

Let God take over your life

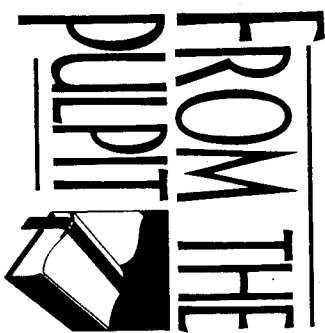
By Elder BRAD BRYANT
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“One of the challenges of our faith is trying to understand and express an infinite, eternal being known to us as God, using the limiting language of this world. It’s just not possible to fully understand everything we’d like to about this God that we worship.

God is often easiest to deal with when we try to box him in. Unfortunately, many in today’s society have chosen to put God in a box labeled “ignore” (keep him there and maybe we won’t have to deal with him). Others put God in a box called “Sunday” (keep him there and we don’t have to spend our personal time thinking about him during the week).

Some put God in a box called “death” (we’ll think about God when someone close to us dies. And then not for very long. Life does go on, after all). Some put God in a box called “alone” (I don’t need church because I can worship just fine by myself). Some put God in a box and call it the “Bible” (everything we need to know about God is written in this book from ages past. Certainly, God would have nothing useful to say to us today about the current state of our world and our lives).

I would suggest that every time we try to put God in a box, we limit



His ability to work in our lives. And working in our lives, with and through us, is what he really wants. God is a being of love — a greater love than we can ever express in language. In fact, it’s greater than even He can express in language, so instead He came into the world as one of us, in the person of Jesus Christ, to show us by example what cannot be expressed in words.

Jesus was a box-breaker. He broke the expected box of the Jewish people by not coming as a conquering king. He broke the box of the church leaders of the time by not overthrowing the Roman occupation troops and proclaiming freedom for the Jews. He broke the box of sexuality through a virgin birth. He broke the box of the Mosaic law by teaching that salvation and forgiveness come to us not by strictly following the Jewish laws given through Moses, but rather

through acceptance of the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus would make on the cross and a disciplined following of his teaching of joy, hope, love and peace.

Jesus continues to be a box breaker. He has already conquered all of the boxes that our world attempted to use against him during His life. Through His mortal life, ministry, death and resurrection, there is no power or situation in this world that He cannot overcome.

One of the greatest gifts that God has given us is our freedom to choose and to be responsible for the results of those choices. He gave Adam and Eve that freedom in the garden, but they messed up and paid the price for that sin, bringing death into the world.

You and I are blessed with that freedom, too. And as a God who breaks boxes, Jesus is asking to be involved with your life — every day. Jesus respects your freedom to choose and to be responsible for the results of those choices. And He waits for that invitation from you, asking Him to be part of your life’s decisions.

Jesus can help you with the big and small decisions in your life — employment, dealing with illness, marriage partners, education, etc. There is no problem that a partnership with Jesus won’t help make better once you decide to invite

Him into your life and let His will be done, rather than yours.

The members of the global Christian family and especially your neighbors who are members of the Community of Christ invite you to think about the boxes you have wrapped around God. Consider how your choices might be limiting the blessings that He wants to provide in your life and make decisions that will help you remove those boxes from around Him.

Don’t limit the “truth of God” to those ideas that someone else has taught you. Instead, allow God to be God in your life and experience the blessings that can come from an ongoing relationship with a God who it’s OK to not fully understand.

Choose today to begin the process of letting God out of your boxes. Seek out and find a Christ-focused community of believers, where you can search, question, repent, serve others, grow, be forgiven and find the presence and ministry of Jesus.

Then choose to become an active part of that community, allowing your “desire to believe” to grow into a living testimony of the work and presence of Jesus Christ in your life. Join us on the journey!

Elder Brad Bryant is pastor of Community of Christ in Normal.

STEP From D1

voice. Children also display sentiment if they perceive their mother or father loves a n spouse more than them.

“Kids will try to separate couples. They want things back the way they used to be no matter how bad things were,” said Hopkins adding that children want the biological parent back — often not cause the stepparent is a bad person, but because they feel the real mom or dad is being replaced.

“It’s like an organ transplant. The kids don’t want you there, a reject you,” Hopkins said.

Resentment can be displayed various ways but most common it escalates when it comes to discipline. Hopkins said biological parents — not the stepparent should handle discipline until sentiment subsides.

New household rules also will challenged, but stepparents need to be firm on what will and will be tolerated.

“Make it clear you are the old adult head of the household and cause of that, rules have to be lowered,” said Hopkins. “Don’t worry about what rules the ex-spouse has or the child’s idolization their bio-parents. Kids just do it to make you feel bad.”

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