



The Christian life is a journey.

TrailNotes speaks to forward movement, paying attention to the “landscape” we are passing through in this trail-laced wooded hillside and valley, not to mention the world beyond. **TrailNotes** is an unfolding, ongoing journal of the people who share the trail with us and the things we’re learning and doing.

ElderTalk

In the past few weeks, both in church and elsewhere, I have heard multiple references to people being salty or someone’s speech being salty. Salty, is an interesting description for attitude or speech. Salt is a mineral mined from the earth or extracted from the ocean made up of one part sodium and one part chloride. What do they mean by salty and why is this mineral used as an adjective for speech?

When I attended Ohio Northern University many moons ago, a young man greatly influenced me by his actions, demeanor, and speech. He introduced me to the Savior and to Scripture. One of the first verses he shared with me as a new Christian was Colossians 4:6. *“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”* This verse impacted me so deeply that I wrote it down in the cover of my Bible. I didn’t want to forget it or lose its sentiment as I began to move from my old way of living to this brand new and so much more fulfilling one. The seasoned with salt word picture spoke to me. But what is meaningful about salt?

In my mind, it was to make what I verbally convey to others more palatable, appealing and/or downright tasty. Salt does that for my meals. I use it frequently and probably more than I should for health reasons. But it is yummy...unless you use too much. This is where I circle back to my opening thought, salty speech. By a current definition, the phrase means speech that is coarse, harsh, angry, or biting. But this is not the scriptural use of the word. In Colossians, I believe Paul is speaking of making it savory and pleasing to hear.

Recently another thought about this verse was revealed to me. How many stories or prayers or compliments have you heard that you really wanted to remember? Why is it when certain people speak the room gets noticeably quieter and others sit up a little straighter and lean in to hear a little better? They want to remember what that person says. They know that

Salty Speech

ANDY HEININGER

they are going to hear something worth remembering. Speech that is full of wisdom or is uplifting is speech worth preserving. People want to remember words that feed their spirits or lift their hearts to bless them again later.

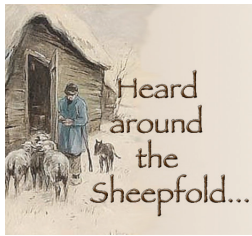


Salt is a preservative. It allows us to keep things fresh or usable for a much longer duration. The challenge for me, and now for you, is to season our conversations with grace and salt to make others feel it is worth preserving—sodium chloride in the correct amount so it is not too salty but a tasty chemical and relational reaction.

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”

Colossians 4:6





Gleanings from or about our brothers and sisters in the body of Christ worldwide.

Patriarch Sviatoslav's Paschal Letter 2022 from the Greek Catholic Church of Ukraine*



“Christ is Risen!

“Beloved in Christ!

“This year we approach the Pascha of Christ in the midst of particular challenges, suffering, cruelty, indignities, and ruin. For our people, in Ukraine and abroad, it would seem that the cross of our Lord was abruptly thrust upon our shoulders from the very beginning of Great Lent, and we have already been carrying it not for a day or two, a week or two, but continuously day and night. From Him, our risen Saviour, we draw strength in the midst of our suffering today. He is the source of our hope. Therefore, together with the apostle Paul, we say today, *“We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed, perplexed but not driven to despair...For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus’ sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.”* (2 Cor.4:8) In that spirit with confidence, we greet one another with the victorious salutation: Christ is risen! Truly, He is risen!

“...Today when Ukraine is defending itself against an insidious foe, more than ever we are called to spiritual warfare, remembering that evil can only be overcome by good. Saint Paul reminds us that we must be cautious, so that in the midst of the horrors of war we remain human and do not fall into the devil’s trap of malice and hate. *‘For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery....For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’* (Gal. 5:1)

“Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, today I extend to all of you my fatherly and brotherly embrace, and

share with you the joy of Pascha. I embrace all who fight on different fronts—spiritual and physical, especially our unbreakable soldiers, our dedicated pastors, and tireless volunteers. I embrace with paschal joy all who have been forced to leave their homes and even their native land and pray for your speedy return in a time of peace which will surely arrive...

“The grace of our Risen Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

“Christ is risen—Truly, He is risen!”

**+Sviatoslav
given in Kyiv**

**at the Patriarchal Cathedral of the
Resurrection of Christ**



*Ed.'s Note: The Roman Catholic Church, Eastern (Byzantine) rite.

From the Desk of Franklin Graham:

“I have just returned from Ukraine where Samaritan’s Purse is working to care for victims of the fighting that has devastated that nation and entire cities under siege. One Ukrainian church we are supporting built bunk beds in Sunday School classrooms and has sheltered thousands of traumatized people as they passed through in search of a new home.

“I went to our Emergency Field Hospital. We have about 100 doctors, nurses, and other medical personnel. The hospital is set up in a parking garage in the western city of Lviv.



“At the Field Hospital chaplains met Fedir, who had witnessed much of the fighting in his hometown. He was thankful his family was already safely abroad, but he was deeply traumatized by what he had experienced.

“Fedir poured out his story to the chaplains and then listened as they shared the Good News in his native language. Fedir enthusiastically prayed to receive Jesus Christ in repentance and faith. His anxiety lifted in *‘the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.’* (2 Cor.4:6 NKJV)”



These Ukrainian flag-colored flowers outside GFC are a call to prayer.

MAY 2022

- 1** Elder Jerry Mathias preaching. II Cor. 1:12-2:16. Bible Doctrine study, chapters 19-20 led by Andy Anschuz.
- 5** National Day of Prayer observance on Mansfield Square from 11:30 am-1:00 pm.
- 8** Mitch Schwartz preaching. II Cor. 3:1-18. 
- 14** GFC Spring Workday (rain date: May 21).
- 15** Pastor Eric Byrom preaching. II Cor. 4:1-5:10. Bible Doctrine study, Chapters 21-22, led by Eric Byrom
- 21** Kingdom Men's monthly prayer breakfast at McDonald's on Hanley Rd. 9:00 am.
- 22** Jay Shifley preaching. II Cor. 5:11-6:2. 
- 29** Worship Celebration with extended time for songs and sharing.

Mission: On April 29 Eric leaves for Kenya with globalLead to mentor and encourage pastors. Eric returns May 7.



The Byroms have been here 10 years.! Eric was given a plaque on April 10th to prove it! And then, a celebratory dinner!

Susan Judd is home!

Since January, Susan has been in the Cleveland Clinic and then Hope Lodge. We join her family in rejoicing over this wonderful news! Brian, you have done a fabulous job of keeping us all up-to-date!



And God said No

GREG SMITH DVM



Ed.'s Note: This article comes from the Director of the Veterinary Christian Foundation, the organization that has gone to the Havasupai Reservation in the Grand Canyon each November (Steve Phillips has gone for years) to treat their animals and share the Gospel. They were not able to go in this year because Greg and another vet were tested positive for COVID. (No symptoms). Ten hours later both tested negative, but they were still not allowed in.

Proverbs 16:9

"A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps."

At a security checkpoint on the mesa above the Grand Canyon entrance to the Havasupai reservation, we waited. This was a mere formality compared to the time and resources spent to get to this moment. Just 90 minutes before, we were in Peach Springs getting our final COVID nasal swab. I had let out a chuckle when the technician barely entered my nose for a sample. The results were being transmitted to the personnel at this checkpoint. Small talk ensued.

"Why are seven of you going to the village?" and "Is this your first time there?" and "How did you get permission to go into the village?" Time passed. In my mind I was checking off the supplies lying in the truck bed.

"I'm sorry" were the first words followed by, "Two of the seven of you tested positive." Then, "Which of you are Greg and Fred?" My mind reeled but as quickly as my disbelief was birthed, I remembered what a great God we serve. "This is going to be good, Lord. We are helpless and dazed...just where You want us to be so You can manifest Your mercies and blessings without any of us crediting ourselves. You will get the glory, Jesus." They told us to leave immediately. OK, so no miracle there.

Back at Indian Health Services in Peach Springs, a security staff member approached the truck inquiring as to why we were back. The story recanted, I asked him to notify the medical staff we were here to be retested. He disappeared into the building for ten minutes. I began to imagine the conversation within and how the Holy Spirit was working to get us reinstated—like Balaam's ass was able to see the angel of the Lord (Numbers 22:21-39). The answer came back, "No. Wait two weeks and re-test." We had no symptoms and no earthly reasoning as to why this was happening.

Concluded on page 4.

And God said No *(concluded)*

The enemy attacked with a “voice” in my head. “See! You knew you weren’t capable of the position God put you in. Now you are exposed. Your faith has failed you. I’m here but where is your God? Why would any of these people ever want to go to Supai with you again? Look at all God’s money you have spent. For what? What will you do with it? It will probably decay and who knows, VCF may never be invited back.”

“He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul.”
Psalms 23:2-3a

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.” Pvs. 3:5-6

We disbanded and dispersed from Peach Springs: Montana, Mexico, California, Virginia, Ohio, Arizona. We all acknowledged God was in control and someday we would know why He said no. We will see His grand plan and we will praise Him now before He reveals His ways in His own time.

Christ took me from the humiliation, embarrassment, anger, dented faith, sadness, and brokenheartedness of that day to the joy I have today. Without question, He talked to us. He said no. I thank Him for being so clear!

Feeling fine, both Fred and I tested ten hours later: negative. None of the rest of the group became symptomatic.

John 15:7 “If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified that you bear much fruit; so, you will be My disciples.”

November 2022. Plans are already in the works. Many tribal members were inclined to go by the church and search for missionary Phil when the bad news spread that day. He gave encouragement and hope and spoke to the people face to face (at a distance). He reinforced relationships with many whom he had not seen for months or through his weekly Zoom Bible study. Fruit.

I hope you have enough trouble in your life to keep you under Christ’s “wing.” His mercies are new every morning.



Alexi Vega (together with the entire Dance Group) blessed us during worship on Sunday, April 24th.

Grace Fellowship Church

365 Straub Rd East • Mansfield Oh 44903
419-526-4699 • gracefellowship01@gmail.com



Eric Byrom	Presiding Elder/ Pastor
Jadaé Fox	Elder
Matt Godsil	Elder
Andy Heining	Elder
Jerry Mathias	Elder
Cameron Karger	Treasurer
Kay Berry & Karen Gates	Women
Lori Barker	Missions
Andy Heining	Worship
Judy Nichols	Prayer Chain
Kay Berry & Jadaé Fox	Office
Kathy Barth	Communion preparation
Manfred & Janet Adalem	" "
Andy Anschutz	Sound/Power Point
John and Donna Kurtz	TrailNotes