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## Iron Sharpening Iron

In our last newsletter we set aside our topic because I wanted to share with you a ministry that God has made very dear to my heart. Today I want to drop back and pick up the topic I had been writing about since December of last year.

In discussing *The Whole Armour of God*, we have now looked at the Belt of Truth, The Breastplate of Righteousness. Then we saw the importance of preparing yourself by putting on the shoes or footwear of The Gospel. A piece of the armor where the weight of everything we will do or say as a soldier of Jesus Christ will be born up. Today we will look at another very important piece of this armor which God has appropriated to each of us.

*“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”*

*Ephesians 6:16*

It’s really interesting to see that Paul equates this piece of God’s armament, a *shield*, with that of *faith*. A piece of equipment that is the first line of defense. The shield is used in cooperation with other parts to cover and even push away an attacker in all facets of the battle. We are then told to use this to quench (or to absorb) the blows, and even to resist the burn of a fiery dart.

First let’s recognize that the shield is often the first form of defense from an attack. This would usually be a distant attack that would come from something thrown or shot at the soldier. In this we see the imperative of learning and knowing what your faith is built on and then holding fast to that faith. Then essentially trusting God no matter what the physical evidence around you might suggest. Faith is not something that we are automatically endowed with, so your personal faith will be built in the knowledge you have of who God is and how God works.

*“Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report.” Hebrews 10:38-11:2*

Secondly, we see that we have the protection of God even from the unforeseen arrows of the enemy. My mind immediately goes to Israel as they stand at the shore of the Red Sea. Notice that in the first big test God allows to come their way, He will demonstrate to them the need to take their stand in Faith. They look behind them and see the armies of Pharaoh coming and Moses immediately calls for them in their Faith, to *stand still*, trusting God to be true to His calling.

Every child of God must see the imperative of this shield Paul calls Faith. Without this piece of armor it will be impossible for us to do battle in the realms we are called to do battle.

*“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Hebrews 11:6*

Knowing about Faith is not enough and it never will be, each of us must learn to walk inside of this Faith. That is, trusting that God is true to His calling, that He never leaves, forsakes or sleeps. He is never caught off guard and He never misses anything. And each of us must choose in every moment to walk with God inside the calling He has set for us.

*“O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O LORD, thou knowest it altogether.” Psalm 139:1-4*

This can only be accomplished as we submit our wills to the will of God.

*“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.” James 4:7-8*



I've been meditating over the last month on the topic of unity. I'm talking unity within the universal church, unity within our families, and unity with those maybe not completely like-minded but of the same "conservative" mind. The Bible speaks a lot about unity. It is important and cannot be said enough. At the last supper, before Jesus was to be taken and crucified, he prayed in John 17. His prayer began by seeking the Father's glory upon himself so he could glorify the Father. Then he prays for his disciples to remain faithful to His words. Lastly, he prays for you and me, believer. He says:

*John 17:20-23 "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; <sup>21</sup> That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. <sup>22</sup> And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: <sup>23</sup> I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."*

Four times in three verses he prays, "that they all may be one." This is the desire of God for us! The end of vs. 23 says "...that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." God's desire for unity is because He loves us, and He knows that the best way to love and show love is through being united – ultimately in Christ! There is no greater unifier than the gospel and there are no better to be unified with (other than God, of course) than the children of God who are seeking His will rather than their own to be done.

If God's desire is unity than it's inevitable what Satan desires – disunity. This is important to note because this is precisely the tactic Satan engages in daily and the tactic, he is most effective with. Have you ever considered the hunting habits of wolves? They are masters at isolating one from the herd and no matter the size of the animal, taking it down and destroying it. They do this for the sake of destroying the prey i.e., eating. They don't isolate it because they care so much about that one, they want to protect it or take it out to a party. The sole intention is to destroy. This is Satan's tactic as well...every. single. time. Jesus told Peter in Luke 22:31-32, "*And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: <sup>32</sup> But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*" Satan disguises himself as an angel of light but is always only a thief, a murderer, and a deceiver. There is never a time when he does good. Never does he ever have our best intention in mind. Whenever we view a true child of God as an enemy, we play directly into Satan's hand. He wants to pin us against each other to erode any trust we may have for one another. Satan wants you alone. He wants you to be lonely – because lonelier people are easier to manipulate. If he can separate us from God and the godly influences in our lives, he can (and likely will) destroy you, and any effectiveness you may have for the gospel. John 10:10 says, "*The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy...*" This is Satan's business, and it hasn't changed in thousands of years because of its effectiveness. Don't give in to his tactics.

God has a better plan for us – always has. So, remember who the real enemy is. It isn't the brother or sister in Christ who has been there for you, helping, rebuking, encouraging you toward Christlikeness. I'll say it again: there is no greater unifier than the gospel and no better to be unified with (other than of course, God) than the children of God who are seeking His will rather than their own to be done. Paul told the Corinthians in 2 Corinthians 6:18 "... *I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*" Believe that!

Because He is Worthy,  
Pastor Ethan

## Annual Business Meeting

As we look toward the closing months of 2023 it is time to begin thinking about nominating deacons and elders to serve at Medora Community Bible Church. Forms will be available in for members to submit their choices for the positions that are open. This will give us time to complete nominations before the Annual Meeting on January 21, 2024 at 6 pm. This will also be the time to vote on the proposed Mission's budget for 2024..

**Board Members:**  
Pastor Ron Mandeville (Elder);  
Pastor Ethan Mandeville  
(Elder);  
Mike Julian (Elder);  
Dave Hawthorn (Elder);  
Mike Orpin (Deacon);  
Shaun Julian (Deacon);  
Jeff Newboles (Deacon);  
Gerald Ratzlaff (Deacon).



### Southland Music Ministries

Southland Music Ministry Team came to Medora on October 15th. They took charge of the entire morning worship service. What a service! It was filled with music and preaching from these young people. Their heart is truly towards serving God and sharing the Gospel of Jesus our Lord.



### New Baby!

Deacon James was born November 14. He was 6 lbs. 13 oz. 19.5 inches long. James and Jill Brown are the proud Parents. Big brother Bruce and Sister Marydith are loving him too.



### Caroling & Chili Cook Off December 17, 5:30 p.m.

We will meet at the MCBC Activity Center. We will be caroling around Medora and then go back at the MCBC Activity Center to warm up with hot chili and delicious cinnamon rolls at the annual chili cookoff. Sign up in the foyer to enter your chili in the cook-off, and for additional items like cheese, chips and cinnamon rolls.



### Children's Christmas Program, "Christmas Is Jesus"

**Sunday, December 10th at 6 pm.**

Come one, come all! Show your support to our children as they tell us the story of Jesus and his love.

### Christmas Card Box

Save time and a stamp this Christmas by dropping your Christmas cards for church friends and family in the Christmas Card Box in the foyer. Your cards will be hand-delivered by faithful helpers in the church. Be sure to get your cards in the box by December 20th.



### Tax Receipt

If you need a receipt for your tax deductible contributions to Medora Community Bible Church during 2023, please contact the church office by phone 620-543-2514 or by email at [dalene.westover@medorabile.org](mailto:dalene.westover@medorabile.org). If you do request in person PLEASE write it down and hand it to one of the secretaries after services.

### December 2023

- 3 Fellowship Groups 6pm.
- 5 Ladies Fellowship Christmas
- 9 Children's program practice
- 10 Children's Christmas Program 6 pm.  
"Christmas is Jesus"
- 17 Caroling and Chili Cookoff 5:30-8:30 pm.  
Last Day to drop off Christmas Cards!
- 20 Candle light service 7 pm.  
No Kids 4 Truth
- 24 Christmas Eve  
Communion

25 Christmas Day offices closed

27 No Services

31 New Years Eve

Singspiration Service 7 pm.

### January 2024

1 New Years Day offices closed

3 Kids 4 Truth resumes 6:45 pm.

14 News Articles Due

21 Annual Business Meeting 6 pm.

## Kid's Konnection

### Big Christian Word

Covetousness : Having a great desire to possess something belonging to someone else. A selfish desire for wealth or possessions.

(Hebrews 13:5) (Luke 12:13)



## Glad Tidings: Hidden Word Puzzle for CHRISTMAS

ANGELS  
BETHLEHEM  
BIRTH  
CAESAR AUGUSTUS  
CENSUS  
CITY OF DAVID  
FLOCKS  
FRANKINCENCE  
GALILEE

GABRIEL  
GLORY TO GOD  
GOLD  
GOOD WILL  
GOSPEL  
HEROD  
HOPE  
HOST  
IMMANUEL  
JESUS

INN  
JEWS  
JOSEPH  
JOY  
LIGHT  
LUKE  
LOVE  
MANGER  
MAGI  
MARY  
MESSIAH

MIRACLE  
MYRRH  
PEACE  
ROOM  
SHEPHERDS  
SON  
STABLE  
STAR  
SWADDLE  
TAX  
WISE MEN

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## Medora Community Bible Church Super Conference

What a wonderful conference this year! We had Pastor Roy Velez sharing his ministry and preaching twice. Dr. G. S. Nair presented his ministry and preached three times. Our own Dr. Wayne Johnson presented his ministry and preached. He also hosted a group of young people from Spokane, WA who sang, played mandolins, guitars, violins, something that appeared similar to an accordion and gave testimonies.

It all culminated with our international supper and traditional Thanksgiving supper the next night. We want to encourage anyone to think about setting up a foreign country's booth to share traditional food from that country. It is some work, but so much fun! Two years from now we will have the next Super Conference.

Consider it.

Below are a few pictures from the conference.



**Wednesday Evenings**

**December 2023**

6 Mary & Tina

13 Mary & Laren

20 Mary & Tina

27 No Service

**January 2024**

3 Mary & Tina

10 Mary & Laren

17 Mary & Tina

24 Mary & Tina

31 Mary & Jill



**Nursery Schedule**

| Dec       | Sunday School | Church                  |
|-----------|---------------|-------------------------|
| 3         | Erin & Laren  | Jennifer & Khloe        |
| 10        | Erin & Mary   | Sabrina/Sammie & Macey  |
| 17        | Erin & Makele | Leslie/Margaret & Stacy |
| 24        | Erin & Judy   | Jenny/Leah              |
| 31        |               |                         |
| Jan. 2024 |               |                         |
| 7         | Erin & Mary   | Jeanne/Jennifer & Macey |
| 14        | Erin & Laura  | Margaret/Khloe & Leslie |
| 21        | Erin & Judy   | Lindy/Jill              |
| 28        | Erin & Laura  | Sabrina/Leah & Stacy    |

**Medora's Munchies**



*by Arlana Snow*

**BLUEBERRY MUFFINS**

- 2 Cups all-Purpose Flour
- 1/2 Cup Milk
- 2-1/2 Cups Blueberries (mash 1/2 cup with a fork)
- 1 Tbs Sugar mixed with 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/2 Cup Butter (1 stick, room temp.)
- 2 Eggs (large)
- 1 tsp Vanilla Extract
- 2 tsp Baking Powder
- 1/4 tsp Salt
- 1 Cup Granulated Sugar (or slightly less depending on tartness of blueberries)

Heat oven to 375°. Grease 12 regular muffin cups, including the area between each cup or use foil baking cups.  
 In a medium size bowl, beat butter until creamy. Beat in the sugar until pale and fluffy. Beat in eggs, one at a time.  
 Beat in vanilla, baking powder and salt.  
 Mix mashed berries into batter.  
 Fold in half the flour with a spatula, then half the milk.  
 Add remaining flour and milk.  
 Fold in remaining blueberries.  
 Scoop batter into muffin cups. Sprinkle with nutmeg sugar. Bake 25-30 minutes, or until golden brown.  
 Let muffins cool at least 30 minutes in the pan before removing.

## December 2023

| Sun   | Mon  | Tue   | Wed   | Thu                                     | Fri  | Sat   |
|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|
|   |  |   |   |   | 1  | 2   |
| 3<br>Fellowship Groups<br>Finale 6 pm.                                      | 4  | 5<br>Mack Tolbert &<br>James Brown<br>Birthdays | 6<br>6:45 pm. K4T   | 7                                       | 8  | 9<br>Christmas program<br>practice              |
| 10<br>Children's Program<br>6pm.  | 11   | 12  | 13<br>6:45 pm. K4T  | 14<br>Tim Gay<br>Birthday               | 15<br>Pastor Wayne & Lorri<br>Johnson<br>Anniversary<br><br>Stacy Rhoden<br>Birthday | 16  |
| 17<br>Bill Westover<br>Birthday<br><br>Caroling & Chili<br>Cookoff 5:30 pm. | 18<br>Megan Ratzlaff<br>Birthday   | 19  | 20<br><br>Candlelight<br>Service | 21<br>Mike & Mary Spaich<br>Anniversary | 22   | 23  |
| 24<br>Communion<br><br>Christmas Eve  | 25<br><br>Merry<br>Christmas! | 26<br>Nyla Gray<br>Birthday                     | 27<br>No services   | 28                                      | 29   | 30<br>Cliffé & Torie<br>Reynolds<br>Anniversary |
| 31<br>New Year's Eve<br>Singspiration Night<br>7 pm.                        |  |   |   |   |  |   |

## January 2024

| Sun   | Mon  | Tue  | Wed  | Thu                           | Fri   | Sat  |
|---|--|--|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
|   | 1<br>New Year's Day<br> | 2<br>Richard Parsons<br>Birthday               | 3<br>6:45 pm. K4T  | 4                             | 5<br>Derrick & Laura<br>Rhoden<br>Anniversary | 6  |
| 7<br>News articles are due<br><br>Madison Bontrager<br>Birthday | 8<br>Shawn MacDonald<br>Birthday   | 9  | 10<br>6:45 pm. K4T<br><br>Matt & Lindy Brooks<br>Anniversary | 11                            | 12  | 13<br>George Chaney &<br>Walter Hundley<br>Birthdays |
| 14  | 15   | 16   | 17<br>6:45 pm. K4T   | 18<br>Lisa Wilder<br>Birthday | 19  | 20   |
| 21<br>Annual Business<br>Meeting 6 pm.                          | 22<br>Gerald Ratzlaff<br>Birthday  | 23   | 24<br>6:45 pm. K4T   | 25                            | 26<br>Jim Crawford<br>Birthday                | 27   |
| 28<br>Sophia Tolbert<br>Birthday                                | 29<br>Mike Orpin<br>Birthday   | 30<br>George & Marcia<br>Chaney<br>Anniversary | 31<br>6:45 pm. K4T<br><br>Sylvan Davis<br>Birthday           |                               |   |  |

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