

Pastor Brian's
Midweek Message
August 17, 2022

"IT'S NEVER EASY!"

"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

How many times have you thought that a task that was before you would be a piece of cake? That it should take no time at all? How many times did that simple assignment consume a good part of your day, FAR more than expected? Such was my morning today, and it all centered around a boat...MY boat. I've heard the following three things said over and over in the nearly a year since I purchased said boat. 1) "A boat is a hole in the water that you throw money into." 2) The word "boat" stands for Bust Out Another Thousand (\$\$\$ that is). 3) "The happiest two days of a man's life are when he buys his boat and when he sells it". My Dad used to say that all the time and he never owned a boat in his life

The fun began about a month ago, on a Thursday when I was headed out for a morning of fishing. I idled out to the end of the canal to the Myakka River, began to throttle up in the open water at which point my Yamaha 115hp motor said "Uh-uh"...choked a couple of times and died. It refused to start from that point on. I had plenty of crank in the batteries, so that wasn't the issue. My problem was somewhere in the fuel line. After about an hour of amateur diagnostics (VERY amateur) I gave in to the fact that I was dead in the water and needed to be towed in the approximate quarter mile back to my dock and lift. Rather embarrassing!

At that point we were about to leave on our vacation adventure, on a somewhat larger boat that I hoped and prayed would not behave in a similar manner to mine.



So, I decided not to do anything about the problem until we returned.

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With the help of Orville Schaudt Jr. (actually, it was all Orville as I was no help at all) we determined that the gas in the tank and in the lines was so full of gunk and water that the tank had to be sucked out and cleaned, and fresh gas (non-ethanol) was then put in. That all happened first thing this morning. Fuel filters were changed out and we were good to go...so we thought. Reality said otherwise. Orville determined that the rubber bulb with the valve inside that sends fuel from the tank to the engine was shot, so we replaced that. Still no positive results. She refused to run. Finally, after flushing more gunk out of the fuel line in the motor itself we (he) got'er going. I'm back on the water! What we thought would be easy wasn't so easy, but it got done.

There's a devotion in here somewhere, about something that is extremely simple, but isn't at all easy. That would be living out the Gospel. The simplicity of the Gospel is spelled out in the verse at the top, John 3:16; *"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."* The message isn't that complicated. We sin constantly. We deserve punishment, eternally. But because God loves us so much, He gave us His Son to die for our sins, in our place, so that the punishment would never fall on us. In Christ we receive the gift of eternal life, and that gift is there for everyone. It's that simple, but it isn't at all easy. It certainly wasn't easy for sinless Jesus to suffer so and die on that cross. It cost Him everything, even His human life. It wasn't easy for God the Father to allow this to happen to His one and only Son. That for the sake of justice and righteousness He had to turn His back on Jesus at the time that He needed His presence the most. It's not even easy for us to believe in Jesus Christ and receive this great gift when every fiber of our sinful human nature fights against God and all that He has for us. It takes the almighty power of God the Holy Spirit to subdue that sinful flesh and bring about a saving faith within us.

Yes, the Gospel is simple, and pure, but living in it, and living according to God's perfect laws and decrees because of it, are the hardest things that we'll do in this life. Again, we cannot do that without the Spirit living within us. Just like with Orville...I'm really no help at all. He did all the work, and He gets all the credit. The same applies to matters of faith and salvation. I'm (we're) no help at all, rather a huge hinderance. It's God that has done all the work and He and He alone gets ALL the credit. *"Thanks be to God, who give us the victory in Jesus Christ our Lord."* (1 Corinthians 15:57)