

Central Baptist Church
Of Camp Springs Maryland
Rev. Lincoln M. Burruss, Jr., Pastor

Vacation Bible School

On Wings
Like Eagles
Champions in GOD!

REACH FOR THE GOAL

**“The goal I pursue is the prize of God’s upward call in Christ Jesus”
(Philippians 3:14)**

INSTRUCTOR’S NOTES

Rev. Dr. Samuel W. Hines, Th.D.

ABSTRACT

God calls His people to be transformed by the “renewing of their minds” (Rom 12:1-2). This transformation of thinking becomes a daily pursuit to understand God’s thoughts (Phil 2:5-11). Additionally, God’s glory is revealed in the Bible against the backdrop of culture, philosophy, apologetics, ethics, and church history. We are tasked with the difficulty of peeling back the concepts of a good resume verses the transcendent qualities of Christ, how they are acquired, and the profitability of each learning tract for humanity. Rabbi Manis Friedman explains this state of perplexity through the Soul’s predicament. He tells a story of a Soul that lives in Heaven on a beach with plenty of diamonds. So, the Soul decides to gather a handful of diamonds and exchange them for something else of value. The merchant laughs and tells him Heaven was full of valuable gems. He would need to exchange something like onions because onions were very scarce in heaven. Then the Soul took a long journey and invested in an onion farm and became a billionaire onion dealer. Finally, he filled a ship with onions and sent a message back to his family that he was coming home. After several days, he arrived but the onion cargo was rotten and his father wanted to know what was stinking in the harbor.

OUTLINE

- I. Preface (1:1–11)
 - A. Salutation (1:1–2)
 - B. Thanksgiving for the Philippians’ Participation in the Gospel (1:3–8)
 - C. Prayer for the Philippians’ Discerning Love to Increase until the Day of Christ (1:9–11)
- II. Paul’s Present Circumstances (1:12–26)
 - A. Paul’s Imprisonment (1:12–13)
 - B. The Brothers’ Response (1:14–17)
 - C. Paul’s Attitude (1:18–26)
- III. Practical Instructions in Sanctification (1:27–2:30)
 - A. Living Boldly as Citizens of Heaven (1:27–1:30)
 - B. Living Humbly as Servants of Christ (2:1–11)
 - 1. The Motivation to Live Humbly (2:1–4)
 - 2. The Model of Living Humbly (2:5–11)
 - a. Christ’s Emptying (2:5–8)
 - b. Christ’s Exaltation (2:9–11)
 - C. Living Obediently as Children of God (2:12–18)
 - 1. The Energizing of God (2:12–13)
 - 2. The Effect on the Saints (2:14–18)
 - D. Examples of Humble Servants (2:19–30)
 - 1. The Example of Timothy (2:19–24)
 - 2. The Example of Epaphroditus (2:25–30)
- IV. Polemical Doctrinal Issues (3:1–4:1)
 - A. The Judaizers Basis: The Flesh (3:1–6)
 - B. Paul’s Goal: The Resurrection (3:7–11)

- C. Perfection and Humility (3:12–16)
- D. Paul as an Example of Conduct and Watchfulness (3:17–4:1)
- V. Postlude (4:2–23)
 - A. Exhortations (4:2–9)
 - 1. Being United (4:2–3)
 - 2. Rejoicing without Anxiety (4:4–7)
 - 3. Thinking and Acting Purely (4:8–9)
 - B. A Note of Thanks (4:10–20)
 - 1. Paul’s Contentment (4:10–13)
 - 2. The Philippians’ Gift (4:14–18)
 - 3. God’s Provision (4:19–20)
 - C. Final Greetings (4:21–23)

INCARNATION CHRISTOLOGY (2:5-11)

The Christ poem is significant because it strongly suggests that there were very early Christians who understood Jesus to be a pre-existent celestial being, who chose to take on human form, rather than a human who was later exalted to a divine status. Importantly, while the author of the poem did believe that Jesus existed in heaven before his physical incarnation, this does not necessarily mean that he was believed to be *equal* to “God the Father” prior to his death and resurrection. This largely depends on how the Greek word “harpagmon” is translated in verse 6 (“Something to be grasped after / exploited”). If “harpagmon” is rendered as “something to be exploited,” as it is in many Christian Bible translations, then the implication is that Christ was already equal to God prior to his incarnation. But Dr. Bart Ehrman and others have argued that the correct translation is in fact “something to be grasped after,” implying that Jesus was *not* equal to God before his resurrection. Outside of this passage, “harpagmon” and related words were almost always used to refer to something that a person doesn't yet possess but tries to acquire.

It is widely agreed by interpreters, however, that the Christ poem depicts Jesus as equal to God *after* his resurrection. This is because the last two stanzas quote “Isaiah 45:22-23” (“Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess”), which in the original context clearly refers to God the Father.

PAUL’S RESUME
(Phil 3:5-6)

1. Faithful follower of God
2. He was circumcised
3. Tribe of Benjamin
4. A Hebrew of Hebrew
5. A Pharisee
6. Righteous under the Law
7. Persecuted Christians

DR. WEEMS RESUME

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Rev. Dr. Renita J. Weems

Co-Senior Pastor

Ray of Hope Community Church

Nashville, TN



Dr. Renita J. Weems is a biblical scholar, an academic administrator, a writer, an ordained minister, and a public intellectual, whose scholarly insights into modern faith, biblical texts, and the role of spirituality in everyday lives make her a highly sought-after writer and speaker.

Dr. Weems is the author of several widely-acclaimed books on women's spirituality and wholeness: "Just A Sister Away" (1987 & 2005), "I Asked for Intimacy" (1993), "Showing Mary: How Women Can Share Prayers, Wisdom, and the Blessings of God" (2003), and "What Matters Most: Ten Passionate Lessons from the Song of Solomon" (2004). She has served as a guest speaker for numerous national gatherings of religious, civic, and sorority organizations, local churches, community-wide events, and radio and television programs.

Ordained an elder in the AME Church since 1984, Dr. Weems has written about the waxing and waning of faith all believers endure on the spiritual journey. Her 1999 book, "Listening for God: A Minister's Journey through Silence and Doubt" (Simon & Schuster), won the Religious Communicators' Council's prestigious 1999 Wilbur Award for "excellence in communicating spiritual values to the secular media." As a scholar she has numerous books, commentaries and articles on the bible and prophetic religion to her credit. In 2008, Yale University invited Dr. Weems to give the prestigious Lyman Beecher Lecture, making her the first African American woman to do so.

Dr. Weems, formerly a member of the faculty of Vanderbilt University and former William & Camille Cosby Visiting Professor at Spelman College, is a much sought after speaker and preacher. She currently serves as Vice President of Academic Affairs at American Baptist College (Nashville, TN).

Dr. Weems earned her undergraduate degree from Wellesley College in Wellesley, MA, and her Master and Ph.D. degrees from Princeton Theological Seminary in Princeton, NJ. Her graduation in 1989 with a Ph.D. in Old Testament studies from Princeton made her the first African American woman to earn a Ph.D. in Old Testament. In the 2008 publication of the book, "Black Stars: African American Religious Leaders," a collection of biographies of some of the most important Black Religious Leaders over the last 200 hundred years, Dr. Weems is featured among such impressive figures as Adam Clayton Powell, Elijah Muhammad, Sojourner Truth, Howard Thurman, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

When she is not travelling and speaking, Dr. Weems is in Nashville with her husband and daughter writing and serving in ministry with her husband at Ray of Hope Community Church in Nashville, TN.

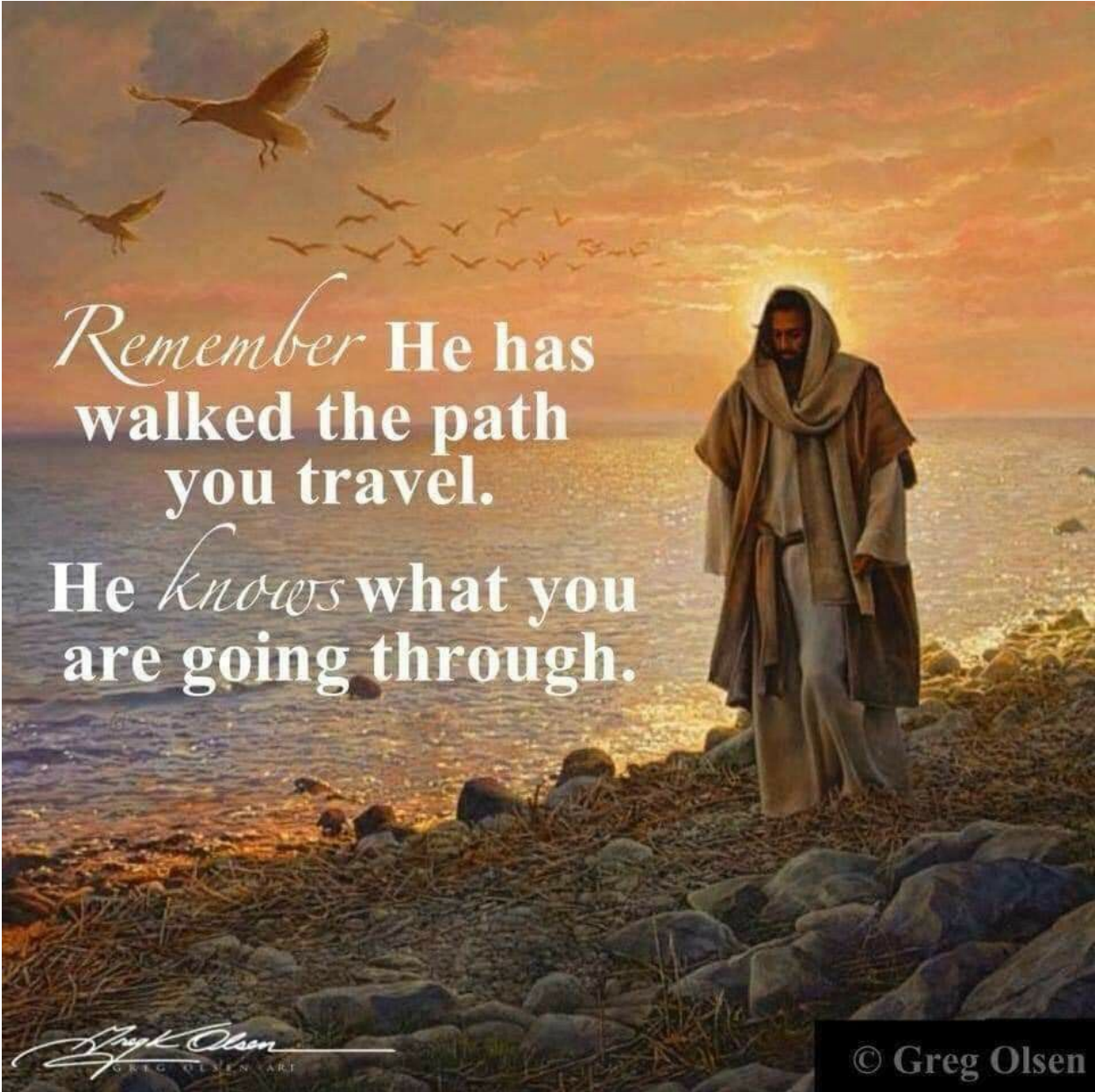
(Courtesy of Howard University, Rankin Chapel, April 5, 2020)

Q & A

Key Verse

• The goal I pursue is the prize of God's upward call in Christ Jesus.
(Philippians 3:14)

1. What/Where is the “Kingdom of Heaven” and the “Kingdom of God” today?
2. How did Jesus illustrate the “Kingdom of Heaven”?
3. This culture face a “new normal”. How would you advise young Souls to get good resumes and the desired path to acquire it?
4. How do we understand an invisible God?
5. Where is God in this pandemic?
6. Where does Sin, Forgiveness, Justice, Love, the Moral Law, and the Moral Law giver fit into this society?
7. What is the Highest Calling?
8. What determines the value of a person today?
9. Does our esteem of people reflect the value given by God?
10. Can we have confidence in the truth today?



Remember He has
walked the path
you travel.

He *knows* what you
are going through.

Greg Olsen
GREG OLSEN ART

© Greg Olsen