

The West End Herald

Second Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC



A Bruised Reed He Will Not Break



by Sinclair Ferguson

continued on page 2

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May 4, 2025

In This Issue

- 1 A Bruised Reed
- 3 Ministry of the Week
- 4 Weekly Catechism
- 5 Corner of River/Rhett
- 6 Birthdays
- 7 Calendar
- 9 Announcements
- 12 The Intercessor

In our weakness, we are as bruised reeds and dimly burning wicks. But Jesus, in His mercy, mends His people and fans them into life.

We need to think carefully about how the Old Testament points to the Lord Jesus. Several passages from the second half of Isaiah are often called the Servant Songs: chapter 42, 49, chapter 50, and then in chapter 52:13–53:12.

Isaiah had foreseen that since the people of God had breached God's covenant, they were destined for judgment. And as He had promised, God would send them into a far country, into exile. But now, as he looks into the future, Isaiah sees deliverance and restoration to the promised land coming on the horizon, and it would come, remarkably, through Cyrus, the pagan king of Persia. That's why Isaiah 40 begins with the words that we are familiar with from Handel's *Messiah*: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God."

But remember Isaiah's own experience that he describes in chapter 6, how he became profoundly aware of his own sinfulness, and he equally becomes profoundly aware of the fact that the people's geographical exile was simply a reflection of a much more sinister exile. And so, he knew



continued on page 10

Daniel & Courtney Hightower

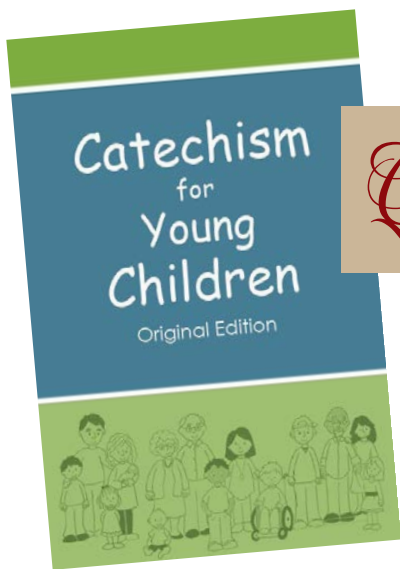


A native of Alabama, Daniel comes to Clemson having served at Jacksonville State University since 2017. Before joining RUF staff, he served as an Assistant



Pastor in Ft Payne, AL. Daniel is a graduate of Troy University, where he met his wife, Courtney. Married since 2009, the Hightowers have four children: Naomi (2013), twins Rebekah and Cole (2016), and Sam (2020). ♦

Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) is a campus ministry that reaches college students from all backgrounds with the hope of Jesus Christ. College is a time when beliefs are explored, decisions are made, and lives are changed. We invite students into authentic relationships and the study of God's Word. Through the ministry of RUF, students discover the love of Christ, find their significance in God's redemptive story, and engage in the life of His church.



Question 129:

Who are to be baptized?

Answer:

Believers and their children.

And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live. Deuteronomy 30:6



Christian parents who baptize their babies want to show that their children belong to the people of God. Christian parents believe that God will work in their children to bring them to faith in Christ. They promise to teach them about Jesus and train them to keep His covenant. Christian parents who baptize their children know that their children must put their faith in Jesus for themselves. If their children never do this, they will never be Christians. Christian parents who baptize their young babies do so trusting that God includes their children in the new covenant. ♦

from *Training Hearts, Teaching Minds*, Starr Meade



at the corner of

River &
Rhett

ASIAN CRESCENT EAST JAVA HUB

VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE

EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES IN INDONESIA

- Meet Alex and Eska D who are spearheading the East Java hub launch
- Java, Indonesia has the highest concentration of Muslims in the world!
- Help us deploy the core team by sending us 2 individuals or families
- Learn more about how your gifts & skills could propel this work forward

MAY 12, 8:00PM EASTERN TIME

[REGISTER HERE](#)



[FOR MORE INFO](#)
INFO@ASIANCRESCENT.ORG

May Birthdays



Have a Great Day!

4

Rafe Johnson

5

Sarah Moore, Mariah Windt

6

Everett Branigin, Nora Hughes, Mary Settle

7

Kennedy McDaniel, Sophia Scott, James VanSteenburgh

8

Rebekah Johnson, Noah Maralit, Chris Nieto

9

Cindy Duncan, James Early

10

Trisha Economidis, Reese Scoggins

This Week

MORNING SERMON

Dr. Richard D. Phillips

OUT OF THE LIONS' DEN

Daniel 6:1–28

EVENING SERMON

Rev. Brendon J. Branigin

ELECT AND EXILES

1 Peter 1:1–2

Sunday, May 4

- 8:30 A.M. MORNING WORSHIP (*Sanctuary*)
- 9:55 A.M. Children's Chapel (*Sanctuary*)
- 10:00 A.M. Sunday School
- 11:00 A.M. MORNING WORSHIP (*Sanctuary*)
- 5:30 P.M. Season of Prayer (*Chapel*)
- 6:00 P.M. EVENING WORSHIP—*Elders Renew Vows*

Monday, May 5

- 6:30 A.M. Men's Bible Study (*Fellowship Hall*)

Tuesday, May 6

- 10:00 A.M. WIC Bible Study (*Fellowship Hall*)

Wednesday, May 7

- 5:00 P.M. Pastoral Care Committee (*Office Work Room*)
- 5:15 P.M. WIC Council (*Conference Room*)
- 5:30 P.M. Family Night Fellowship Supper (*Gym*)
- 6:15 P.M. Hope Choir (K4–K5); Covenant Choir (Grades 1–6); Youth Choir (Grades 7–12)
- 6:45 P.M. Missions Moment (*Gym*)
- 7:00 P.M. CAT Kids (Ages 3–Grade 4); Covenant Kids (Grades 5–8)
- 7:00 P.M. Jr. & Sr. High Bible Studies
- 7:00 P.M. Adult Prayer Meeting & Bible Study (*Gym*)
- 7:30 P.M. Chancel Choir

Friday, May 9

- 12:00 P.M. Men's Luncheon and Bible Study (*Gym*)
- 1:30 P.M. Mission to Main

Upcoming Events

spcgreenville.org/calendar

May 12	Diaconate and Session Meetings
May 14	Graduation Banquet
May 21	CAT Kids Program
May 23	CAT Kids Spring Fling
May 24	Masculine Mandate
May 25	Baptism Sunday
May 28	Summer Children's Choir Begins
June 1	All Adult Summer Sunday School Begins
June 14	Masculine Mandate
June 15	Baptism Sunday
June 16-21	Sr. High Summer Conference (Pawleys Island, SC)
June 23-27	PCA General Assembly (Chattanooga, TN)
July 7-11	Vacation Bible School
July 21-25	Jr. High Summer Conference (Ridge Haven, NC)

Spring Masculine Mandate Sessions

May 24 | June 14

SPC Gymnasium @ 8:00 A.M.



Men who have been redeemed from sin through Jesus Christ have been freed from the bondage of self to live for the glory of God in all things. (p. 42)

Announcements

Friday Night Alive

All singles are invited to the Phillips Home for a meal, fellowship, and teaching time on Friday, May 2, beginning at 6:00 P.M. Please contact Sharon Phillips if you need a ride or have questions.

Baby Shower

All the women of Second Presbyterian Church are invited on Sunday, May 18 from 2–4 P.M. to the Gamble home in celebration of mom-to-be, Sarah Phillips and Baby Boy Phillips, due in August. The shower is being hosted by (mom-in-love) Sharon Phillips, Sarah's Aunts Maggie and Lynn, and dear friends. Please RSVP to Sharon Phillips. Sarah is registered at <https://my.babylist.com/sarahphillips>

CAT Kids Closing Program

The church family is invited to this special program on Wednesday, May 21, at 7:00 P.M. in the Sanctuary. Special thanks to Jill Mann and her many helpers who work diligently throughout the year to provide meaningful teaching to our Covenant Children.

Men's Meeting, Saturday, May 24

All men (high school age and above) are invited to this important time of teaching with Pastor Richard Phillips. Enjoy breakfast together at 8:00 A.M. in the Gym followed by a lesson from Pastor Phillips' book, *The Masculine Mandate*. Books can be purchased in the church bookstore. There is no need to register and food will be provided.



that political deliverance was not an adequate solution to the real problem, which was spiritual—their sin. What the people really needed was deliverance from their deeper bondage in sin and their exile from God.

And so, God gave Isaiah insight into the way in which God would bring that deliverance. The Lord would make Cyrus His servant to bring about political restoration, but it would take a different kind of servant to rescue them from the power and consequences of sin. And so, over the horizon, a shadowy figure begins to appear. His presence is announced in these words in Isaiah 42:1, “Behold my servant, whom I uphold . . . I have put my Spirit on him.” That poem or song is worth meditating on, and I want to select only one of its amazing statements, but one that’s cited in Matthew 12:18–20 and referred to there specifically to the Lord Jesus. Here are the words:

*He will not cry aloud or lift up his voice, or
make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he
will not break, and a faintly burning wick he
will not quench. Isaiah 42:2–3*

That’s such a beautiful description of the Lord Jesus, isn’t it? I love it that Isaiah’s poem begins with the words, “Behold my servant,” in other words, “Look at Him.” I hope you can find time to do that today, to actually look at Jesus in these words, not just see the words, but focus on the One to whom the words point and admire Him, love Him—because I’m afraid it’s the lack of doing this that tends to weaken our Christian lives.

But think about these two pictures of Jesus. There He is walking through the fields. He comes across a slender reed that’s been damaged. I know my own instinct would be to do what I would’ve done as a boy: pull it up, break it off completely, and throw it away—just finish the job. It’s had its day; it’s done. But not Jesus.

Then think of the other picture: a dimly burning wick. Sometimes where we live in Scotland storms cause power outages, and occasionally we’ve had to resort to using candles. But eventually they burn down, the

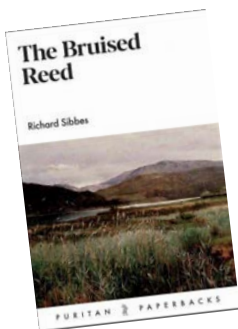
light begins to flicker, there's smoke. What do I do? Well, I just snuff out the candle. It's useless now, and I discard it.

But what if the bruised reeds and the dimly burning wicks are people—weak people, frail people, people life has damaged, even people we don't see any use for any longer? Does Jesus ignore them, snuff them out? After all, they're just dimly burning wicks. Now, truth to tell, we're all bruised reeds and dimly burning wicks in the Lord's sight, but He doesn't throw us away or snuff us out.

I've met Christians who live in fear that Jesus is going to do exactly that to them, and that's why this word "behold" is so important. *Behold* Jesus—look, see what He is really like. He's a gracious, kind, tenderhearted, and patient Savior to His people. He doesn't break bruised reeds or snuff out dimly burning wicks; He mends them, fans them into life.

But before we finish, there's something I want to point out to you. A couple of verses later in this passage, the Servant is described in this way: "He will not grow faint or discouraged" (Isaiah 42:4). These words actually echo what was said earlier about Jesus. The Lord Jesus is able to help bruised reeds, dimly burning wicks, because He was victorious when His heel was bruised. Although the darkness sought to extinguish the light, the Light of the World still shines on, and that's what makes Him exactly the kind of Savior I need and you need—we all need. ♦

Sinclair Ferguson is a Scottish theologian and author who served as a minister and professor in Scotland and in the USA.



All-Adult Summer Sunday School

This above article lays a foundation for what the adults will be studying this summer. All-Adult Sunday School begins on June 1 in the Gym. Books are available for purchase in the Church Bookstore (located in the hallway outside the Chapel) for \$8.