answers and fulfillment at every turn, yet he found that life seemed to be as pointless as attempting to capture the wind.

Solomon looked for answers in the pleasures of life, in laughter and happiness, in wine, and in success, but failed to find any purpose. Finally, he strove to make a success of himself—in the modern definition. He built houses, planted gardens, made pools, refined his culture, and even increased his net worth. So great was his stature of success, that no one could match his abundance. This too, he recognized was only vanity! Much of the balance of Ecclesiastes carries the reader to discover the truth that Solomon found. At the end of chapter 12, we find this:

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. (13) For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil."

This passage outlines man's great duty to the Almighty God. Simply put, man is to 1) Fear God, 2) Obey God, and 3) Meet God.

Fear God - The fear of God is a very unique response that is outlined in the Proverbs. The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion (Prov. 28:1). When a man fears God, he has no fear of any man. The fear of God is a necessary prerequisite to the other components in this passage. Only when one observes his first duty to fear will he obey and prepare to meet God. A man that fears God must have a definite understanding of the character of God. The fear of God causes us to examine His holiness, justice, and faithfulness.

Obey God - Man must comply with the commands that God has issued. From His character, we learn that God is not frivolous but purposeful. Every command that God has given, every leading that He has impressed on the heart of His servants, has a definite purpose. Obedience to God requires a life of faith and diligence (earnest application applied to a task). Only by faith does a believer have the ability to obey. Faith is the necessary ingredient to accomplish any spiritual victory (Heb. 11:6).

Meet God - Every man must in this life prepare to meet God in the life which is to come. Every man shall be judged according to his works. The believer will be judged by Christ (I Cor. 3). This judgment is an assessment of works and not of condemnation (Rom. 8:1). The unbeliever shall be judged for his rejection of Christ and subsequent works (Rev. 20). For the unbeliever, it will be a fearful event to enter into the holy throne of God and be judged righteously. There will be no argument that can prevail, for in that day, every knee shall bow to Him. Sorrow will be immense, but the opportunity to prepare for it will have passed. Each individual must understand this very specific duty that God has entrusted him with. We can refuse and argue, but this truth will remain. Truly, as Solomon wrote, this is the whole duty of man!

Susquehanna Valley Baptist Church Media



SVBC Music



The Rejoicing in the Word Podcast



The Gospel



The SVBC Pulpit



The Rejoicing in the Word Ladies Blog



SVBC Facebook

Plan for Victory

By Valerie K. Starnes

Upcoming Events

October 3 - Lower Paxton Twp. Fall Fest
October 10 - Couple Outing
October 12 - Fall Play Date
October 25 - 16th Church Anniversary
November 1 - Ministry Sunday
November 8-12 - Preaching Conference
November 23 - Thanksgiving Service
December 6 - Children's Christmas Program
December 13 - Christams Cantata
December 20 - Christmas Chimes Choir
December 24 - Christmas Eve Concert

Monthly Memory Verse

(Each month as a church we put aside a passage from Scripture to memorize; this passage is our memory passage for March)

2 Peter 1:13-14

"Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; (14) Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me."

Great is Thy Faithfulness

(written by Thomas O. Chisholm)

Great is Thy faithfulness,
O God my Father,
There is no shadow of turning from Thee;
Thou changest not,
Thy compassions, they fail not:
As thou hast been
Thou forever wilt be.
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed
Thy hand hath provided--
Great is Thy faithfulness,
Lord, unto me!

There are many great and precious promises available to every child of God. We must plan for victory by proving these promises in our daily living.

We are promised His sustaining power in temptation and trials – "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Let's talk about some of the temptation and testing we endure because of our own sin nature. "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed" James 1:14. Often, we assume that we have been overtaken by an uncommon temptation, but usually it is the same old sins and weaknesses that trip us over and over. In Christ, we are overcomers! We do not have to give in to temptation and selfish desires.

If you are struggling with a new or continued sin problem, trust God to be faithful to you in the matter of this promise of deliverance. We can have an earnest hope that God WILL help us! Although we are weak, His grace is greater than our weakness. When we are burdened by our sin, we are ready to turn to the Lord and His Word for instruction. And HE is ready to do a work in our lives so we may grow in grace and win the victory over this sin!

Make a study of your own life patterns. Be aware of recurring events and trouble spots and prepare for them. Avoid wrong reactions by planning an appropriate response beforehand. Be ready with applicable verses from the Word of God to guide that response. Surround yourself with the support of a Bible-preaching church. When we are weak in a certain area, we need every prop available to hold ourselves upright. I suppose we need special care in much the same way we would bolster our immune system with vitamins and nutritious foods when it has been weakened or compromised. The same treatment is needed for recurring temptations to sin. Do. all. the. things. Pray. Read your Bible. Go to church. Get counsel. Follow through. Listen to sermons. Preach God's Word to your heart. Adjust your thinking to God's Word. Take every opportunity to strengthen your faith and obedience. And in Christ, you will win the victory!

This promise of God's sustaining power in temptations and trials is the first of many promises that are available to Christians on an individual basis.

May the Lord help us to prove these promises each new day.



A Ministry of Susquehanna Valley Baptist Church

Beginning this fall, we will start preparing the necessary supplies to begin evangelization within the city in the spring of 2027. Our target date for starting services is September 2027. For more information, check out the chapel's facebook page through the QR code on the right.

In 2023, our Pastor led us to begin praying about a Gospel Chapel in the city limit of Harrisburg. On July 9th of this year, SVBC voted unanimously to proceed with planting a new work in this capital city.



Susquehanna Valley Baptist Church
3840 N. Progress Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110

Service Times:

Sunday School (10 AM), Sunday Morning (11 AM), Sunday Evening (6 PM),
Thursday Night Prayer Service (7 PM)