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PathPointe

November 2020







PathPointe Magazine Volume 21, Issue 11 November 2020

Page 2	Memories Dr. T. D. Worthington
Page 6	Radio Bits Your Christian Superstations!
Page 8	Thank God For A Headache? Mrs. Sherry Worthington
Page 10	Childlike Faith <i>Rev. Michael Williams</i>
Page 12	And Finally

A Thankful Heart...

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POSTMASTER: Please send address corrections to: Pathway Ministries Group, PO Box 1895, Goldsboro, NC 27533-1895.

PathPointe Magazine is written for the Faith Partners, Business Underwriters, and friends of Pathway Ministries Group

Subscriptions: PathPointe is provided free of charge to interested parties within the USA, as our Lord provides. All other subscriptions are \$30.00 per year.

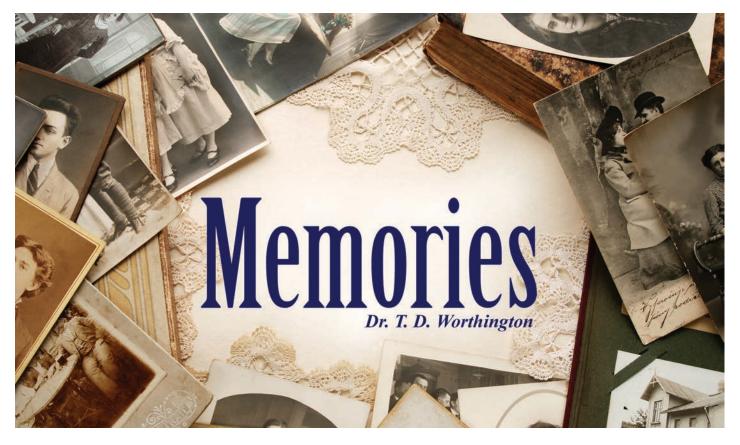
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Letters And Press Releases: There are four ways to send us material. 1. Fax to 866-537-8189. 2. By courier to 1302 South George Street, Goldsboro, NC 27530. 3. Through the mail. 4. Through our web site at GoMixRadio.org. These are in order of preference. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned.

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I don't suppose anyone really appreciates childhood while you are actually going through it. Oh, I know there were some good memories and the Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons often bring back those memories, but still life as a kid could be tough. Remember all those rules, boundaries, and bosses? Remember how most anyone could boss you around including parents, grandparents, teachers, babysitters, and anyone at least a day older than you? It's only after you grow up and face the real world that you learn to appreciate childhood. Perhaps childhood is best lived in the world of hindsight.

Of course, that is not to say that everyone had a good childhood. I well know that for some, childhood was filled with some pretty tragic memories. However, thankfully back in my generation, broken homes and abusive relationships were somewhat rare. Looking back, it was generally enjoyable being a child. You had little to worry about when you were younger. You didn't have to worry about getting a job or paying the mortgage. Things like leaking roofs and flat tires were not your problem. Sometimes, it would be wonderful if we could go back to being children again. It might be nice to spend an entire day in a make-believe world limited only by our creative imaginations. Yet, since we haven't been granted the privilege of time-travel, the best alternative is to look for ways to bring ourselves back to the good old days of yesteryear. One way is by revisiting our memories.

Nostalgia is big business today. Old toys can fetch a hefty price. Oh, how I wish I hadn't put my Mickey Mantle baseball cards in the spokes of my bike. For those of us on a budget, cheaper ways for reliving memories are through old television programs. I watched a lot of cartoons as a kid. I still watch cartoons on occasion. I also watched a lot of westerns; I still do when I can find them. For a kid it was truly a magical experience to buckle up your six shooters and dress up in your cowboy suit. Oh, how foolish we were to want to grow up.

Do you remember those horrible words that were so often unmercifully hurled at us? Those words were; *"When you get older."* These were words we didn't want to hear. This short phrase instilled the idea in a kid's mind that growing up would be a wonderful world filled with unlimited possibilities. As children, we normally viewed growing up as something good and associated it with positive things such as unlimited freedom and independence. To us, it sure looked like growing up would fix everything that was wrong with the world.

When we were young, our dreams and wishes were not so different from our realities. Imaginations could run wild, and we had not a care in the world, or at least not many. But as

time goes on, we soon figure out that there will always be someone out there smarter, prettier, stronger, luckier, or just better at something than we are. That instinct we were born with, to trust others, is replaced by a stronger instinct to simply survive. Growing up doesn't just mean staying up until all hours or being able to take the car out for a night on the town. It means responsibilities and obligations. Good grief, why didn't they tell us these things? Actually, I guess they tried but it just wasn't what we wanted to hear. Maybe doing all that homework wasn't so bad after all.

Oh, to go back and just live in the past! As much as I have enjoyed my life as an adult, there are times when going back to childhood, curling up in a warm blanket of memories, covering all the cold unknowns and unexposed realities of tomorrow would be a wonderful retreat. Just for a short season to bury myself in the glowing days of the pure joy and limited worries of childhood; where do I sign up?

However, although we may all recall special isolated memories from our childhood, nostalgia has more to do with an emotional state. I don't remember the first time I drank a Coke out of an old glass bottle, but I do remember a specific time-frame in my life when it happened. I don't remember exactly when I got my first cowboy suit or red wagon, but I know it happened and I know it happened in those magical days of childhood. Just as I have childhood memories of events, I also have memories of certain pleasing odors of childhood. The smell of burning leaves in the fall, of Mom cooking Thanksgiving dinner, and of a live Christmas tree can always bring up memories of the

past. We have been told that while the average person can smell 10,000 odors, no two people will smell the same thing. We react to smells differently, associate them with different things, and yearn for them differently.

Nostalgia, like sorrow and happiness, is a universal feeling. It's one that all races, cultures, and ages share. We all grow nostalgic for the past, even if it's not the same past. Even if there are parts of your past you would rather forget, most of us still have moments of pleasant memories we wish to retain.

According to The New York Times, "most people report experiencing nostalgia at least once a week, and nearly half experience it three or four times a week." More powerful than the future, the past gives us reason to carry on. Rather than facing the unknown, we go back to the past to remember why life is worth living. We latch on to memories of happiness to give us faith in the future.

At the end of the day, nobody can be a child forever. That being said, it is good to relive your childhood on occasion. I think God is pleased when we relive good memories. Memories help weave our past with our present, and connect yesterday with today and tomorrow. When we're celebrating any kind of occasion, we remember the people who, over the years, have been there for us, supporting and encouraging us, making this day possible. Holidays have a special power to help us recall people and events that have shaped our lives.

I think God wants us to remember the simple days of childhood. Our memories might include:

How loving parents sheltered, nurtured, protected, and taught us as we were growing up.

When devastating circumstances shattered your world, and you learned first-hand that you were surrounded by people of compassion and love.

When the loss of a loved one made you realize how important it was to be surrounded by someone who cared.

When your hopes were dashed, but a loving parent reminded you to be on the look-out for a new and better opportunity.

When you were afraid or in danger, but your parents came to your rescue.





When you found yourself on the wrong path, but a parent guided you back to the way.

When you realized that your parents were willing to suffer in order to provide for you.

When you were chastened, but still felt secure in the love of your Mom and Dad.

When your parents gave you unconditional love and gave you the security of boundaries, the peace that comes with trust, and you became aware of the foolishness of worry.

All these things are deep in our childhood memories. God wants us to remember these valuable lessons; I think that is why childhood memories are some of the most vivid of all. You see, these are the memories instilled from childhood that teach us about God. Who do the examples I mentioned earlier remind us of?

Each time an Israelite saw the Ebenezer stone, they remembered God's help in the past, God's help relied on today, and God's help assured for tomorrow. The Ebenezer was a *"picture"* of the Lord's readiness to hear their cries and save them, and it served to remind them where to turn for their strength and power and Who to thank for their deliverance.

Our childhood memories are like an Ebenezer stone that calls us to remember who God is. The children of Israel reached back into their history and named the marvelous things God had done, the many ways God had delivered them from their enemies, and all the times He forgave their disobedience. The reminders are specific: Didn't God lead you out of bondage in Egypt? Didn't He feed you in the desert and keep doing so, even though you grumbled and complained? Didn't He forgive your repeated idolatry and rampant rebelliousness? Didn't God give your army victory after victory over your enemies? And if He did so much for you in times past, can't you depend on Him to do as much, if not more, for you today? And why are you worrying about tomorrow? Won't He still be there for you, hearing your pleas for help, acting on your behalf?

"I will utter hidden things, things from of old," the psalmist said, "things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us." (Psalms 78:2-3)

Just like for the children of Israel, many of your memories have been given by God to help you remember. They are given to remind you of God's power, to give you trust and confidence in Him, to teach you to lean on Him, to be your Ebenezer for as long as you live this side of heaven.

You see, your memories can be your personal Ebenezer stone. Unlike the pillar erected by Samuel, your Ebenezer, your stone of help, requires neither hammer nor chisel. You don't need to sit down and pen eloquent songs, as the psalmists did. To create your personal Ebenezer, all you need to do is mentally page through your memory album and recall with thanksgiving the many and varied victories God has given you.

You might begin by remembering the gifts of life, parents, home, health, education, and family. Your memories could include the blessings of friends, livelihood, community, and nation. But, especially, remember certain events in your life, times when God turned what appeared to be disaster into an unexpected opportunity, or when He took you through hardship so you could gain the gifts of maturity and wisdom. Your personal Ebenezer turns you away from fear, doubt, and disbelief today, because you realize once again how many times in the past God has forgiven, protected, and healed you. Your Ebenezer memories stand as a constant reminder that God has given you the victory of all victories! Through Jesus Christ, He has made you victorious over the eternal effects of sin, winning for you the promise of eternal life with Him.

Your Ebenezer, your historical record, is your present-day monument to all God has done for you in the past. Your memories, even from childhood, reveal His presence in your life, even if you didn't realize it at the time. Let these things remind you! Let these memories free you to rely on Him today and through every tomorrow. Just as God has been with you in the past, He will remain with you to help you, strengthen you, and bless you now and in the future.



Dr. Worthington has been in the ministry over forty years and serves as President of Pathway Ministries.



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Updates to Share

Over the past few weeks, we have been having our Fall Mini Share-A-thons. We can't say "Thank you" enough to the outpouring of support we have received from our many Faith Partners as we ask for the financial support and prayers needed to continue this ministry the way we feel the Lord has led us to. In this day and time, we've all had to be flexible and modify so many things in our lives. Thank you for making the changes our ministry has faced so much more bearable. It's incredibly comforting to know we have your support!



We want to say a special thank you to Red's Auto and Truck Center, located at 3527 US Highway 13 North between Snow Hill and Goldsboro. They have allowed us to put up a GoMix Christian Radio sign to let people know where to find great Christian programming on the radio dial, and more importantly, where to find the Lord! You can also see our signs at the Snow Hill First Baptist Church (pictured above), located at 509 Kingold Boulevard in Snow Hill, NC, and at New Bethel Baptist Church located at 16419 US Highway 301 North in Enfield, NC. A big "thanks" to them as well.

While we're giving credit where it's due, one more word of thanks is due to long-time *GoMix* Supporter, *George Worrell* of Greene County, NC. George donated and made all the frames for our signs as well as put in the time and labor to put

them all in place for us. Thanks, George!

If you, someone you know, or maybe even your church or business would be willing to let us place a *GoMix Christian Radio* sign on your property to help promote the Gospel, be sure to let us know and we can make it happen. Just give us a call at 252-747-8887, or email Jeremy at *jeremy@gomixradio. org*.

GoMix Radio PO Box 1895 Goldsboro, NC 27533 call 252-747-8887 or fax 866-537-8189 www.gomixradio.org When Writing, Please Enclose Your Mailing Address And Partner Number.

For Additional Information:



Artist Spotlight - Jeri and Larry Mercer Ministry with Chris Bays

We are so excited to introduce our ministry, *Jeri and Larry Mercer Ministry with Chris Bays* to everyone! We want to tell you a little bit about us and how we got started on the wonderful journey that God has allowed us to do through song and testimony.

Larry and I (Jeri) started out early in our marriage wanting to share the Gospel of Christ through music. It all started in the early 1970s, but the group I want to share with you is the one which lead us to where we are today. That group would be Praise Unlimited. It consisted of a couple named Chris and Joyce Bays from Jacksonville, NC, and Larry and I, from Chinquapin, NC. We sang together for many years. You could say it was almost like a marriage. We traveled all over the East Coast, from South Carolina to Maryland. It was an exciting time for all of us. We were privileged to open for many full-time Gospel groups such as the Perry's, Gold City, the Greenes, and the Rex Nelon Singers during our 15 years of traveling together. For personal reasons, Larry and I then had to step away from singing.

After a couple of years, it was time for me to start back doing what I love. I knew at this point I was going to be a soloist, but I trusted God to carry me through. Larry became my sound man, and from there we traveled to church revivals, homecomings, and special events. We stayed busy! After a few years, I felt like it was time for Larry to share the stage with me. What a joy it was to have him standing beside me. He has his own talents; not only singing, but also playing several instruments as well.

We had always stayed in touch with our dear friends Chris and Joyce, but several years later Joyce passed away and went to be with the Lord. We still miss her greatly today. In 2019, I asked Chris to do some backup vocals on several of our tracks, and he was willing to help out. After months of being in the studio recording several tracks, we recorded a beautiful arrangement of "Amazing Grace". Coming back from the studio listening to the track and crying, it became apparent that it was meant for us to get back together after 20 years. It just felt right, and we knew God's hands were in it. We have always loved one another as true friends. Larry and I have now been married almost 50 years, and I've never regretted one minute of serving and traveling for the Lord. It's been our joy. In this day and time, we have put our trust and faith in doing His work. We thank God for putting us back together and using us to share His greatest Gift to others. We would love to come share our testimonies and the Gospel of Christ to your church. Please visit our website: www.jerimercer.com to find out more about us. We appreciate your prayers and encouragement as we continue to travel for His glory.

Thank God... For A Headache? Mrs. Sherry Worthington

Have you ever had one of those days, the kind where your head is pounding and your feet hurt? Your back feels like it is about to break, and you still have ten more things to do.

Well, I was having one of those days when a child's essay caught my attention. The title was, "*I am thankful to be a headache.*" Doesn't that sound strange? I just had to read it. The essay was written from the headache's point of view. What do you call a headache? He or it? For our purposes, let's call it a he. The headache proceeded to tell how he was glad he wasn't an earache because he would have to live in all of that ear wax. Next, he proceeded to be thankful that he wasn't a foot ache because he would be walked on all day long. The headache went on to describe each part of my body that was aching. *The only thing Mr. Headache wasn't thankful for was for the man who invented Aspirin.*

At this point, my little voice (*better known as the Holy Spirit*) taps me on the shoulder. He says, "*How will you apply this child's essay* to your life?" Do you realize how humbling that is? The Holy Spirit often uses life experiences and children's words to teach me something, if I am willing to listen.

So I began to thank God that I have feet that can be tired. I thanked Him for my backache. I could be paralyzed and have no ability in my back to feel pain. I thanked God for my headache and that I had a mind that could function properly *(that is not up for debate, by the way)*. After I thanked God for my healthy body that could ache, I tried to look a little deeper.



What had caused those aches? My feet were hurting because I had been on them all day long. What was the cause? My ministry as a teacher requires me to be on my feet all day, helping children and teenagers learn about the Saviour as well as academics. If I did not have the ministry God had given me, I may not have had sore feet.

At the time this incident occurred, we had five children at home. They are married now and have children of their own so I know they can identify with this situation. It had been a stressful day at work, and I had a

headache. It did not help that I had heard the word "Mom" several hundred times that evening. I was trying to help some of the children with homework at the same time that I was grading papers and doing my own work. As I looked at my children, I became so thankful for them. What a blessing they had been and still are in my life! I was thankful they were well behaved, for the most part, and they wanted my help with their homework. Next to my husband, they were and are my very dear friends. I don't know what I would do without them. Then I seemed to forget about my aches and pains and began thanking God for my life and all the blessings surrounding it. I still do that to this day. This was over 20 years ago, and I remember the lesson I learned that day. Unfortunately, I

forget sometimes and have to be reminded to be thankful for the little problems in life, because behind those problems, are many blessings.

I have so many things to be thankful for! I have a wonderful husband who loves me with all of his heart. I am so blessed to have him. My parents raised me in a Christian home and taught me Godly principles in life. I had two brothers, one is in heaven, but I know my other brother would be here if I needed him. He is in Texas, but he would find a way. I have many more family members who I am thankful for, but time doesn't permit me to continue. I am thankful to be an American, even with all of her problems. I am thankful for this beautiful world with the sunrise and the sunset.

Most of all, I am thankful that I am a Christian. I am thankful that my God loved me so much that He gave His only Son for my sins. He gave His Holy Spirit to be with me and guide me each day. Without Jesus, I would *not* have the blessings that I have today. The principles that my family and I have chosen to live by have made our lives as close as they can be to heaven on earth. Jesus made it all possible.

Lest I bore you, I guess I need to stop now. I'll pick it up with my Lord later. He never gets bored with me. When I get down and feel heavy-hearted, I start counting my blessings. When we concentrate on our aches and pains and what we don't have, it is easy to become downtrodden. Count your blessings!

In Ephesians 5:20 Paul states, "Giving thanks for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." May we store that verse in our hearts during this Thanksgiving season. Remember all of our blessings each day.

It will help you! Try it!



Mrs. Worthington has five children and twelve grandchildren. She serves as Principal of Pathway Christian Academy in Goldsboro.



But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 19:14

What a beautiful scene Matthew's Gospel paints of Jesus and the children. Through the years we have looked at this passage just in the simplicity of "childlike faith". Many inspiring sermons have been delivered encouraging believers to receive Jesus with the faith of a child. As I prayerfully studied this passage, the Lord began to open my eyes to the grace and the depth of this passage.

God wants humanity to come to Him like a child because of many reasons. I am listing a few of those reasons below.

Children are Teachable

Children have a God-given ability to learn what is presented to them. God has amazingly designed the human brain with the ability to learn. Think of all the information a child receives, processes, and learns during his early years of development. Think of how much we can receive from God if we come to Him with an open mind of a child and a willingness and desire to learn.

Children are Loveable

Children are born with a loving nature. Children will love everyone without prejudice. The ability to love is a characteristic of God which is imparted into humanity. The Word teaches that God is love. Children will naturally love until they are taught to hate. Think of how elated our Heavenly Father is when we love Him with the love of a child!

Children have Faith

All people are born with a measure of faith (Romans 12:3). Children come into this world with the natural ability to believe. That is a wonderful gift! As children, we all had great levels of faith. We would receive a concept and simply believe. I think God wants us to come to Him with that childlike faith and just believe. He wants us to read and study His Word and believe. He wants us to walk in faith, looking to Him for our well-being, just as a child looks to their earthly parents.

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me" (paraphrase). Let us come to Jesus with the wonderful qualities of a child. There's an old adage that states, "There's a little child in all of us." Let us release that child and allow ourselves to walk in the fullness of Christ. He is waiting for you to come to Him!



Christmas Instrumental Favorites





Rev. Michael Williams was in the ministry for over twenty years. A long time supporter of GoMix Christian Radio, Pastor Williams has recently been called home to be with our Lord.





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NOTE: Sending us a Go-Greeting implies the right to broadcast your message on the air.



And Finally...



A Thankful Heart...

I am thankful for the small Praying Mantis that sits in the sun in view from my kitchen window. God lets me know He creates the most unlikely little creatures to bring smiles in the morning light. I am thankful for the breeze that lightly touches and cools my face when I walk on a chilly evening talking with the Lord, just like I heard about in the Bible days. As I stop for a brief moment and see the evening moon, the flowers starting to open for the night, and the moths coming out, I am thankful. The night flowers feel as they are only for my eyes for a short time while I'm reminded of the love given from my Heavenly Father. So for the light in the morning and the shelter at night, I am thankful. F. A.

I am grateful for both my immediate family and my extended family. Although we may grow tired of spending so much time together, I love them with all my heart. I am glad I get to spend so much time with these people who hold my heart. E. W.

Thanksgiving is a time to be thankful about all God's gifts. I am very grateful about my family. I think they are the most important thing in my life. When I see my sibling smiling and my parents walking holding hands, I feel blessed. These are the small details that make me happy. M. V. I am grateful for this beautiful year of my life in which I have had the opportunity to live many beautiful experiences like having my family healthy and happy. I am thankful to have work and be able to study at the same time. I have also had a lot of abundance in every way like food, housing, and good relationships with family and friends. I also appreciate the opportunity to be a very productive person. In conclusion, I am so grateful for all the good things in my life because it makes me happy and even the bad things because I have learned and improved. M M

"New Year Plans"

We'd like your help for an upcoming edition of "And Finally..."
Write to us in 150 words or less and tell us what you are planning to do in the new year ahead. The deadline for submission is November 30, 2020. You can send an email to: share@gomixradio.org Attn: PathPointe Magazine Or write to: Pathway Ministries PO Box 1895 Goldsboro, NC 27533





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