

In our Christian lives, we all are faced at times with challenges and/or opportunities to “stand up” and “speak up” for what and who we believe in. How we respond to those opportunities/challenges often serve to define who we are – bold followers of Jesus or faint-hearted individuals who retreat from conflict.

Carrie Prejean (sounds like a Cajun name) was the California representative in this year’s *Miss USA* competition back in April. During that competition, she was faced with one of those opportunities/challenges when she was asked before a national television audience to voice her perspective on the controversial subject of same-sex marriage. In a now famous statement, Carrie replied, “I do believe that marriage should be between a man and a woman; no offense to anybody out there. But that’s how I was raised, and I believe that it should be between a man and a woman.” As a result of her statement which reflects her Christian faith, Carrie has been bitterly attacked by critics, most prominently by homosexual activist and blogger Perez Hilton, the same man who posed the question to her in the pageant. Some have said that Carrie made a great mistake by “standing up” for what she believed in front of a national audience, and others have even said that her statement cost her the title of *Miss USA 2009*.

Several weeks after the event, Carrie spoke at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. As she addressed Liberty’s student body and faculty, she said that when Mr. Hilton’s question was posed, she immediately knew that she had come to a spiritual crossroads. “I knew right there that I was either going to please man or please God. And I knew there was no choice.” Then she reminded the students that the Christian life is often full of challenges. “You’re going to be persecuted, you’re going to be made fun of and you’re going to be called names. But when you are given an opportunity to stand up for Christ do it.”

Carrie told the Liberty students that the unexpected event has opened more doors than she ever dreamed possible to speak about her faith in Jesus Christ. “This has given me an opportunity to proclaim my faith to millions of people.” That’s what God can and will do when we are willing to “stand up” and “speak up” for Him.

This coming weekend (May 16-17) at Celebration Church we’re going to be learning how we can “stand up” and “speak up” at opportune times for our Lord and for our faith. I hope that you will plan to join us for our worship services this coming weekend, as we continue our message series *BEDTIME STORIES*, and be sure to bring others with you as well.

If you are looking for a *SUMMER CAMP* for your children, be sure to check out our *Crescent City Christian School Summer Camp*. The CCCS *Summer Camp* will have the same great Christian emphasis we have year-round through our church and school, combined with lots of well-supervised fun activities for your children. Daily fun activities will include swimming, arts and crafts, recreational activities, and age appropriate field trips. Information about the *CCCS Summer Camp* can be obtained at www.ccchristian.net, or by calling 504.885.4700.

You may also want to consider enrolling your child or children at Crescent City Christian School for the coming 2009-2010 School year. The benefits for having your child (or children) at CCCS include:

- Strong parental involvement is always welcomed and expected

- There will be consistent staff/parent communication
- Strong Biblical discipleship and discipline will characterize the program
- A qualified, quality Christian staff will work with your child
- Structured learning will be balanced with creative motivation
- The Daycare and School will provide excellent academic preparation
- Your child will be in a safe, loving environment
- Scriptural principles will be taught and modeled to your children 35+ hours per week
- Numerous extracurricular activities will be available to your child
- Discounts are provided for church members, and for families with multiple enrollees
- A “no interest” payment plan is provided for participating families
- You and your children will experience fellowship with other parents and children who have the same spiritual and academic goals in life
- We will do everything we can to help you child or children learn how to “stand up” and “speak up” for their faith like Carrie Prejean has done

If the Lord is leading you to enroll your child in our School or Daycare, please do so as quickly as possible. You can obtain information about *Crescent City Christian School and Daycare* by visiting www.ccchristian.net, or by calling 504.885.4700.

This past weekend in our services our people rejoiced as we shared how we were able to help a homeless family (a couple and their three small children) that had been living in a car find employment and get into an apartment. It's a great blessing to be a part of a church family that truly cares about hurting people in our city and region as well as around the world. Let me remind you, however, that we are only able to help hurting people and carry the "good news" of Jesus to the people of our city as well as people around the world because of the faithful giving of our people. If you are behind in your "tithing" or giving to A CITY TRANSFORMED: INVESTING IN ETERNITY, please "catch up" in the coming weeks so that we can continue to see many people's lives and situations transformed by the Lord.

Pastor Dennis