

# Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

## 24 August 2014

*I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!" Psalm 122:2*

### Topics

#### A.M. Bible Class:

The called out (1 Peter 2:9-10)

#### A.M. Lesson:

Lead us not into temptation (Matthew 6:13)

#### P.M. Lesson:

The Lord rebuke you (Jude)!

#### Wednesday:

Envoys from Babylon (2 Kings 20:12)

Pulpit Evangelist

*Ken Knowlton: 428-3494*

Elders

*Greg Briggs: 428-8756*

*John Cunningham: 428-0895*

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

## Da! Not Duh. But "Da," Which Means "Yes."

From <http://www.milliondollarsunday.org/>

Ukraine is more receptive than ever before. They are continuing to say "Yes" to the Bible in their public schools. With six regions and one district complete, more regions of Ukraine are saying "Da!" to the Bible in public schools. EEM [www.eem.org] has been asked to place Bibles and biblical literature in public schools and now public universities.

Hundreds of thousands of students who will be studying the Bible in their classrooms. Imagine that.

More And More Of Ukraine Is Saying "Yes."

Many Ukrainian officials, librarians and teachers believe giving the Bible to their children will change the future of their country. That is why they continue to ask EEM to put Bibles and biblical literature in their public schools.

## More clichés we should avoid

Christian Piatt

Christians have a Public Relations problem; that much is self-evident. So in as much as I can respond to that, I want to offer these as advice on how to change the way we approach people about our faith. Here is a handful of phrases that, if stricken from our vocabulary, might make us a little more tolerable.

**"Everything happens for a reason."** I've heard this said more times than I care to. I'm not sure where it came from either, but it's definitely not in the Bible. The closest thing I can come up with is "To everything, there is a season," but that's not exactly the same. The fact is that faith, by definition, is not reasonable. If it could be empirically verified with facts or by using the scientific method, it wouldn't be faith. It would be a theory. Also, consider how such a pithy phrase sounds to someone who was raped. Do you really mean to tell them there's a reason that happened? Better to be quiet, listen and if appropriate, mourn alongside them. But don't dismiss grief or tragedy with such a meaningless phrase.

**"Can I share a little bit about my faith with you?"** Too often, Christians presume we have something everyone else needs, without even

knowing them first. Ask someone about their story, but maybe not the second you meet them. Christian evangelism often is the equivalent of a randy young teenager trying to get in good with his new girlfriend. When your personal agenda is more important than the humanity of the person you're talking to, most people can sense the opportunism from a mile away.

**"The Bible clearly says..."** Two points on this one. First, unless you're a Biblical scholar who knows the historical and cultural contexts of the scriptures and can read them in their original languages, the Bible isn't "clear" about much. Yes, we can pick and choose verses that say one thing or another, but by whom was it originally said, and to whom? Cherry-picking scripture to make a point is called proof-texting, and it's a theological no-no. Second, the Bible can be used to make nearly any point we care to (anyone want to justify slavery?), so let's not use it as a billy club against each other.

**"Are you saved?"** I've addressed the theological understandings of hell and judgment in other pieces, but regardless of whether you believe in hell, this is a very unattractive thing to say. First, it implies a power/privilege imbalance (ie, "I'm saved, but I'm guessing you're not based on some assumptions I'm making about you), and it also leaps over the hurdle of personal investment and relationship, straight into the deep waters of personal faith. If you take the time to learn someone's story, you'll like learn plenty about what they think and believe in the process. And who knows? You might actually learn something too, rather than just telling others what they should believe.

**"The Lord never gives someone more than they can handle."** What about people with mental illness? What about people in war-torn countries who are tortured to death? What about the millions of Jews murdered in the Holocaust? And this also implies that, if really horrible things are happening to you, God "gave" it to you. Is this a test? Am I being punished? Is God just arbitrarily cruel? Just don't say it.

**"The Bible says it; I believe it; that settles it."** If ever there was a top-shelf conversation killer this is it. You're not inviting any opinion, response, thought or the like. You're simply making a claim

and telling others to shut up. Also, I've yet to meet someone who takes EVERY WORD of the Bible literally. Everyone qualifies something in it, like the parts about keeping kosher, wearing blended fibers, stoning adulterers, tossing your virgin daughters into the hands of an angry mob... you get the point.

**"God is in control."** This raises a very fundamental problem of Theodicy, which most Christians I've met who say this are not necessarily prepared to address. Theodicy is the dilemma between belief in an all-knowing, all-loving and all-powerful God with the existence of evil and/or suffering in the world. And the other problem is that, if you believe that human beings have free will (a central tenet of most Christian thought), it needs to be recognized that that, in itself, is a concession of control by God. And like other phrases I've mentioned about God's role in daily life, be careful in tossing this one around. Telling someone who was raped, abused, tortured, neglected, etc. that God was in control during that experience likely is enough to incite that person to turn from the concept of God forever.

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/christianpiatt/2012/07/ten-cliches-christians-should-never-use/>

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/christianpiatt/2012/07/ten-more-cliches-christians-should-avoid/>

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/christianpiatt/2012/07/nine-final-christian-cliches-to-avoid/>

## News

Next Sunday (31<sup>st</sup>) will be a 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday contribution. This contribution will support the **Bibles for Ukraine project**.

Mike Cavasos will have sinus surgery on August 26.

Tatyana Knowlton is visiting family in Russia and Ukraine.

John and Sharon Cunningham are traveling.

The **building cleaning** scheduled for September 6 is canceled.

There will be a building cleaning (no frills) on Tuesday (26<sup>th</sup>) at 9 A.M.

## Prayer List:

*Bill and Barbara Eisenberg, H.L. Boling, Mike and Sandy Cavasos, Nic and Ani Self.*

