



Calvary *Herald*

JANUARY 2025 ~ VOLUME 56 ~ ISSUE 1

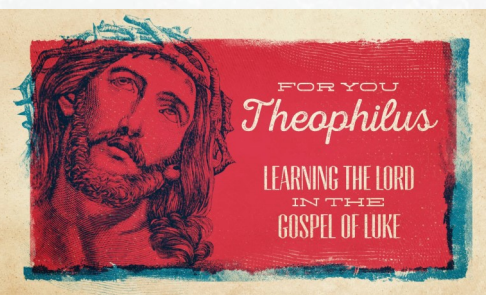
Coming Soon to a Pulpit Near You

If you're a regular in worship at Calvary, you know that our pastor tends to preach most of his sermons in short series of messages that last from three to five weeks. But as we begin this new year, he wants to try something a little different. Beginning on the first Sunday of January and running until the end of April (or just after Easter), Pastor Alex will be leading us through the gospel of Luke in a long series of messages titled, "For you, Theophilus."

Theophilus, you might know, is the person to whom Luke addressed his gospel. "I decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus," Luke says, "so that you may know the certainty of the things you've been taught." What you might not know is that the name "Theophilus" means "friend of God." And so, scholars are divided: Was there an individual named Theophilus to whom Luke wrote, or was Luke writing to all "friends of God," so that everyone would be able to understand more fully the good news about Jesus?

Either way, this extended study will allow us to cover much of Luke's gospel, learning how it all fits together and discovering some of the key emphases that make Luke's telling of the story different from the accounts of Matthew, Mark, and John.

We hope that you'll plan to be with us in worship, so that you can follow along. And we encourage you to invite others, so that—regardless of whether they're "friends of God" or "potential friends of God"—they'll come to "know the certainty" of how God has demonstrated His love in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord.



Red Cross Blood Drive

Calvary will host its first Red Cross Blood Drive of the New Year on Sunday, January 5. The event will take place in the fellowship hall from 11 am to 3:30 pm. And if you'd like to schedule an appointment to donate, you can visit RedCrossBlood.org and use the sponsor code, "Calvary." We are inviting members of our church to support this effort by signing up to register donors and/or to help staff the snack bar. If you'd like to serve in these ways, please contact Mary Jane Shelton (336/401-5849).

Midweek Ministries

A new season of Calvary's Midweek Ministry will begin on Wednesday, January 15. We know that everyone is busy! But there's a lot to be said for carving out a little time in the middle of the week to recharge your spiritual batteries. And by setting aside an hour on Wednesday night to study the scriptures and pray with friends, you just might find that the rest of your week is a little more energized.

We gather in the fellowship hall at 5:45 on Wednesday evenings for a brief time of prayer, and then we split into growth groups for all ages. As the new year begins, adults will be able to choose between a study of

the Gospel of John (led by Jon Cawley), and a study based on the recent faith-based movie, "The Forge" (led by Kim Morrison and Jan Varney). If you have any questions about the Midweek Ministry program, please contact the church office. We hope to see you there!



Enhance Your Growth with RightNow Media

If you'd like to "go deeper" on Pastor Alex's upcoming sermon series on the Gospel of Luke, why not check out some of these resources from RightNow Media? They come in a variety of formats, with video segments, study guides, and more!



Bible Backroads with Dave Stott (6 sessions ~ 11 minutes average)

Dave's use of scripture, archaeology, and geography make the history and impact of Luke's gospel come to life!



Eyewitness Bible Series: Luke (20 sessions ~ 15 minutes average)

Each video is a narrative account by a Bible personality from the book of Luke. A truly unique way to dive into the gospel!



Whatever it Takes by J. D. Greear (4 sessions ~ 47 minutes average)

Greear explores the radical commitments Jesus calls each of us to make when we set out to be his followers.

Are you or your small group looking for a way to deepen your walk with Jesus this year? You may be interested in one of the "Roadmap" curricula available through RightNow Media. You can complete a 2025 roadmap on your own, in a virtual group, or with a small group to earn special recognition and, more importantly, to get closer to Christ! Reach out to Becky Critz for more information.

rightnow MEDIA

Contribution Statements

Contribution statements for the gifts that have been given to the church in 2024 will be coming out later this month. For anyone who doesn't have an email address on file with the church, your statement will be mailed to you or given to you directly on a Sunday morning. For those who do have an email address on file, your statement will be sent as an email attachment; so if you haven't received it by the end of the month, please check your junk folder or contact the church office. If you'd prefer to receive a printed copy of your statement, please contact the church office, and we'll be happy to provide it.



Calvary 2025: Connecting with God and Each Other

As we move into a new year, we'd like to remind you that Calvary offers an array of resources that make it easier for everyone who participates in the life of our church family to connect in a stronger way with God and with each other.

- **RightNow Media:** If you're connected in any way to the Calvary family, you can get free, unlimited access to RightNow Media—an online treasure trove of Bible studies, devotional resources, training tools, and even Christ-centered entertainment for the kids. Several of our Sunday School classes utilize RightNow to make it easier for their members to dig into the scriptures. But even if you're not in a class that uses RightNow (or if you're in no class at all), you can enrich your understanding of God's Word by selecting some studies that address books of the Bible, doctrines, or issues that interest you. And if you're not sure where you start, you can check out the "Bible Study Roadmaps" that walk you through a whole year of discipleship, life application, scripture study, outreach, and community and relationships.
- **Instant Church Directory:** Since Calvary has two different worship services—and since new people connect with our congregation all the time—it can be challenging to get to know others. So, we use an online church directory (also available as an app that you can load on your phone) to share addresses (postal and email), phone numbers, and photos of individuals and families who participate in the life of the church. *And please note that last phrase!* We'd like everyone who participates at Calvary (not just "official members") to be in the directory, so that it can be a truly useful tool for creating connections with others. So, if you're not already in the directory, we'd like to help you get started.
- **Daily Devotionals:** Every weekday, Calvary sends "Today's Word from Pastor Alex" to everyone who wishes to receive it by both email and voice recording. Never more than 2 minutes long, these short devotionals are grounded in scripture and offer an encouraging or thought-provoking reflection to start your day.
- **Prayer Updates:** Calvary aims to be a church in which people are seeking to partner with God in order to bring His power to bear in the life of our families, our friends, and our community. And so, as different needs are brought to our attention, we share the latest prayer concerns through updates that are sent out by email and/or recorded message.
- **Regular Publications:** For some folks, this might seem a little "old school." But we do want you to know that almost everything that happens at Calvary gets featured in our weekly worship bulletin and monthly newsletter. Of course, you can pick up copies of these publications at church. But we also send them out by email to those who request them. And, not long after they're printed, they're also posted on our website (www.calvarymountairy.org), where you can get all kinds of information about our church and its ministries.

Again, the main goal of these resources is connection. If any of us want to "love God and love others" as Jesus commanded, we need to find ways to establish and nurture the kind of relationships in which active love can flourish. And while none of these resources can "guarantee" our growth in love, they do help to provide the kind environment that makes love a little easier. So, if you're not yet taking advantage of these tools but would like to do so, please contact the church office to get more information.

Thank You Notes

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your continued love and support of our ministry. We are only able to succeed because of partners like you. May God continue to bless you.

Stephanie Shaffer

Baptist Retirement Homes Foundation

Dear Pastor Alex,

Thank you and all the other people at Calvary Baptist Church for praying for me. It meant a lot to me! I believe in prayer; it has helped me a lot in the past and it gives me the strength to get through tough times. Everything went better than I thought it would with my treatments, and I hope things turn out well. I'm wishing you and everyone at Calvary a wonderful Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sydney Farris

(Allison Hiatt's mother)

Memorial Gifts

Calvary would like to thank those who gave special gifts in memory and in honor of those they love.

- **In Memory of Shelly Rector:** Dot Mabe, Johnny and Mary Lynn Goins, Claudia Bryant, Dot Marion
- **In Memory of Paulette Badgett:** Dot Marion
- **In Honor of Mike Francis and the Handyman Ministry Team:** Claudia Bryant

A stylized, handwritten-style graphic of the words "Thank you!" in a dark, bold font. The letters are thick and have a slight shadow, giving it a three-dimensional appearance. The "y" is particularly large and loops around. The overall style is casual and heartfelt.