



SERVICE TIMES:

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:30 AM
5:00 PM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

ELDERS:

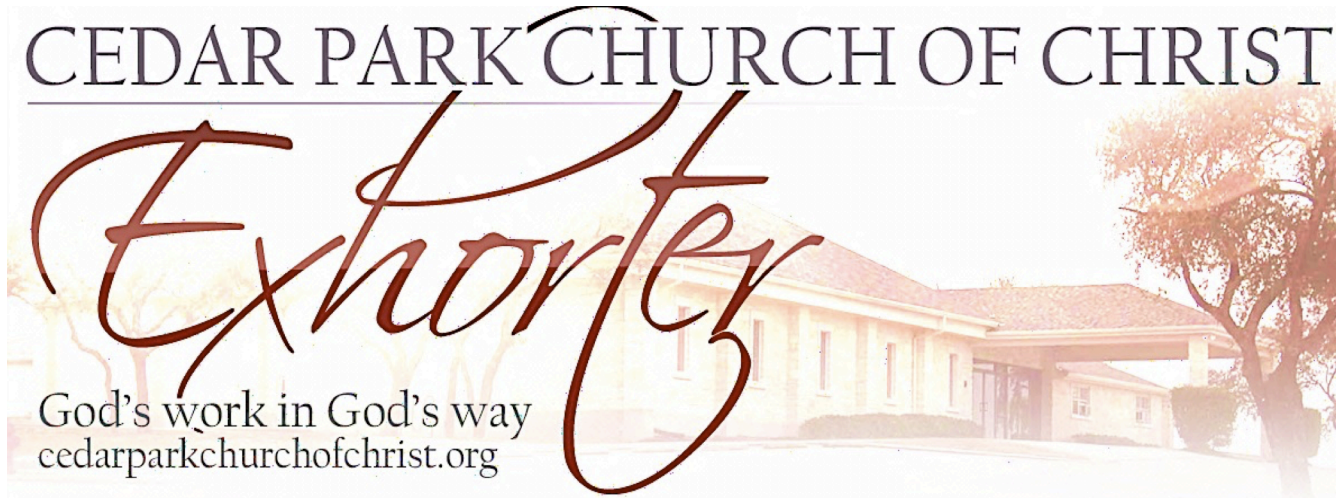
Todd Cox
Jimmy Griffith
Bryan Tacker

DEACONS:

Derek Anderson Travis Everett
Ryan Griffith Dan Harbin
Craig Hecht Danny Meek
Phil Parker Jason Stannard
Travis Starling Steve Turquette

EVANGELIST

Paul White



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cedarparkchurchofchrist.org

Jan 12, 2020

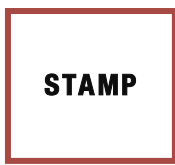
KNOW THY ENEMY

“If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.”
- Sun Tzu

Our spiritual walk is not one of idyllic pathways in the shade by cool waters; it is not one of easygoing sightseeing. It is a battlefield. Those of you who have been in the church for any period of time, should already know where I'm going with this. It's a new year. Another year, another struggle for the faith, another year of temptations. As Christians, we should be (and in this congregation, I believe it is evident that we are) educated on the word of God. We know the good news. Jesus' sacrifice for our eternal benefit and his glory - truly amazing news!

Sun Tzu's words in "The Art of War", though secular, still apply in our spiritual fight today. Do we truly know ourselves - our limitations, our strengths, or weaknesses? I believe most Christians know most of these things about themselves naturally. However, how much do you know about our enemy, Satan? What are his strengths? What are his weaknesses? How can we be most effective in combating him? How often is it, though, that we study his patterns, his strategies and tricks? I would hope often.

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THE POWER OF A GOOD EXAMPLE

Here are three things, which we can remember throughout this year, when we're being tempted by the devil:

- He tempts everyone
- He is crafty above all else
- He will receive his retribution

We're very familiar with 1 Peter 5:8: *"Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour."* But verse 9 after it is just as important to remember: *"Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings."* We're not alone when we suffer! Even Jesus was tempted. This is where our fellow Christians can help us. How better to deal with temptation, which no man is free from, than to ask a brother or sister in Christ for help in our struggle?

We must also remember, that Satan is crafty above all else. In Genesis chapter 3, he caused the fall of man using a lie disguised as a half-truth. In the New Testament, he even tempted Jesus using the same half-truths. Today, he tempts us in the same way - with lies wearing clothes of truth. The best way to overcome this is to know the truth of God's Word above all else. When a forgery expert is examining a painting, he studies the original intently - not another fake. We can best guard ourselves against the Devil's deceptions by constantly immersing ourselves in the Word of Truth.

And finally, we can take solace in the fact that Satan will receive his retribution.

Revelation 20:10 – *"And the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever."*

Despite the hardships we face, all the trials and the temptations, we can look forward to victory one day. As we start this year out, let's remember that message as an encouragement.

- Braden Peterson

When Benjamin Franklin wished to interest the people of Philadelphia in street lighting, he didn't try to persuade them by talking about it. Instead, he hung a beautiful lantern on a long bracket outside his own front door. Then he kept the glass brightly polished, and carefully and religiously lit the wick every evening at the approach of dusk. People wandering about on the dark street saw Franklin's light a long way off and came under the influence of its friendly glow with grateful hearts. It wasn't long before Franklin's neighbors began placing lights in front of their homes, and soon the entire city awoke to the value of street lighting and took up the matter with interest and enthusiasm.

In the same way, we are expected to positively influence those around us by "letting our light shine" by our daily lives as faithful Christians. The words we speak as we attempt to teach and exhort others are important, but they will do very little good without the power of a good example.

In a world of moral darkness, Christ's disciples are to: *"Be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."* (Phil 2:15)



*There is no better exercise for your heart than
reaching down to help lift someone up.*

—————
If you scatter thorns, don't go barefoot.

—————
*Your mind is a garden,
Your thoughts are the seeds.
You can grow flowers,
Or you can grow weeds.*