

**Summer Preaching Series**  
**“Cedars: Load Bearing Truths to Build a House of Faith”**  
**Kenwood Baptist Church Sermon Series**  
Pastor David Palmer  
June 7-August 31, 2015

**OVERVIEW:** Our summer preaching series at Kenwood Baptist will be a topical study of majestic biblical truths called “Cedars of Lebanon.” The cedars of Lebanon were the most prized building material of the ancient world. These majestic evergreen trees grew up to 130 feet (40m) with trunks up to 8 feet in diameter (2.5m). The wood was prized for fragrance and durability. The resin content preserved the trees from rot and worms. Kings across the ancient Near East harvested these cedars to build palaces and temples. In 1 Kings 5-6, Solomon uses the cedars to build the Lord’s house in Jerusalem.

Just as the cedars of Lebanon support the structure of God’s dwelling place, the house of Christian faith is built upon load-bearing truths. We will explore these enduring truths through a series of important questions. These questions have formed the major topics of Christian theology over the centuries. What is God like? What is humanity? What is sin? Who is Jesus Christ? What is the atonement? What is election? What are justification and adoption? What are sanctification and perseverance? What is the church? Who is the Holy Spirit and what are his gifts? What will happen when Christ returns? What are the new heavens and the new earth?

Our prayer for this series is that we would be built more strongly together into a house of faith. Christianity should never be defined by social issues or personal preferences, but by faith in Christ and the great truths of God’s Word. These truths give structure to our lives, direction for our mission in the world, and endurance for the task before us. May the hope of Psalm 92:12-13 be fulfilled among us this summer: “the righteous will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; planted in the house of the LORD, they will flourish in the courts of our God. They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, proclaiming, “The LORD is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him.”

**CHURCH INTEGRATION:** We will share this exploration of load-bearing truths by reading *Christian Beliefs: Twenty Basics every Christian should know* by Wayne and Elliot Grudem.

**KEY SCRIPTURE MEMORY:** “You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. (Eph 2:19-22)

**GRAPHIC DESIGN:** The graphic design for the series calls our attention to a winding path through a cedar forest. As majestic trees rise around us, the path beckons us forward into God’s design for our lives. Above the path, architectural drawings call our attention to the components that we need to build a house of faith.

## **WORSHIP EMPHASIS AND KEY HYMNS/PRAISE SONGS:**

**Creed (Rich Mullins/Third Day)**

**This I believe (Hillsongs)**

**Dwell in Your House**

WEEK 1:     June 7           Pastor David Palmer (Communion Sunday)  
          Title:            "Cedars: Load-Bearing Truths to Build a House of Faith"  
          Text:            Psalm 92  
          Theme:          Introduce Summer series  
          Reading:        Grudem, chapter 1: "What is the Bible?"

**Pastoral contact:** I want to personally invite you to worship at Kenwood this Sunday. We will begin a new summer series called "Cedars." The Cedars of Lebanon represent load-bearing truths to build a house of faith. The imagery is taken from Psalm 92, our text for Sunday. Each week this summer we will explore one major topic of Christian theology. We will share the journey with a short book called *Christian Beliefs: Twenty Basics Every Christian Should Know* by Wayne and Elliot Grudem. Each chapter is only about five pages. I encourage you to get this book and read chapter 1: "What is the Bible?" for this Sunday. Jesus says in John 8:32 that "You will know the truth and the truth will set you free." My prayer for this summer is that God would help us to grow stronger in understanding Christian truth and experience great freedom together in Jesus. May the Lord bless us as a community this summer!

WEEK 2:     June 14          Pastor Dennis Metzger  
          Title:            "What is God Like?"  
          Text:            Isaiah 40:25-31  
          Theme:          The biblical doctrine of God  
          Reading:        Grudem, chapter 2: "What is God like?"

**Pastoral contact:** Who is God and what is He like? The Scripture affirms that there is only one true and living God. There is none like the Lord God Almighty. This load-bearing truth reveals who our God is. Pastor Dennis Metzger will explore this cedar of truth from Isaiah 40:25-31. He will help us grasp the unique identity and character of the God we are created to know, love, and serve. I encourage you read *Christian Beliefs* chapter 2: "What is God like?" for this Sunday. We look forward to worshipping God together on Sunday morning.

WEEK 3:     June 21           Rev. Susan Rice  
          Title:            “What is humanity?”  
          Text:            Psalm 8  
          Theme:           The biblical doctrine of humanity made in the image of God  
          Reading:         Grudem, chapter 7: “What is Man?”

**Pastoral contact:**     What is Humanity? The Scripture affirms that human beings are uniquely made in the image and likeness of God. This load-bearing truth is unique to Christian theology. Rev. Susan Rice, just having returned from our mission trip to Beirut, Lebanon, will explore God’s truth about us from Psalm 8. We are crowned with glory and honor. I encourage you read *Christian Beliefs* chapter 7 “What is Man?” for this Sunday. We look forward to worshipping God together on Sunday morning.

WEEK 4:     June 28           Pastor Larry Taylor  
          Title:            “What is sin?”  
          Text:            Romans 5:12-19  
          Theme:           The biblical doctrine of human depravity (original sin)  
          Reading:         Grudem, chapter 8: “What is Sin?”

**Pastoral contact:**     What is Sin? The Scripture affirms that although human beings are made in the image of God, we are fallen in sin. We are created to reflect the glory of God, but we have lost our glory through the deception of sin. Each of us is born with a disposition that is hostile to God. Each of us seeks our own way. We stand in need of redemption. This load-bearing truth is unique to Christian theology. Pastor Larry Taylor will explore God’s truth about what’s wrong with us from Romans 5. I encourage you read *Christian Beliefs* chapter 8 “What is Sin?” for this Sunday. We look forward to worshipping God together on Sunday morning.

WEEK 5:     July 5                 Pastor David Palmer (Communion Sunday)  
          Title:            “Who is Jesus Christ?”  
          Text:            Colossians 1:11-20  
          Theme:           The biblical doctrine of Christ  
          Reading:         Grudem, chapter 9: “Who is Christ?”

**Pastoral contact:**     Who is Jesus Christ? Christian theology affirms that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man. He is the Beloved Son of God. He is the firstborn over all creation. He is the One through whom the world is made. He is the One through whom the world is saved. I have the great privilege to explore the greatness of Christ from Colossians 1:11-20. This cedar of truth introduces our Savior. I encourage you read *Christian Beliefs* chapter 9 “Who is Christ?” for this Sunday. I look forward to worshipping God together on Sunday morning.

WEEK 6: July 12 Pastor David Palmer  
Title: “What is the Atonement?”  
Text: John 3:16 and 1 John 4:9-10  
Theme: The biblical doctrine of substitutionary atonement for sin  
Reading: Grudem, chapter 10: “What is the Atonement?”

**Pastoral contact:** What is the atonement? Jesus taught his disciples that it was *necessary* for him to suffer and die. Hebrews 9:22 tells us that without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. Christian theology affirms that the death of Christ is the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. In him alone, we find forgiveness and reconciliation to God. We will explore the work of Christ from John 3:16 and 1 John 4:9-10. This cedar tells us how God fixes a broken world. Read *Christian Beliefs* chapter 10 “What is the Atonement?” for this Sunday.

WEEK 7: July 19 Pastor David Palmer  
Title: “What is Election?”  
Text: Ephesians 1:3-14  
Theme: The biblical doctrine of election, being chosen by God  
Reading: Grudem, chapter 12: “What is Election?”

**Pastoral contact:** What is Election? Christian theology affirms that God is running the universe. If he does not choose to act, none can be saved. The biblical doctrine of election, or being chosen by God, reveals God’s sovereign purpose apart from any human merit. Although this doctrine can easily be misunderstood, election should always lead us to humility, awe, and gratitude. We will explore this great load-bearing truth from Ephesians 1:3-14. I encourage you read *Christian Beliefs* chapter 12 “What is Election?” for this Sunday.

WEEK 8: July 26 Pastor Scott Burns  
Title: “What are Justification and Adoption?”  
Text: Galatians 3:24-4:7  
Theme: The biblical doctrines of justification and adoption  
Reading: Grudem, chapter 14: “What are Justification and Adoption?”

**Pastoral contact:** What are Justification and Adoption? Christian theology affirms that God declares us righteous in his sight by faith in Christ. This is the great load-bearing truth called justification. This righteousness comes to us as a gift. It is not earned. Indeed, it cannot be earned apart from Christ. Once we receive Christ, we are adopted as the sons and daughters of God. We are no longer orphans or strangers, but we are adopted as children. These truths offer us security, peace, and our new identity as part of God’s family. Pastor Scott Burns will explore these cedars of truth from Galatians 3:24-4:7. I encourage you read *Christian Beliefs* chapter 14 “What are Justification and Adoption?” for this Sunday. I look forward to worshipping God together on Sunday morning.

WEEK 9: August 2 Pastor Scott Burns (Communion Sunday)  
Title: "What are Sanctification and Perseverance?"  
Text: 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7  
Theme: The biblical doctrines of sanctification and perseverance  
Reading: Grudem, chapter 15: "What are Sanctification and Perseverance?"

**Pastoral contact:** What are Sanctification and Perseverance? Christian theology affirms that God's saving purpose leads toward a holy life. We are filled with the Holy Spirit at conversion. The Holy Spirit dwells within us. The Holy Spirit begins to transform us. This is the process of sanctification. Sanctification is a lifelong process that requires perseverance. We are not changed in one day, one week, or one year. God has committed himself to us. He who begins a good work in us will be faithful to complete it. These truths reveal God's will and the goal of life. Pastor Scott Burns will explore these cedars of truth from 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7. I encourage you read *Christian Beliefs* chapter 15 "What are Sanctification and Perseverance?" for this Sunday. I look forward to worshipping God together on Sunday morning.

WEEK 10: August 9 Pastor David Palmer (Sunday after Deer Park Days)  
Title: "What is the Church?"  
Text: Ephesians 3:8-12  
Theme: The biblical doctrine of the church  
Reading: Grudem, chapter 17: "What is the Church?"

**Pastoral contact:** What is the Church? Christian theology affirms that God's saving purpose is on display in the church. The church is the vast assembly of all of God's redeemed people. All true believers, regardless of when and where they live, make up the church. The church is the place where we belong. The church is the people of God. The Bible describes the church with many metaphors as a new temple, a holy priesthood, branches on a vine, an olive tree, and a field ripe with harvest. The most moving statement is that the church is the Bride of Christ. This truth reveals where we most belong. We will explore this cedar of truth from Ephesians 3:8-11. I encourage you read *Christian Beliefs* chapter 17 "What is the Church?" for this Sunday. I look forward to worshipping God together on Sunday morning.

WEEK 11: August 16 Pastor David Palmer  
Title: “Who is the Holy Spirit and what are His gifts?”  
Text: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11  
Theme: The biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit  
Reading: Review Grudem, chapter 17: “What is the Church?”

**Pastoral contact:** Who is the Holy Spirit and what are His gifts? Christian theology teaches that God fills believers with the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is fully God, together with God the Father and God the Son. The Holy Spirit fills the church with the real presence of God. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are the unique manifestation of his presence in every believer. The gifts of the Spirit are to be used. They are for the common good. They build up the church. They reveal that God is among us. We will explore this cedar of truth from 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. I encourage you review *Christian Beliefs* chapter 17 “What is the Church?” for this Sunday especially the last page on spiritual gifts. I look forward to worshipping God together on Sunday morning.

WEEK 12: August 23 Pastor David Palmer  
Title: “What will happen when Christ returns?”  
Text: Revelation 19:11-21  
Theme: The biblical doctrine of Christ’s return and final judgment  
Reading: Grudem, chapter 18: “What will happen when Christ returns?”

**Pastoral contact:** What will happen when Christ returns? Christian theology affirms that Jesus Christ will return in visible glory. It will be a public event. Every eye will see him. He will return after the gospel has been preached to all nations. He will return as the victorious King of glory. All humanity will appear before his judgment seat. This will be an awesome sight. Christ will condemn sin and evil forever. Christ will reward the righteous with eternal life. This load-bearing truth tell us where the world is going and who will be waiting when we get there. We will explore this cedar of truth from Revelation 19:11-21. I encourage you read *Christian Beliefs* chapter 18 “What will happen when Christ returns?” for this Sunday. I look forward to worshipping God together on Sunday morning.

WEEK 13: August 30 Pastor David Palmer  
 Title: “What are the new heavens and the new earth?”  
 Text: Revelation 21:9-22:5  
 Theme: The biblical doctrine of the new heavens and new earth  
 Reading: Grudem, chapter 20: “What is Heaven?”

**Pastoral contact:** What is heaven? Christian theology teaches that God will create a new heavens and new earth after the final judgment. Heaven is not a disembodied state. Heaven is participation in an entirely new world. This new world holds a vast and glorious city, the New Jerusalem. God will dwell there. Redeemed humanity will walk together. There will be no evil, no death, no mourning. The old order of things has passed away. The new has come. The biblical view of heaven is an entirely renewed creation. God’s people will have new glorified bodies that will never grow old or become weak or ill. We will enjoy God’s presence. There will be wonderful music. We will enjoy one another. There will no more tears. This load-bearing truth tells us what happens in the end. We will explore this cedar of truth from Revelation 21:9-22:5. I encourage you review *Christian Beliefs* chapter 20 “What is Heaven?” for this Sunday especially the last page on spiritual gifts. I look forward to worshipping God together on Sunday morning.

**CEDARS SERMON SERIES OVERVIEW:**

What is the Bible?	Implied: Where do I find the truth?
What is God like?	Implied: Who is God?
What is humanity?	Implied: Who are we?
What is sin?	Implied: What’s wrong with us?
Who is Jesus Christ?	Implied: Can anyone help us?
What is the atonement?	Implied: What repairs the world’s wrong?
What is election?	Implied: Who is running this world?
What are justification and adoption?	Implied: Am I safe and secure?
What are sanctification and perseverance?	Implied: What is the goal of life?
What is the church?	Implied: Where do I belong?
Who is the Holy Spirit and what are his gifts?	Implied: How do I get involved?
When will Christ returns?	Implied: Where is the world going?
What are the new heavens and new earth?	Implied: What happens in the end?

**NEXT SERMON SERIES: LEVITICUS: “BE HOLY FOR I AM HOLY”**

**FALL 2015: SEPTEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>-NOVEMBER 22<sup>ND</sup>**