

LANAKILA NEWS

SUNDAY

Ladies Ministry:
9:30 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.

Adult Sunday School:
9:30 a.m. – 10:20 a.m.

Morning Worship:
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Children's Service:
10:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Bible Study:
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study:
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Children's Ministry:
6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Youth Group:
6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

SATURDAY

Men's Ministry:
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

CONNECT

Website:

www.lanakilabaptist.com

Email:

Secretary@lbswarriors.org

Social Media:

"LanakilaBaptist" on:



If you would like to be a part of our Lanakila Ohana please fill out a **CONNECTION CARD** and drop it in the offering or at our **Welcome Desk**.



REFOCUSING

"And they said, 'Let us rise up and build.' So they strengthened their hands for this good work." (Nehemiah 2:18)

I remember when I got my first pair of glasses. I had been having headaches and my doctor recommended that I get my vision tested. I had the typical eye exam, reading the chart on the wall, the puff of air into my eyes, etc. Then the optician had me look through another apparatus and ask me the familiar question: "Do you see better with this lens, or with this lens?" After looking through multiple lenses, the optician said, "Here is what you are seeing now and here is what you will see with glasses." I couldn't believe my eyes were that out of focus. I ordered the glasses and in one hour I was making the drive home seeing things I didn't realize I wasn't seeing before. I had become accustomed to not seeing things clearly and of living with the consequences.

This year myself and Pastor James will be helping our church to refocus. There are two areas we will address as we start this new year. First, our relationship with God. Did you know that you can do all the right things like faithfully reading your Bible, praying, attending church, giving and serving, but not really experience the intimate relationship that your heavenly Father wants to have with you? You can focus on all the right things while not realizing you are missing out because your eyes are out of focus. Sadly, this is exactly what the Pharisees did in Jesus' day. They were so focused on what was right that they couldn't see the miracles Jesus performed. I will be preaching a series of messages called *Experiencing God*, to help us refocus our relationship with God.

Pastor James will be preaching about revitalizing our church. Lanakila Baptist Church has been in decline for more than 10 years and it hasn't improved much in the past 5 plus year of my pastorate. It is the hard truth we must face and address. That is not to say that we haven't made some progress; by God's grace we are still here as a witness of God's love, grace and salvation.

I read a quote this week about church revitalization: "Church revitalization is a sustained effort to reverse the decline of a church by addressing critical issues while maintaining the church's existing leadership, structures, and history." The article went on to suggest that a church cultivate a compassionate congregation, accept and enact necessary changes, refocus on our mission by prioritizing discipleship and evangelism outside the church, evaluate your commitment to the church, enlist a prayer team that focuses on revitalization, take responsibility for the church's growth or decline, and learn about your community to better reach your community. That is a tall order by necessary if we are to obey the great commission Jesus gave to His Church. Let's rise us and rebuild!"

DID YOU KNOW...

What can we learn from the 12 tribes of Israel?

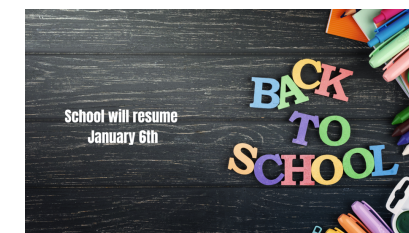
This year we are going to learn about the 12 tribes of Israel and how we can apply their stories to our everyday lives. Each of the twelve sons of Jacob/Israel received a blessing from their father just before his death. The twelve sons were the ancestors of the twelve tribes of Israel, and the blessings contained prophetic information about the future of each tribe. Regarding the tribe of Reuben, Jacob prophesied, "Reuben, thou art my firstborn, My might, and the beginning of my strength, The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power: Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; Because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; Then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch" (Genesis 49:3-4). In addition to referring to the future of the tribe of Reuben, the prophecy contains within it several lessons for all of us.

Reuben, the firstborn of the twelve sons, he was Jacobs "might, and the beginning of his strength", meaning that he was given all the privileges of a firstborn son. At first, he "excelled in dignity and power", which is fitting for the firstborn son, but Jacob said that Reuben "shalt not excel" because of his sin of incest with Bilhah, Jacob's wife (Genesis 35:22). Although that sin was committed forty years earlier, it left an unremovable stain on Reuben's character and his descendants. By committing that sin with his father's wife, his tribe and family would be a disappointment instead of being an example and a blessing. He forfeited the privileges of his birthright, and his dying father demoted him. Jacob did not disown, he would still have all the privileges of a son, but not of the firstborn.

Jacob's sad prophecy for Reuben certainly came true. No judge, prophet, ruler, or prince came from that tribe. The only people of distinction from that tribe was Dathan and Abiram, and they were known for rebelling against Moses. Reuben's tribe chose to live on the eastern side of the Jordan, which also indicated the loss of godly influence on his brothers which his birthright entitled him. Although Reuben was the firstborn, the kingdom was given to Judah and the priesthood to Levi, leaving Reuben's tribe small and without influence.

Also, Reuben was unstable as water, and we can find several lessons for all Christians in this phrase. For one thing, Reuben's morals were unstable. He did not have control of himself and his own appetites. His instability could refer to him sometimes being regular and orderly, and at other times wild and undisciplined. As Christians, we have to control our flesh and its appetites and desires at all times. More importantly, we have to be steadfast in our faith and not "tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine" (Ephesians 4:14).

We also learn from Reuben that if we dabble in sin we should not expect to save our reputation or maintain a positive influence on others. Although we know our sins were nailed to the cross and we are forever forgiven for past sins, we may still suffer the earthly consequences for those sins, which often includes remorse and a loss of reputation and influence. Reuben's sin left an unerasable mark on him and his family. As Christians, we must understand that some of our sins will do the same. – Pastor James



Lanakila Baptist School's Early Enrollment Month of February

Please call the following campuses:

Elementary Campus at (808) 677-0731
K-3 to 5th Grade

or

High School Campus at (808) 681-3146
6th to 12th Grade

