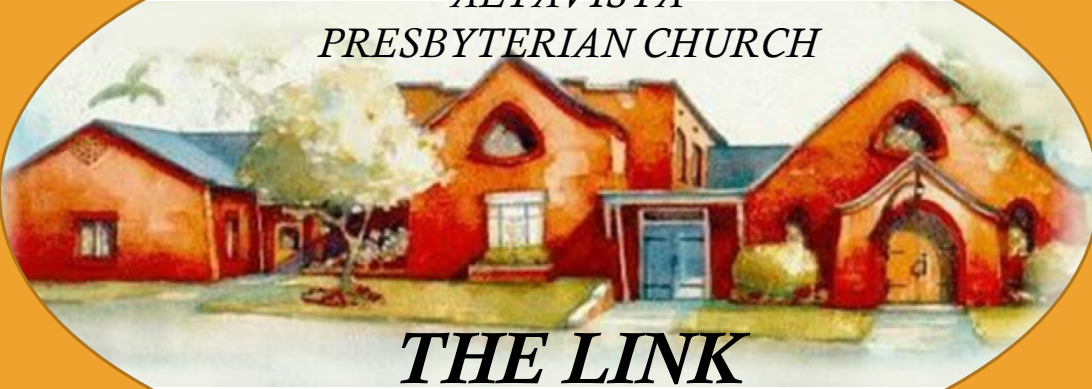


*ALTAVISTA  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH*



***THE LINK***

*October 1, 2020*

OUR VISION, OUR HEARTS, AND OUR DOORS ARE  
ALWAYS OPEN



**ALTAVISTA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

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“I strongly encourage each of you to pray and read the Bible daily”



Sabbath rest is required of us in the Fourth Commandment. More often than not, many of us fail the fully grasp what true Sabbath rest means. I was inspired by Rev. Joe Holland's article "Time and the Individual" and I wanted to share a portion of his wisdom with you.

The focus of this article is on our personal use of time, time we typically order outside our vocation, time we might call our downtime, time for refreshment. This time stands in contrast to our work hours, no matter how those work hours may be defined. And my contention is that God intends for us to start from rest and refreshment and only then to go about our work. In order to practice a biblical view of personal time, we have to have a correct view of ourselves in reference to God. Let's compare two views.

The first view we might call the modern deistic view of time. Our average Christian—let's call him Jack—holds to this view. He loves God, his church, and his family. Jack is in corporate finance and is able to afford a home for his family in the suburbs. Jack works sixty or more hours a week during this stage of his vocation, what folks in corporate finance call "your prime." He earns a good salary and pays dearly for it at the end of the day. Exhaustion is the norm. His family gets the leftovers, when leftovers are available and not already committed to what Jack calls "me time" in his "man cave." Saturdays are for his kids' sports. Sunday mornings are for church. Jack doesn't know what to do with Sunday afternoons. Jack is being slowly run down, but he doesn't quite know it. His relationships at home are suffering. It's been awhile since he last read the Bible or prayed for longer than the twenty seconds it takes him to fall asleep at night. As I tell the men I disciple, this kind of week annualized doesn't end up in a good place. Jack has lost a biblical view of time and rest.

In our second view, we'll try to reorient our view of time around the fourth commandment, creation, and redemption. Now let's look at Bob. Bob holds a more

biblical view of rest. Bob is also a Christian and works in the same office as Jack. But while a diligent worker, Bob isn't at the office as much. He doesn't stay after hours for the "optional" work on important projects. In fact, Bob believes that appropriate rest will allow him to accomplish more at work than overwork will. Bob sees rest not only as God's command to him but as God's gift. Because Bob purposefully avoids overwork, he has more of himself to offer to his family. Bob's time in the early evenings is spent with his wife and kids. He isn't obligated to collapse on the couch. He chooses to refresh in restorative family activities. Bob intentionally gets enough sleep at night, prays, reads his Bible, and enjoys worship and rest on Sundays. Bob sees rest and personal time as God's gift to prepare him for diligent work, not the scraps of time that remain after diligent work.

In those descriptions, we are tempted to compare Jack and Bob by their activities. But that is the wrong comparison to make. Jack and Bob, though both earnest Christians, have radically different views about God's sovereign grace. The only way you can prioritize rest is by believing in God's gracious and providential control over all things. If God is not in control or is not abundantly gracious or is not the One who assigns our tasks each day, then our future protection and success are completely up to us. We have to forgo rest, have to sacrifice rest to our idols of success and safety. We place ourselves in the position of securing what only God can provide and, as a result, have no place in our lives for rest. But when we start with God's sovereign grace, we can begin from rest and move to work. Each day we begin with the evening—we are asleep

and God is awake working (Ps. 121:3–4); we wake each morning to join God in His work, to set about the work He has already prepared for us (Eph. 2:10). Each week we begin with a day of celebration, a day of inactivity, a day of rest; we begin the week on the second day of the week proclaiming that our God is so strong that He doesn't need our help to get each week started—He accomplishes it on His own.

Beginning from rest and moving to work, as we've seen, includes both a biblical view of the fourth commandment and of God's sovereign grace. Practically lived out, this means that our rest takes on a different flavor, incorporating different practices, specifically physical rest, the rest of worship, and the rest that comes from celebrating in friendship.

Christians are commanded to physically rest. That is a big part of the fourth commandment, the Sabbath day, and days that begin with sleep. A big part of physical rest is getting enough sleep. As Matthew Walker says in his book *Why We Sleep*, "Sleep is the single most effective thing we can do to reset our brain and body health each day." Walker discovered this in his scientific research; Christians know it as biblical truth. We must sleep. God designed our sleep in such a way that we are effectively paralyzed while we sleep. Sleep is God's way of ensuring that we will deal with time, rest, and our own mortality. One of the most powerful things you can physically do to demonstrate your trust in God's sovereign and gracious rule is to get a good night's sleep (Ps. 127:2). The other aspects of physical rest tend to fall into place around this one central practice.

Christians are also commanded to enjoy the rest of worship. In the end, God is our rest (Ps. 4:8), He is our eternal Sabbath (Heb.

4:11). It is in this way that worship is restful to our souls. We receive spiritual refreshment when we spend private time in prayer and Bible reading. We receive a unique rest when we worship with our brothers and sisters each Sunday. Christianity far excels banks for number of holidays. Our God has commanded a weekly holiday—a day to rejoice and rest in Him.

Third, Christians are commanded to experience the rest of celebration with friends and family. The Lord's Supper on Sunday is a pattern of the feasting we should enjoy throughout the week—gathered with friends and family to thank God for His provision, to sing, and to laugh. When secular social scientists speak about the importance of family dinners together, they are only echoing biblical anthropology. We were designed to receive rest and refreshment as we celebrate and feast with friends and family.

So, practically speaking, the best thing you can do enjoy your personal time is first to jettison unbiblical views of work, rest, and God's gracious character. Then focus on glorifying God by physically resting—a few hours each day and a day each week. This physical rest will especially be seen in your commitment to getting enough sleep. Also focus on your spiritual rest, the renewal that comes from the public and private worship of God. Last, focus on the rest that comes from relationships—celebrations, activities, and feasts with family and friends, rejoicing with gratitude in the God of your salvation.

In the end, what we find these practices and the fourth commandment drawing for us is a picture of the life of our Lord, Jesus the Christ. He obeyed all God's laws, including the fourth commandment, for us and for our

salvation. He came to do the will of His Father, and He trusted the sovereign rule of His Father, even to and through His cross. Jesus rested and slept, sometimes sleeping so soundly that a stormy squall couldn't wake Him (Luke 8:22–25). Jesus frequently ate, celebrated, and feasted with His friends and family (Luke 7:34), as He, too, in His

humanity, benefited from the refreshment of friendship (John 15:15). It is Jesus who invites us to follow Him into the biblical use of our personal time for rest and refreshment in the service to Him and others. It is ultimately in Jesus that we find our rest (Matt. 11:28).

*Adapted from Joe Holland's "Time and the Individual," Tabletalk, Sept. 2020. Rev. Holland is an associate editor for Ligonier Ministries and a teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church in America.*

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# Sunday Sermons This Month

## October 4<sup>th</sup> • Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Mark 8:34-9:1

“The Cost of Discipleship”

## October 11<sup>th</sup> • Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Mark 9:2-13

“Elijah’s Return?”

## October 18<sup>th</sup> • Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Mark 9:14-29

“If’s’ Right Place”

## October 25<sup>th</sup> • Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

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Mark 9:30-37

Dr. Jarrett Knight, guest speaker

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**Altavista Presbyterian Church**  
**Session Highlights**  
**September 20, 2020 meeting**

- Examined Confirmands Nicholas Shelton & Kiernan deBernard & welcomed them as Active members of APC.
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- Approved applying for a mission grant from the Presbytery of the Peaks for the Puerto Rico mission trip in the amount of \$3,000.
- Reviewed the August, 2020 Treasurer's Report.
- Accepted Elder Janette Walker's resignation from the Session because she has moved out of state. Following discussion regarding the difficulty finding members willing to serve on Session & the short time remaining in Janette's term, there was a consensus not to fill the remainder of her term.
- Approved minutes of the August 16, 2020 Stated Session meeting as presented.
- Moved Stephen Phillips from the Active Roll to the Inactive Roll.
- Joys & concerns of the congregation were identified. Moderator Ed prayed for those listed & to close the meeting.

	<b>August-2020</b>	<b>YTD</b>
<b>Pledges</b>	8,633	77,767
<b>Non-Pledges</b>	1,875	19,500
<b>Plate Offering</b>	4	224
<b>Total Expenses</b>	12,838.95	88,928.38

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## HAPPENING THIS MONTH!

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### Bible Study — Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, & 27<sup>th</sup>

Bible Study meets every **Tuesday** morning in the Sanctuary **at 10:00 AM**. All are welcome to join as Pastor Ed leads us through various studies and discussions of Scripture, theology, and church history.

Pastor Ed continues in his series on Reformation theology.

## Prayer Service — Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, & 28<sup>th</sup>

Midweek Fellowship meets every **Wednesday** in the Sanctuary at **6:30 PM**. All are welcome to join us in a time of worship, prayer, study, and fellowship.

Pastor Ed continues in a series on the commands of Christ.

## Youth Group — Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, & 18<sup>th</sup>

Youth Group meets every **Sunday at 6:00 PM** at rotating locations. All youth between Sixth and Twelfth grades are welcome. The Youth will be fed and will fellowship throughout the evening.

- Oct. 4 at deBernard's
- Oct. 11 at APC
- Oct. 18 at Overby's

*Pastor Ed will be out of town Oct. 19-26*

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### OCTOBER

#### Birthdays

#### Anniversaries

1	Barbie Andrews, Jenny Roark	
2	Glenn Berger	
5	John Erb	
7	Ron Coleman	
10		C E & Jean Murphy
14	Jeannie Smith	
15	Carl Cuthbertson	
18		Harrison & Kris Bell
21	Dan Kauffman	Jimmy & Diann Martin
22	Ed Soto	
24	Linda Janiak	
26	Jimmy Martin	
30	Kris Bell	
31	Patty Eller	



# Month of October

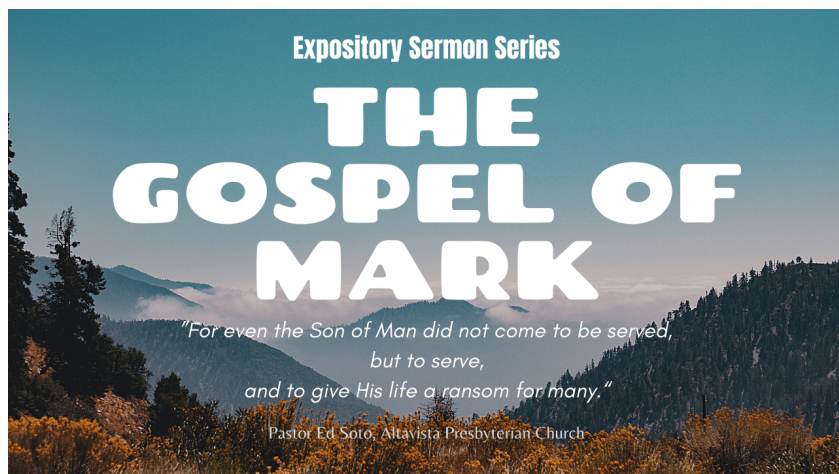
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
<b>4</b> 10 AM Worship & Communion 6 PM Youth Group Mtg. at the deBernard's	5	<b>6</b> 10 AM Bible Study in Sanctuary 5:30 PM Christian Ed. Mtg. 6 PM Ministry Beyond Mtg.	<b>7</b> 6:30 PM Midweek Fellowship in Sanctuary	8	9	10
<b>11</b> 10 AM Worship 5 PM Youth Group Mtg. at the Church	12	<b>13</b> 10 AM Bible Study in Adult SS Room	<b>14</b> 6:30 PM Midweek Fellowship in Sanctuary	15	16	17
<b>18</b> 10 AM Worship Session Meeting after Worship 6 PM Youth Group Mtg. at the Overbey's	<b>19</b> Pastor Ed on Vacation	<b>20</b> Pastor Ed on Vacation	<b>21</b> Pastor Ed on Vacation 1 PM DAWN Board Mtg. in Fellowship Hall November Link Deadline	<b>22</b> Pastor Ed on Vacation	<b>23</b> Pastor Ed on Vacation	<b>24</b> Pastor Ed on Vacation
<b>25</b> 10 AM Worship Pastor Ed on Vacation Guest Speaker Jarrett Knight	<b>26</b> Pastor Ed on Vacation	<b>27</b> 10 AM Bible Study in Sanctuary 11:30 AM Packing for DAWN at the DAWN Bld.	<b>28</b> 1:30 PM APC-DAWN Food Distribution 6:30 PM Midweek Fellowship in Sanctuary	29	30	31



# Events & Postings

<http://www.altapres.org/events--postings/one-week-update>

One week into the fall and things are going well!



10 AM SUNDAYS

Starting back with the *Gospel of Mark* has been quite fun and rewarding. As we dive deeper into the text, we're

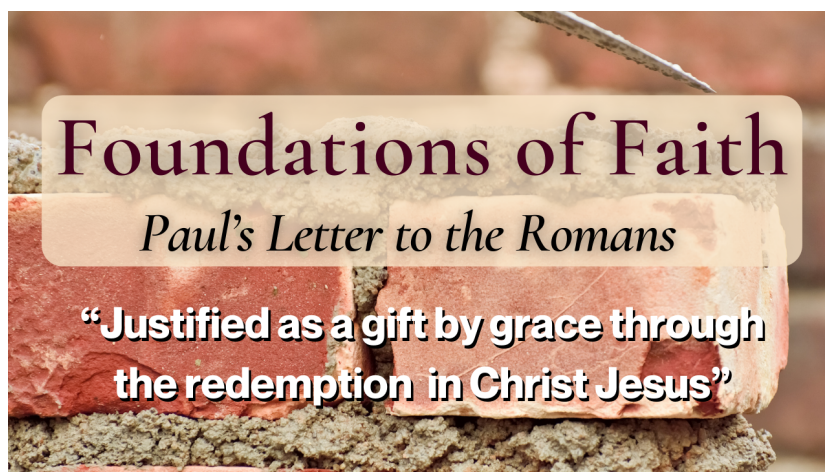
going to come up

against some teaching that strikes many to the core. As Paul told Timothy, Scripture is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." Whenever we come upon a text that is jarring, shattering, and offensive to us, that's God's way of getting our attention. The more we wrestle with and apply the teachings of Scripture, the better, more faithful Christians we'll become.

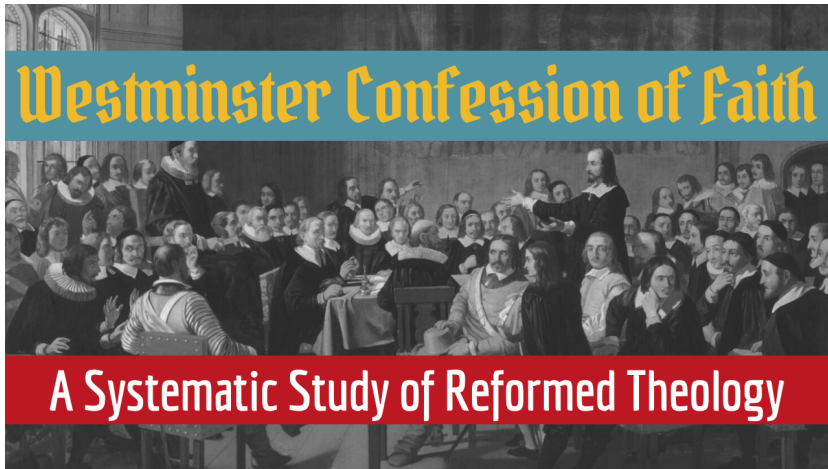
6 PM SUNDAYS

Our youth group is no stranger to expository teaching! We've started meeting weekly so that I can walk our youth through the details of

Scripture, just like on Sunday mornings but at a smaller scale. When crossing a stream, we often look for big stones upon which to walk, so as to minimize getting too wet. That is what I am doing for youth group. We're crossing the wide, deep, and swift waters of Paul's Letter to the Romans by utilizing the stepping stones of his theology. This book provides much of the foundations for Christian thought and life and is necessary for our youth to grasp as they look toward the next chapter of life







10AM Tuesdays

Bible Study went off on a good start. The *Westminster Confession of Faith* is a heavy and lengthy summary of Scripture and theology (though its length is but a blink when compared to

Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* or Hodge's *Systematic Theology*). Yet, it remains a vital document for Reformed theology. Using the expository style of preaching, I am taking a systematic, chapter-by-chapter look at the Confession, where it is grounded in Scripture, and how it relates to us in the 21st Century. I am deeply indebted to Dr. R. C. Sproul, whose book *Truths We Confess* is my road map throughout this study series. His book and many other resources can be found online at [Ligonier.org](http://Ligonier.org).

6:30PM Wednesdays

The new Wednesday evening prayer service was also a good success. This service is much more casual and contemporary. Because

of the pandemic, we are not having regular prayer fellowship (which met Wednesday mornings in my study). This service will take the place of that fellowship. We offer up prayers of supplication on behalf of the church and the world. Like everything else, this service is not devoid of expository preaching. During the fall and winter seasons, I am taking us through 49 commands of Christ. These various commands are Jesus' instructions and desires for our righteous living. It is important for us to know and understand what our Savior expects of us.

