

# A Fresh Word

## PASTOR'S CORNER



Dear Friends:

Numerous topics came to mind as I sat to write this month's *Pastor's Corner* — taxes, finances, anger, etc. Yet, God led me to write the following. Are you ever tired? Do you ever say to yourself, "If just one more thing comes up, I don't know what I'm going to do?" If so, read on.

At some point, in and of ourselves, we all reach that point. The difference maker is what happens next. Prior to my conversion, my typical response was anger, resentment and various other emotions. I reacted to the circumstances from a purely emotional view. My emotional view had been crafted over years based on my environment in which I grew up, worked and played. My past dictated my present.

Fortunately, I heard the gospel of Jesus Christ and accepted Him in my life.

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'YOUR BODY IS YOUR TEMPLE'

## Spiritual Self-Defense

**TOP RIGHT:**  
(Front row) Sis. Chelsea Washington, Bro. Jalen Houseworth and Bro. Kai Houseworth. (Back row) Sis. Haley Barber, Bro. Mike Barber, Sis. Lisa Houseworth, Sis. Breanne Gaddy and Bro. Joe Graham.

Self-Defense  
8:30 a.m.  
Saturdays  
Worship Center gym



**M**embers and friends of Fresh Start Christian Church are being blessed with weekly spiritual, mental and physical workouts, thanks to **Bro. Joe Graham**.

Graham has been teaching a free self-defense class each Saturday at 8:30 a.m. in the Worship Center gym since the latter part of 2008. Adults and children learn about tae kwon do, a Korean martial arts form that is 30 percent hands, 70 percent feet.

"The spiritual benefit is being in control and to really feel good about yourself. Your body is your temple," said Graham, a black belt.

"The mental aspect is being able to concentrate. When you have power and confidence in yourself, you feel better about yourself. You're not easily enticed into fighting ... you're able to use your mind better."

**Sis. Maresa Ikard**, 13, started attending the class around January 2009 and keeps coming back with her sisters, **Shakela** and **April**.

"It's fun, educational and you learn self-defense," Ikard said.

**Bro. Kai Houseworth**, 5, said he likes "the side kicks, the knee kicks, the punches and the back fists."

**Bro. Jalen Houseworth**, 8, also enjoys the class. "It helps me keep moving. It keeps me safe," he said.

**Sis. Patricia Oluade**, who started attending the class this year, describes Graham as personable.

"He tries to make sure he includes everyone in the class. If you're attentive, he's attentive to you as well," said Oluade, a member of Friendship Baptist Church. "I think he's doing a good job of making sure that we have an idea of what can happen to us if we need to use it (self-defense)."

Graham said he is proud of the class. "I just get a light in my eye when I see them do the kicks right, when I see them do the punches right. ... It's just really inspiring when you can teach someone, they grasp on and learn it, and you know it will be beneficial later on in life. That's how I get paid."



## Fresh Start Christian Church

**Pastor**  
Rev. James L. Henley, Jr.

**First Lady/Church Administrator**  
Sis. Vivian Henley

**Elders**  
Bro. Curtis Wilson (601-503-3202)  
Sis. Annie Williams (601-506-5494)  
Bro. Ronnie Webster (601-966-0180)  
Bro. Denny Teague (601-918-8645)

**Worship Center and Annex**  
5210 Manhattan Road, former Northside YMCA

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P.O. Box 31473, Jackson, MS 39286  
601-362-1818  
requests@freshstartchristian.org  
www.freshstartchristian.org

**Worship Services/Children's Church**  
Sundays, 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m.  
3rd Sundays, 5 p.m.  
2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays (under age 13)

**Prayer Services**  
1st Mondays, 6 p.m.

**Aerobics**  
Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m.

**Bible Study**  
Wednesdays, 6-7 p.m.

**Praise Team Practice**  
Thursdays, 6:15-7:15 p.m.

**Third Friday/Teen Friday**  
Third Fridays, 6-8:30 p.m. (ages 4-18)  
4th Fridays, 6-8:30 p.m. (ages 13 and up)

**M.A.D.E. Men**  
(Making A Difference Everyday)  
1st Saturdays, 7 a.m.

**Self-Defense**  
Saturdays, 8:30 a.m.

**Children's Choir Practice**  
Saturdays, 10 a.m.

**Dance Ministry Practice/Aerobics**  
Saturdays, 11 a.m.

**Angel Food Ministries**  
(Call church to order and for pickup info)

**LIGHTS (Ladies Illustrating Grace,  
Hope, Truth & Strength)/  
Couples Ministry/Singles Ministry**  
(Meeting dates and times vary)

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# baptisms



**Bro. Tremell Walker** (top left) was baptized on January 25, 2009. He married Sis. Melody Porter Walker, daughter of Sis. Katherine Porter (usher), on February 28, 2009.

**Bro. Robert V. Hooker Jr.** (top right) also was baptized on January 25, 2009 along with his sister, **Sis. Kandice Hooker** (left). They are the children of Bro. Robert V. Hooker Sr. and Sis. Sherree Hooker.



**Sis. Ariana Holman** (right) was baptized on February 22, 2009. She is the daughter of Sis. Kajuana Holman and the granddaughter of Sis. Katherine Porter.

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However, for years I still lived a life in which I allowed the past to control my reactions. I failed to realize the true power that comes with Jesus Christ in your life. I never completely allowed him access to all of me. As a result, I was like a wave that could be tossed about every which way by the simple change of the wind.

Then one day as I was reading my Bible, I re-read 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a *new creation*; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." It was like an explosion went off inside me. I wasn't who I used to be. Inside me now lived the most powerful force that ever existed or will exist, the Spirit of the Living God. And as a direct result, I was a new creation. I simply had to understand how to let go of the old.

My study of the Word intensified, and I realized I had been trying too hard. I simply needed to yield myself to Him and allow Christ to live through me. It all started with me making the choice to trust the Christ in me regardless of the situation. Why? Because there is no situation he can't handle. My job was simply to be obedient to His Word.

So now when I get tired, I keep moving because I know Christ has all the energy we need. When it seems like things are piling on, I simply choose to believe that with Christ in me, it is no more than I can handle. The result is a reduced stress level and a peace that surpasses all human understanding.

I realized that in His Word, God has supplied the answer for all major issues: mortgage foreclosures, financial overburdens, marriage, love, loneliness, etc. Whatever you are going through at this moment, I challenge you to examine yourself and consider the following: Has my mind and therefore my life been so redirected by God's revelation of Himself to me via His Spirit that I can no longer live like I used to?

I realize I can no longer live completely for me. I can no longer view other people as I have my whole life. I can no longer view my Lord and Savior as I did in the past. A new me has been and is being created from within, and I must make a complete break from the old me.

My life now has a new focus, new desires, new direction and new home. The Apostle Paul puts it this way: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14 KJV)

You see, I finally realized, to paraphrase Galatians 2:20-21, James (my old self), has been crucified with Christ, and the old me no longer lives; instead, Christ lives in me. The life I, James, now live in this human body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I'm not sure why this is what I wrote, but I know it is what God wanted me to say.

*Rev. James L. Henley Jr., Pastor*

# Family Focus



## THE LOWE-TOBIAS FAMILY

**Sis. Connie Lowe-Tobias** and her daughter, **Sis. Constance Lowe**, have been attending Fresh Start since November 2008.

Connie owns C.C.'s Day Care Center on Angle Drive in Jackson. Constance, 17, is a senior at Madison Central High School.

### WHY THEY ATTEND FRESH START:

**Connie:** "The people are friendly. I love the sermons and the atmosphere. ... I really feel like a member because everyone has taken me in."

**Constance:** I enjoy his (Pastor Henley's) sermons and I really get a lot from them, and the people are friendly here, too."



## JEREMY YOWK

**Bro. Jeremy Yowk**, 20, the brother of **Sis. Valerie Foster**, is planning to join the U.S. Marines in a few months. The Bailey Magnet High School graduate and Jackson resident has been attending and volunteering at Fresh Start regularly since January 2009.

### WHY HE ATTENDS FRESH START:

Jeremy enjoys listening to Pastor Henley preach. "It helps me be even more appreciative of God and gives me a better understanding of Him."

Jeremy also likes volunteering at the church. "I just don't mind helping people. ... I've been like that since I was a little kid."

## 'Just Speak Life to It'

*Have you ever been in a dry place?  
 Couldn't show it on your face  
 So you cry inside, Lord, tell me why!*

**T**hese words from a familiar song highlight the emotions many of us are experiencing. In the current economic climate, many have either lost a job or are worried that they might soon lose their jobs. Each day, someone finds out they suffer from a serious illness, is injured in an accident, or suffers emotional loss. For many, these events occur even though they have done nothing to cause or deserve them.

Somehow, difficult situations seem more difficult when we do not believe we caused the problem. We tend to focus on our circumstance, which produces worry, dread and mental (nonexistent) suffering.

We imagine all of the terrible things that will surely happen and willingly allow a circumstance or situation to turn us into victims and dictate our actions. The maybes of the future paralyze us in the present and steal the joy from our lives.

FIRST LADY  
 VIVIAN HENLEY



This should not be the case.

If we believe in prayer in the good times, will seeking God's presence and guidance become any less necessary in the bad times? If God is with us when we have plenty, are His blessings any less during tough economic times?

*By faith this is what you must do.*

In tough times, we should not ask why. Rather we should ask how. How does this situation fit in God's plan for my life? How can my response to adversity glorify God? How will God use what seems like bad for my good?

The uncertainties of life produce opportunities for us to grow closer to God, to become stronger in faith, and to experience our testimonies of God's faithfulness and goodness.

God has not promised that everything will always be good, but that He will work all things for the good of those called according to His purpose.

So rather than living life in response to our circumstance, we should let God's promises and faithfulness guide our lives, and when circumstances threaten our safe and secure existences...

*Just speak life to it  
 Just speak life through it*

*Knowing God's not a man that He should lie*

*Just hold on to it  
 Just go on through it*

*To every dry bone in your valley  
 Just speak life.*

# Highlights and Happenings

## April is Fellowship Month!

Refreshments will be served each Wednesday after Bible study.



Members of Fresh Start Christian Church join hands with members of Redeemer Church in the annex on February 28, 2009, before they prepare groceries for Angel Food Ministries.



### FINANCIAL TIPS

PASTOR HENLEY

**1** Put your savings and cash value buildups to work. Use them to pay down outstanding debts. You can be sure you are paying more in interest than you are earning.

**2** If your credit score is OK, consider refinancing. If you can drop your rate two points, you should be OK. Make sure you don't refinance for a period longer than what you have left to pay off the current mortgage.

**3** If you got a big tax refund, immediately go and adjust your W-4 form at work to receive part of that money during the year.

**4** If you receive the earned income tax credit, ask your employer about form W-5, which allows you to receive part of the money during the year.

**5** Go to [angelfoodministries.com](http://angelfoodministries.com) and see how you can save on your food purchases each month.

**6** Review and stick to your budget.



(LEFT) Members and friends of Fresh Start Christian Church recently surprised Pastor and First Lady Henley with a wedding anniversary gift after a Bible study in January. The Henleys celebrated their 21st wedding anniversary on January 15, 2009. (ABOVE) Fresh Start recently purchased a van from a Baptist church in Raymond. The church also renovated its kitchen (new cabinets) and two classrooms (new walls).

### CLEANING TEAMS

**WEEK 1**  
Team Williams

**WEEK 2**  
Team Teague

**WEEK 3**  
Team Webster

**WEEK 4**  
Team Wilson

**WEEK 5**  
Team Henley

### UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- **Passion of the Christ movie:** 7 p.m. Good Friday, April 10 (Couples Ministry will be rescheduled)
- **Easter program:** 4 p.m. Saturday, April 11
- **Singles Ministry:** 7 p.m. Friday, May 8
- **Church picnic:** Saturday, June 6 (time TBA)

### Making Christ Visible

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

—Romans 10:9 (NIV)