



# BEACON

A Publication of Bellview Church of Christ  
4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526  
850.455.7595

Internet Web Page: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>  
E-mail: [bellviewcoc@gmail.com](mailto:bellviewcoc@gmail.com)

## January

January 2  
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January 16  
January 23  
January 30

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February 20  
February 27

## March

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November 27

## December

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December 18  
December 25



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 1

January 2, 2017

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Minister: Michael Hatcher

Deacons: Henry Born, Elward Brantley,  
Bill Busch

Sunday Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## The Lord's Supper

*Charles Pogue*

Perhaps I have mentioned this in a previous article, but I believe it bears repeating. When a brother presiding at the Lord's table suggests we remove worldly thoughts from our minds and center them upon Christ and His death, I always wonder where he thinks our minds had been for any preceding acts of worship. That being said, we must never allow ourselves to partake of the Lord's Supper in a routine and thoughtless way. There are things about which we should focus our thoughts.

When one partakes of the bread, he ought to think of that body hanging on the tree (Acts 5:30; 1 Pet. 2:24). Think of the cruelty, including the mocking (Mat. 27:31; Mark 15:20; Luke 22:63) that He went through for you and for me. Think of the nails driven into His hands and His feet (Luke 24:40), and the crown of thorns that was shoved down upon His head (Mat. 27:29), doubtlessly, beginning a flow of blood down His brow. He went to

that cross and offered Himself as a vicarious (substitutionary) sacrifice. He, not you and me, died for our sins. How can we partake of the bread and not think of the cruel scourging (John 19:1), and of Him bearing His own cross upon which He would hang. He carried that cross until He fell beneath the load (19:16-17; Luke 23:26). After that, Simon of Cyrene was compelled to carry it the rest of the way (Mat. 27:32). If we think on these things the Lord's Supper will always be filled with the meaning it should have for those of us who have humbly obeyed His Gospel.

After the Lord, had blessed the bread, broke it, and gave it to the disciples to eat, He blessed the cup and gave it to them to drink. When you partake of the fruit of the vine, do you remember that it has always been since man first sinned, that God has required a blood sacrifice for sin? He did that, because the life of the flesh is in the blood (Lev.

17:11). When Christ was hung on the cross, He had already been scourged, which would have drawn blood from His body. As we mentioned, the crown of thorns would have done the same. However, when the soldiers came to break the legs of the three who had been hung on their respective crosses, they found Jesus already dead, so they did not break His legs. Instead, one soldier pierced the side of Christ, and there came out blood and water. That is when He poured out His blood for us (Mat. 14:24). That is when He poured out the blood that washed away the sins of Saul of Tarsus (Acts 22:16), and every other person who is baptized into Christ's death (Rom. 6:3-4). It was because of the shedding of that blood

that He died, and that we might live (1 John 4:9). How can anyone partake of the fruit of the vine, and not think on the love that made the Savior go to the cross, and shed His sinless blood for our sinful selves?

Regardless of when a congregation observes the Lord's Supper during the Lord's Day worship service, the mind of every member should be on spiritual things from the very beginning. When we partake of the Lord's Supper our thoughts, had better already have been removed from worldly things, but now they are centered specifically on the cross where Jesus body was hung and where His blood was shed. Oh, what love that made the Savior go! The Lord's Supper was instituted as a memorial feast (1 Cor. 11:24-26). That means Christ and those things concerning His crucifixion are what we are to remember as we partake. We do so looking unto the day He will come again.

*Beeville, TX*

*Defender and Beacon*

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## Roadblocks to Faith

*Roelf L. Ruffner*

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God (John 12:42-43).

Who were these "chief rulers" who believed on Jesus but did not want to confess it publicly? They may have been members of the Jewish religious council, the Sanhedrin, composed of seventy prominent citizens of ancient Israel. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were among their number. John indicates that

"many" "believed on" Jesus. They had heard His teachings for over three years and may have witnessed some of His miracles, yet they refused to confess Him as the Christ. They knew the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament but failed to acknowledge them regarding Jesus. "Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?" (3:9-10).

Why did they not confess the obvious—that Jesus was the Christ? What was the roadblock

to obedient faith? John indicates that one reason was fear of disgrace. The Jewish officials had determined that if anyone confessed that Jesus was the Christ they would be cast out of the synagogue. “These *words* spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue” (9:22). The synagogue was the center of Jewish life and to be expelled was a disgrace. What about our fear of disgrace? Many Christians have undergone persecution by society, friends, and family because of their decision not just to believe on Christ but to obey Him.

And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten *them*, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name (Acts 5:40-41).

Another reason lay in the opinion of many of the Jewish officials had of Jesus. They saw Him as a backwoods preacher who threatened their positions (John 7:41, 52). Those who wondered if Jesus was the Christ had great regard for these men. How many today fail to obey the Gospel because of the regard they have for men who are in essence false teachers? They teach and preach a *gospel* that is not the old Jerusalem Gospel and which will not save anyone in eternity. They may hold some position of authority in a denomination or a religious institution but they teach a false gospel and are accursed (Gal. 1:8-9).

John indicates that these wan-a-be believers

valued the “praise of men.” They liked being called “Master” or “Rabbi” in the market place (Mat. 23:1-12). They would probably have lost that title if they confessed that Jesus was the Christ. However, following the Lord often requires going to the back of the bus. And we all secretly long to be praised by others. “Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets” (Luke 6:26).

This brings us to the root of all roadblocks to faith—a lack of self-denial and a lack of love for God. These rulers could not humble themselves and confess that Jesus was who the evidence says He was—the Son of God. They would have had to dethrone themselves in their hearts and enthrone the Lord. “And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Mat. 18:3). For most folks to believe in Christ they must first disobey self to obey the Lord, in other words to love Him more than they love themselves. “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (1 John 5:3).

The sad point of this event in John 12 is that some of these same rulers a few days later sided with the high priest Caiaphas and demanded Jesus be crucified by the Gentiles on the false charge of blasphemy. Their belief in Jesus was shown to be only an inch deep.

Dear reader, what about us? Are we so wrapped up in ourselves and what others think that we fail to show obedient faith? “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46).

Columbia, TN

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Dot Dodd
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Karen Ayliffe	
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	
Rheba Stancliff (Rehab in North Carolina)	
Al Flesher (Rehab in Arkansas)	
Shannon Barlow (Pam Busch's niece)	
Sonya Chavez (Joyce Johnson's friend)	
Shane Norris (Pam Busch's nephew)	
Linda Ness (Pam Busch's sister)	

## Please Remember

### January 8

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### January 9

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### January 15

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### January 23

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### January 29

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

## Directory Updates

If you have any changes to the members' directory please contact the office.



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 2

January 9, 2017

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## He That Believeth Not

*Brad Green*

Jesus, in His Great Commission, states, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16). Belief has always been a prerequisite for salvation, for “without faith *it is impossible to please him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb. 11:6). However, faith alone has never saved anyone. “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone....by works [*of obedience, see context*] a man is justified, and **not by faith only**” (Jam. 2:17, 24). The New Testament clearly teaches that a dead faith will not save, but a faith that leads to acts of obedience, (i.e. repenting of past sins—Luke 13:3; confessing that Jesus is the Son of God—Rom. 10:9-10; being baptized to have one’s sins washed away—Acts 2:38;

22:16; and faithful living until death—Rev. 2:10; 1 John 1:6-9), is the faith that will save. Thus, as Jesus teaches, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

However, Jesus also teaches, “he that believeth not shall be damned.” Some, in the religious world, have claimed that all one must do to be saved is believe and that Mark 16:16 does not teach, “he that is not baptized shall be damned.” Let us examine the verse further, taking care to harmonize any conclusion with the entirety of New Testament teaching.

1. “He that believeth not shall be damned,” because Jesus says, “if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). Faith is a requirement and condition of salvation.
2. “He that believeth not shall be damned,” because he will not repent of his past sins. One who does not believe in God

or God's Word will not use the Bible as a standard of how one is to live and act. Therefore, he will not see the need to turn away from anything that he practices. He will most likely determine for himself what he believes to be right and wrong irrespective of the truth of God's Word. Without repentance, one will die in his sins (Luke 13:3; John 8:24).

3. "He that believeth not shall be damned," because he will not confess that Jesus is the Son of God. If an individual does not believe the teachings of the Bible, then he will not believe that Jesus is God's Son and therefore will not confess His name before men. Without making the confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, one cannot be saved (Mat. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:10).
4. "He that believeth not shall be damned," because he will not be baptized. One who does not believe will not accept the truth that baptism saves and therefore will not be immersed in water to have his sins washed away. If one does not accept the truth that baptism saves, he will not waste the time to do so. The New Testament teaches that baptism saves.
  - a. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).
  - b. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38).
  - c. "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (22:16).
  - d. "Baptism doth also now save us" (1 Pet. 3:21).

Baptism alone will not save, just as faith

alone will not save. The New Testament teaches that a living faith, which comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17), will lead men to obey God's commands to repent, confess, be baptized, and remain faithful in service to God until the end. One who does not believe in God or His Word will not be baptized and will, as a consequence, not be saved.

Mark 16:16 is very clear, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." If one wants to be saved, he will believe and allow that faith to lead him towards the culminating act of God's plan to save—baptism. One cannot be in Christ, unless he is "baptized into Christ" (Gal. 3:27). One cannot be added, by God, to the church of His Son, Jesus Christ, without being baptized into that One Body (Acts 2:38, 47; Eph. 1:22-23). After being taught God's plan to save man, the Ethiopian eunuch inquired,

See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:36-39).

You, too, can rejoice, if you choose to believe and obey.

*Lenoir City, TN*

## Appeal for Joshua Aidoo's Vehicle

Bellview has supported Joshua Aidoo in Ghana for two years. His evangelistic work is greatly hampered because of transportation difficulties—he has no vehicle. When he goes into new areas with the Gospel, he takes a team of men with him. Having either to hire a driver with a van or rent a van is expensive and at times unreliable. He also needs this vehicle for use by his family (five children). The vehicle (used) he needs will cost a minimum of \$16,000.00. The elders of the Bellview Church are handling these funds. We ask brethren to help us help this good man by sending your check to (please make checks out to Bellview Church of Christ):

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## Belief Demands Obedience

*R. L. Whiteside*

On Pentecost, those who accepted Peter's preaching were commanded to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus, the Christ, unto the remission of their sins, and about 3,000 rendered prompt obedience. And so in other cases in the book of Acts. In reports of these cases of conversion under the preaching of these inspired men there is not a hint that sinners were saved the moment they believed. "And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord" (Acts 11:21). If they were saved the moment they believed, they were saved before they turned unto the Lord; but healing—salvation—follows the turning to the Lord (Isa. 55:7; Mat. 13:15; Acts 28:27).

No arguments of the "faith only" advocates can do away with the plain statements of our Lord and His inspired preachers on the necessity of obedience. The fact is that in their arguments they array Scripture against Scripture. Our Lord makes this plain statement: "Not

every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Mat. 7:21). To say, "Lord, Lord," shows some degree of faith; but it is a dead faith, for there is no obedience to God's will. Such faith profits nothing—puts no one into the kingdom of heaven.

The writer of Hebrews says of Jesus, the Christ, "though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation" (Heb. 5:8-9). No one can misunderstand that plain statement, nor twist its meaning into something that it does not say. Some are so set on evading its force that they seek to array some other passages against it, and that is not fair dealing with the Word of God. If a man does not obey the Lord Jesus Christ, He is not the author of salvation to such a man.

*Deceased*

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Dot Dodd
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Karen Ayliffe	Rheba Stancliff
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	
Al Flesher (Rehab in Arkansas)	
Shannon Barlow (Pam Busch's niece)	
Sonya Chavez (Joyce Johnson's friend)	
Shane Norris (Pam Busch's nephew)	
Linda Ness (Pam Busch's sister)	

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### January 29

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## Food Pantry

Canned Soup, Meat, and Vegetables  
Peanut Butter and Jelly



# BEACON

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January 16, 2017

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## “Get Rich Quick”

*Lee Moses*

It seemed that the recent record Powerball drawing was on everyone’s mind. News media were constantly reporting as the jackpot continued to grow. Groups of co-workers were pooling their assets to buy large numbers of tickets. Radio disc jockeys were speaking about how many tickets they had bought and what they would do with the money if they won it. The lottery jackpot reached 1.6 billion dollars, which was well more than double the previous world record. However, the size of the jackpot did not make it any more likely for a person to win. The odds of any one person’s winning were only 1 in 292.2 million! However, gambling thrives on the “get rich quick” illusion.

One victim of the “get rich quick” illusion this go-around was a resident of Cordova, TN, going by the name of “Cinnamon Nicole.” She certainly considers herself a victim. As a matter of fact, she has set up a Go Fund

Me (i.e., fund raising Website) account for herself. On it she makes the plea:

Please help me and my family [sic] as we have exhausted [sic] all of our funds. We spent all of our money on lottery tickets (expecting to win the 1.5 billion) and are now in dire need of cash. With your small donation of at least \$1.00, a like [sic] and one share, I’m certain that we will be able to pick ourselves up from the trenches of this lost [sic] and spend another fortune trying to hit it big again! PLEASE, won’t you help a family in need. DONATE NOW.

If she accurately represents her situation, she spent all of her family’s funds on lottery tickets “expecting to win the 1.5 billion.” Again, consider the odds of winning—1 in 292.2 million. Why would anyone **expect** such outrageous odds to line up in his or her favor? Why would anyone put everything she

owns on the line against such odds? One would hope that she had at least learned a valuable—and expensive—lesson from this experience. But consider this woman’s able—and expensive—lesson from this experience. Consider this woman’s plans—once her family is back on their financial feet, she plans to “spend another fortune trying to hit it big again!” She remains fully under the illusion.

God’s Word warns against falling under the “get rich quick” illusion:

An inheritance *may* be gotten hastily at the beginning; But the end thereof shall not be blessed (Pro. 20:21).

A faithful man shall abound with blessings: But he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent (28:20).

He that hasteth to be rich *hath* an evil eye, And considereth not that poverty shall come upon him (28:22).

But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition (1 Tim. 6:9).

It is shameful that our society now encourages this illusion from the highest levels. Through the knowledge supplied by the Word of God, Christians will avoid being brought

under the spell of the “get rich quick” illusion, especially when it comes to using sinful and dishonest means to obtain those riches.

*Union City, TN*

## The One Book That Can Never Be Destroyed

“For ever, O LORD, Thy word is settled in heaven” (Psa. 119:89)

- “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away” (Mat. 24:35).
- “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: But the word of our God shall stand for ever” (Isa. 40:8).
- The Word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword (Heb. 4:12-13), cutting deep in the human heart.
- The Word of God will be present at The Great Judgment. “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day” (John 12:48).

*Author Unknown*

## Getting Little Out of Worship?

*Bill Jackson*

My cousin, returning from World War II, stopped off to visit and attended worship with us. He had come from a non-religious background, and it is doubtful that he had ever attended the services held by the chaplains, weak as they were. I have seen few people so miserable in my life as was that cousin when

we were in worship. Hardly any verse could be mentioned or read that he had ever heard of; he knew nothing of the New Testament church or the proper divisions of the Bible. He had no idea as to the items of New Testament worship, or that Christianity was a life to be lived outside the church building. He

indicated he obtained nothing from the Bible study and worship. Of course, he put nothing into it either. In his ignorance of all things pertaining to the Bible, it is understandable that he “got nothing from the worship.” Of much more concern are those in the kingdom, some for years, who will still state, “I get so little out of worship!” We firmly believe the same point is true that relates to that cousin of mine; we get something out only when we put something in. There is no excuse for a child of God to come to worship and study with nothing, putting in nothing, and then expecting anything but nothing. May we think of these points as we approach worship and study as children of God.

- Every song I sing can remind me of Biblical truths and my need to feel more appreciation for God and His efforts for me.
- Every Bible verse mentioned in classes and worship has a lesson for me and should remind me of similar verses—and especially of my own need to know more of the Bible.

- Everything expressed in prayer should remind me of my own blessings, of my own praying, and how I can improve it.
- Every point made in song, prayer, and remarks at the Lord’s table should cause me to be more thankful for the sacrifice of the Christ and make me more appreciative of His death and shed blood.

Participation in giving to the Lord’s cause should awaken in me greater appreciation and love for the kingdom, its work, and for the part I can have in it. Even in the announcements made, I can see opportunities for service in seeing to the sick, shut-ins, and the bereaved, to say nothing of opportunities to greet and welcome visitors and newcomers. Getting nothing out of services? You should be ashamed of yourself.

The fact is, I get something out only when and if I put something in. If I come to worship with an empty bucket, want nothing in it, and by lack of interest block anything that starts to enter it, I will leave with an empty bucket. Keep it up, and the bottom will rust out completely.

*Deceased*

## Appeal for Joshua Aidoo’s Vehicle

Bellview has supported Joshua Aidoo in Ghana for two years. His evangelistic work is greatly hampered because of transportation difficulties—he has no vehicle. When he goes into new areas with the Gospel, he takes a team of men with him. Having either to hire a driver with a van or rent a van is expensive and at times unreliable. He also needs this vehicle for use by his family (five children). The vehicle (used) he needs will cost a minimum of \$16,000.00. The elders of the Bellview Church are handling these funds. We ask brethren to help us help this good man by sending your check to (please make checks out to) Bellview Church of Christ:

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**Sick**

Remember in your prayers:

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Marge Williams  | Dot Dodd        |
| Anthony Polnitz | Tim Busch       |
| Debbie Dawson   | Nancy Travis    |
| Henry Hignite   | Cary Parks      |
| Karen Ayliffe   | Rheba Stancliff |
- Al Flesher (Rehab in Arkansas)  
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)  
Shannon Barlow (Pam Busch's niece)  
Sonya Chavez (Joyce Johnson's friend)  
Shane Norris (Pam Busch's nephew)  
Linda Ness (Pam Busch's sister)  
Myron Faye Stanton (Marge Williams' sister)  
Sam Lasure (Sacred Heart Children's Hospital)  
Chelsie Lashley (Scheduled for a tonsillectomy on January 20, Terri Myrick's granddaughter)

**Restored**

Nelda King was restored to Christ on January 15, 2017. Please keep her in your prayers and offer her encouragement.

**Please Remember**

**January 29**

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

**Food Pantry**

Canned Soup, Meat, and Vegetables  
Peanut Butter and Jelly



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## Does It Make a Difference Which Church?

*Harrell Davidson*

Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood (Acts 20:28).

Many say that it makes no difference—in theory that is! However, their practice shows that it does matter to them. Why? Perhaps it is because the first position is a matter of self-justification meaning that they have compromised their convictions if they had them to begin with. People join a church for various reasons. We have heard of some that did so because of personal friendships. To some, the preacher appealed to them through the style of dress or diction. Some join a church because of social prestige or to obtain business. To many, but not enough, it is a matter of conviction which church they are a member of.

Does it make any difference to the Lord? He went to great pains to foreshadow, picture,

or pattern His church (Heb. 8:1-2; 9:8-9; 10:1). He chose to build it Himself.

And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (Mat. 16:18).

The church, is His because He paid for it and built it because He loved it enough to die for it (Eph. 5:25). He paid the purchase price (1 Cor. 3:9). He chose one church to be His bride (Rom. 7:4; Eph. 5:23-24; 2 Cor. 11:2-3). Christ honored one church by giving it His name. As individuals, we are called Christians (Acts 11:26; 1 Pet. 4:16). Universally, including all Christians, we are an assembly (Rom. 16:16; Heb. 12:23). It was into one church that He put His table (Acts. 20:7; 1 Cor. 10:17; Luke 22:29-30). He adds the saved to one church (Acts 2:41, 47). Of course, it makes a difference to our Lord!

It is possible for that church to be

discovered, restored and perpetuated, minus all that denominationalism stands for? The church is perfectly outlined in the New Testament as to its founder, its foundation, its head (Col. 1:18), its creed (Mat. 16:16), its discipline (2 Tim. 3:15), its ordinances (1 Cor. 11:2), its organization (1 Tim. 3), and its message (Gal. 1:8).

The terms of entrance into the church of the New Testament are identical with the Gospel requirements for salvation (Rom. 1:16; Mat. 28:18-20; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). Then there is maintenance to be done. Membership is maintained by following the teaching of the New Testament. By life, by service (Col. 3:17), and by worship (Acts 2:42).

It is by the authority of Jesus Christ that a local congregation of Christians offers to all the privileges of becoming a Christian just as men did under the direction of inspired men

(2:38). This causes one to be simply a Christian plus nothing and minus nothing and be a member of the church you read of in the New Testament without being a party to denominationalism (1 Cor. 1:10). There is freedom **in** Christ **not from** Christ, in His Word or law. We have liberty, not a license; we have law, without legalism and authority without autocracy (human).

When God speaks it does make a difference what men do. About Adam and Eve, Voltaire said, "What a difference could an apple make?" God did not say it was an *apple*, but it made all the difference in the world. You see, the authority and character of God is involved, as well as human destiny. It made a difference what river Naaman dipped in (2 Kin. 5), and it makes a tremendous difference by us being a part of the bride—the church of Christ.

*Obion, TN*

## Salvation by Faith Only?

*Guy N. Woods*

According to the Baptist view, the order and conditions essential to salvation are: (1) repentance and (2) faith. Repentance is a change of mind, produced by sorrow for sin and leading to a reformation of life. What produces a change of mind (i.e., attitude of heart) in the sinner? In a word, all the factors involved in the scheme of redemption. The sinner, through contemplation of his lost condition, is led from feelings of gratitude for the provisions made for him to decide to turn from rebellion against God to humble and complete obedience to Him. From what source does he derive information touching

his lost condition, and where does he learn of the provisions thus made in his behalf? From the Scriptures, of course. What prompts him to act upon the impressions obtained in this manner? His confidence in the reliability of the facts and principles presented! But is not this confidence he now enjoys in the Sacred Writings nothing more nor less than faith? It is indeed, and without it there can be no repentance. Furthermore, it is the acceptance of the facts presented that leads him to desire to repent.

Faith, then, must **precede** repentance. Faith enables the sinner to repent—in fact,

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prompts the desire. Without faith, the sinner cannot repent; without faith, he would not if he could. As irresistible and conclusive as these facts are, they are, nevertheless, in hopeless conflict with Baptist doctrine. Why? The basic assumption of their doctrine is the dogma of salvation by faith only. They insist that the sinner is saved at the very instant of belief, before and without additional acts of obedience.

With such a position, it becomes clear that they cannot place repentance **after** faith in their scheme; to do so they would have the sinner *saved* before and without repentance. Thus, to get repentance in their *plan of salvation* at all, they must place it **before** faith. Such an arrangement is illogical, unscriptural, and psychologically impossible. It is, however, but the inevitable consequence of their false theory regarding the plan of salvation. It is the fruit of an effort to be consistent in error while clinging tenaciously to a false premise—namely, that salvation is conditioned upon faith only.

They face a similar difficulty in their position regarding an alien sinner's prayer. While it is a tenet of their doctrine that God will hear and answer the prayer of an alien sinner, their position thereon makes such psychologically impossible. In their view, faith and salvation are concurrent—that is, the moment the sinner believes, he ceases to be an alien, he is saved. Manifestly, then, he cannot pray as an alien after faith, for he is—according to their conception—no longer an alien. If, therefore, he prays as an alien sinner, it must be before he believes. It is, however, psychologically impossible to pray without faith; moreover, such is displeasing to God (Heb. 11:6). Thus, since an alien cannot pray before he believes, and since Baptist doctrine has it that he is no longer an alien after believing, their doctrine makes it logically and psychologically impossible for an alien sinner to pray any time! Yet, it is of the very essence of their doctrine that an alien sinner must pray to receive salvation.

*Deceased*

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Rheba Stancliff	Paul Brantley
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	
Myron Faye Stanton (Marge Williams' sister)	
Sam Lasure (Sacred Heart Children's Hospital)	
Shannon Barlow (Pam Busch's niece)	
Shane Norris (Pam Busch's nephew)	
Linda Ness (Pam Busch's sister)	

## Please Remember

### January 29

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

### February 6

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### February 12

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.



## YouTube Channel

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# BEACON

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January 30, 2017

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4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526

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Minister: Michael Hatcher

Deacons: Henry Born, Elward Brantley,  
Bill Busch

Sunday Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## What America Needs

*Charles Pogue*

We hear all the time that America need secure borders. We hear that we need more jobs with higher wages so families do not have to hold down three or four jobs just to get by. What we need, we are told, is the U.S. Supreme Court to uphold the United States Constitution when a case comes before them. What we need is to reduce the national debt, and get spending under control.

With all due respect to those things, and they are important, those are not what America needs. At least, they are not what America needs the most. What America needs is to turn her eyes toward the Creator. What America needs is what Paul described to Agrippa:

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God,

and do works meet for repentance (Acts 26:19-20).

From north to south, from east to west, from coast to coast, what America needs is to recognize and honor the Creator of all men. What America needs is to keep the moral standards set forth in the inspired Word of the Almighty God. What America needs is to go down on its collective knee and repent of applauding the sin that destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24-25). What America needs is to repent of destroying babies in the womb. America needs to understand, as David did, that the Lord covers the child in its mother's womb and fearfully and wonderfully forms it. Its substance is not hidden from God when it is made (Psa. 139:13-15).

What America needs is to put away lying, greed, self-indulgence, laziness, sexual

promiscuity, and everything else that contradicts the life that God fashioned man to live. What America needs is to realize the nation is blessed whose God is the Lord (33:12). That people is a happy one (144:15). America needs to remember that “Righteousness exalteth a nation: But sin *is* a reproach to any people” (Pro. 14:34). Those who say that those in the leadership of our nation need to honor the great constitution upon which the republic was founded, are correct. Yet, if America does not turn its eyes on God and seek Him, no written document or collection of documents will prevent it from collapsing from the inside because of moral decay.

What America needs are people both in government and out, who come to realize that our nation has drifted far away from its founders who believed not only in the sovereignty of God, but that men are obligated to live lives that to the best of their knowledge and ability conform to the Bible. America’s people need someone to impress upon their minds what at last Eli told his sons, and the sad outcome of it.

If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto

the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them (1 Sam. 2:25).  
America needs to honor God!

*Beeville, TX*

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## What Looks Natural in Your Hands?

Some time ago I read about a woman who had died and her husband requested that when she was placed in the casket that she have an open Bible in her hands. The husband explained that she looked more natural that way. I thought about what a life she must have

had to have been remembered in such a way. The article I read revealed that they had been married 53 years and had 5 children, with 15 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. All who were old enough were Christians.

Is this not evidence enough of the influence

of a Bible-reading life? This good woman also requested no flowers at her funeral. Instead, she asked that the money be given to the poor.

Now, when you die, what if someone put the thing in your hands that seemed most appropriate? What would it be? A cigarette? A

bottle? A fishing pole? Car keys? A TV guide? A deck of cards?

Think about it. What object would your family pick that would most accurately represent your life?

*Author Unknown*

## The Local Church

*Danny Douglas*

God's design is for Christians to worship Him and work for Him in the local church. The local church is an important aspect in His eternal plan and purpose of the body of Christ, for which He died (Eph. 3:8-12; 5:25; Acts 20:28). In the local church, the wisdom of God can be seen.

Each congregation is autonomous (self-governing) and independent of all others (cf. Acts 14:23). The churches of Christ are not controlled by any earthly central governing board or authority. Thus, if one congregation falls away from the Faith, the others do not necessarily do so. The governing authority over the church is Christ in Heaven (Mat. 28:18; Phi. 3:20). Authorization for all that the church is to do and teach is found in His Word (cf. Col. 3:17; 2 John 9).

After his conversion to Christ, when Saul (Paul) came to Jerusalem, "he assayed to join himself to the disciples" (Acts 9:26). He understood that when he went to a new locality, he was to work with the local church (i.e., "place membership"), which was made up of disciples or Christians (cf. 11:26).

Today, all Christians are to be a part of the Lord's work in a local congregation that is faithful to Him. If there is no true church of

Christ locally, then Christians there are to establish one. Today, no organization, school, or agency is to circumvent the local church. For example, no group of men comprising an educational institution is to interfere or intermeddle with the affairs of a local congregation of God's people—although there are those who so do.

Each local group of Christians comprising the body of Christ in a community is to follow the Word of God and uphold the Truth. Their first obligation is to Christ, Who is the Head (cf. Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18). As the "pillar and ground of the truth," the church's loyalty is to be to Christ, expressed by obedience to His Word (cf. 1 Tim. 3:15). The glory of the local church can be seen in the symbolic words of John. He described the seven churches of Asia as "seven golden candlesticks" (Rev. 1:11-12, 20). As gold is precious, so is the local church, and as a candlestick upholds light, so the local church is to uphold the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ. How beautiful and glorious is the local church! Let us be loyal and faithful servants of Christ in the local church of Christ. "The churches of Christ salute you" (Rom. 16:16).

*Mt. Pleasant, TN*

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Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Paul Brantley
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	
Myron Faye Stanton (Marge Williams' sister)	
Sam Lasure (Sacred Heart Children's Hospital)	
Shannon Barlow (Pam Busch's niece)	
Shane Norris (Pam Busch's nephew)	
Linda Ness (Pam Busch's sister)	
Robert Burks (Nancy Travis' step-brother)	

## Please Remember

### February 6

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### February 12

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.



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# BEACON

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## The Blending of Fear and Love

*Dub McClish*

Is God a Being of wrath to be feared or is He a benevolent person to be loved? What is the proper response of man to Jehovah: fear or love? Or is it possible that both motives of response are appropriate? Christians are more and more comforted with a soothing message that tells them to have no fear of God. Is this Gospel or is it man-pleasing psychology?

It can hardly be denied that fear is upheld in the Bible as an honorable motive of obedience and service to God. Nehemiah charged his fellow-countrymen: "Ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the nations our enemies?" (Neh. 5:9). Many of the Psalms extol the wisdom of fearing the Lord: "Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling" (Psa. 2:11—KJV); "In thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple" (5:7); "The fear of Jehovah is clean, enduring for ever" (19:9); "The fear of Jehovah is the

beginning of wisdom" (111:10). Solomon says that the whole duty of man is to "Fear God, and keep his commandments" (Ecc. 12:13).

Some would argue that the "fear motive" belongs to the Old Testament but is minimized in the New Testament. However, careful study shows that the New Testament preachers did not hesitate to urge obedience to God out of fear. Luke records the use of it by Peter in Acts 2:40: "And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation." The church in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria walked "in the fear of the Lord" and "was multiplied" (9:31). Paul reasoned with Felix about "righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come" and "Felix was terrified" (24:25). Paul, "knowing...the fear of the Lord," persuaded men to prepare for judgment (2 Cor. 5:10-11). This same apostle urged Christians

to perfect holiness “in the fear of God” (7:1) and to work out their own salvation “with fear and trembling” (Phi. 2:12). It is evident from these and kindred Scriptures that the motive of fear was used in more than a small way to induce both primary conversion and spiritual growth of the saints during the first century.

It is well known by even casual readers that the Bible’s pages often exhort man to love God. No clearer statement of this truth is found than the one recorded in Matthew 22:37: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.” Jesus pronounced this (an Old Testament quotation, incidentally) to be “the first and great commandment” (22:38).

Now the question arises again: are the motives of fear and love incompatible or mutually exclusive in a Christian? Some have concluded on the basis of 1 John 4:18 that they are: “There is no fear in love: but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment; and he that feareth is not made perfect in love.” Indeed, there is a type of fear that is completely expunged by a mature love for God. The cringing dread, the terror that a slave harbors toward a cruel master, is removed from the heart of one who loves God to the extent that he has entrusted his whole being to Him and His gracious promises in Gospel obedience. However, there is another quality of fear that true love for God never expels—the quality of reverence, awe, and respect that causes a constant recognition of our unworthiness before our Maker (Heb. 12:28-29). This is a fear that shrinks from displeasing God in any way, such as an obedient child has for parents who love him. Such a fear is

necessary to the trait of humility. Indeed, such fear is assumed and required by a true love of God.

Some of our preachers are encouraging people in the notion that to really love God means to assume sort of a dreamy, mystical, better-felt-than-told attitude toward Him that frees them from strictly obeying His commands. Such could hardly be further from the truth. True love of God cannot be expressed apart from absolute respect for and obedience to the Word of God. Jesus said, “If ye love

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me, ye will keep my commandments” (John 14:15). John declared: “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments” (1 John 5:3).

While fear of punishment and judgment may not be the supreme motive, it is still a valid motive for urging obedience to God, both for sinner and saint. It is sometimes the only motive to which the disobedient will respond. The type of fear that stands in awe and reverence of the Creator and Sustainer of the

universe, produced by a life of faithful obedience, is one to be treasured and nurtured. Such godly fear is a sign of maturity. Love, of course, is the purest motive of all for our worship and service to God, but it is not always possible or necessary to determine exactly where fear ends and love begins. They blend into one harmonious whole as we express our fear and love of God by obedience to His written Word.

*Denton, TX*

## A Good Example Is the Best Sermon

*Dub Mowery*

Young people are inclined to feel they are always being preached to, if not by their parents then by others. All of us have a spirit of independence. We certainly do not want others dictating to us our every move. Sometimes parents are slow or reluctant to give up their parental control of their young adult offspring. On the other hand, young adults would be wise in seeking advice from their parents and other responsible older adults concerning important decisions they must make.

It is easier to follow a good example in the life of one in whom we respect than the advice of one who is inconsistent in their conduct.

You have probably heard of the old boy who said, “Son, don’t do as I do, but do as I say do.”

If we want younger generations to conduct themselves in a proper manner, then we need to provide them good examples. Young people need more models than critics.

We should adhere to the following words of Jesus in setting an example unto others.

Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Mat. 5:13-16).

We must also teach on doctrinal matters.

*Deceased*

### Realized Eschatology Debate

H. Daniel Denham & Holger Neubauer

The video of the debate can be viewed at:

[https://www.youtube.com/  
user/52MichaelH](https://www.youtube.com/user/52MichaelH)

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Al Flesher	
Linda Worley (West Florida Hospital)	
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	
Shannon Barlow (Pam Busch's niece)	
Shane Norris (Pam Busch's nephew)	
Linda Ness (Pam Busch's sister)	
Robert Burks (Nancy Travis' step-brother)	
Sam Lasure (Sacred Heart Children's Hospital)	

## Please Remember

### February 12

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### February 19

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### February 20

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

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# BEACON

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## Answered Prayers

*Geoff Litke*

Several years back, country singer Garth Brooks topped the charts with his song, “Unanswered Prayers.” Singing of God’s care by **not** answering prayers, he spread an idea bringing a false sense of comfort to millions of struggling listeners. When faith is based upon pop culture rather than truth, grief will inevitably follow (Mat. 7:24-27). God’s Word provides spiritual truth concerning prayer.

The fact is that God will not hear the prayers of impenitent sinners. Proverbs 28:9 says, “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, Even his prayer *shall be* abomination” (cf. John 9:31; 1 Pet. 3:12). This is not a mark of God’s care, but a reflection of man’s condition (Rom. 3:23). Nor is it a comment upon God’s power. Long ago, Isaiah told the people of Israel:

Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities

have separated between you and your God, And your sins have hid *his* face from you, that he will not hear (Isa. 59:1-2).

God can *hear* the prayers of anyone, but He will not give ear to those who have gone astray, rather, they must seek Him in the way He has prescribed.

For the faithful child of God there are no “unanswered prayers.” Those who ask according to their own selfishness may protest, “I don’t get everything I want.” That is the heart of the problem for that individual, they ask according to their own selfish lusts (Jam. 4:3). However, it must be remembered that God is the one who answers prayers and for His faithful children they are all answered. God gives four basic answers to prayers.

God, a loving Father, sometimes says **no!** That may be a surprise to many people, and perhaps this is the kind of thing others think about when considering the idea of

“unanswered prayers.” Nonetheless, what we ask for may not be in our best interest which is why we pray, “Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven” (Mat. 6:10). Even Christ exemplified this attitude praying, “nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done” (Luke 22:42). Sometimes, due to man’s misunderstanding or inability to know things **not** revealed, he may pray for something contrary to God’s will. God will say **no**.

Other times God may say **yes** and grant requests of His children. Even then, God may give what is asked, but not exactly in the way they were expected to be given. This is similar to Abraham, who after being told to offer Isaac went out to obey supposing God would raise him from the dead (Heb. 11:19). One thing is sure, that whatever God gives will still be good. Jesus asked, “Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?” (Mat. 7:9-10). God’s way is the better way. There are many misconceptions about what God will give and how. Some are of no consequence, but others undermine God’s own Word and lead one to pray for things contrary to God’s will. In the past God has done some things miraculously, but miracles have ceased (1 Cor. 13:10). Today, God can use providence to answer the prayers of man. It is never a question of what God **can** do, but what He **will** do. In the past God made man out of dust, but today He uses the natural birth process. Couples praying for children may have them, but they will not arise from the dust in the backyard. Christians pray for bread (Mat. 6:11). In the past He gave manna, but today man must work for

the things he receives, but it is God that provides the seed, the ground, rain, opportunity according to the laws of His creation.

Perhaps the most difficult answer for God’s children is when God says, “wait.” Christians need prayer, but need patience to abide under what circumstances they face. Paul wrote:

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your

## Appeal for Joshua Aidoo’s Vehicle

Bellview has supported Joshua Aidoo in Ghana for two years. His evangelistic work is greatly hampered because of transportation difficulties—he has no vehicle. When he goes into new areas with the Gospel, he takes a team of men with him. Having either to hire a driver with a van or rent a van is expensive and at times unreliable. He also needs this vehicle for use by his family (five children). The vehicle (used) he needs will cost a minimum of \$16,000.00. The elders of the Bellview Church are handling these funds. We ask brethren to help us help this good man by sending your check to (please make checks out to) Bellview Church of Christ:

**Bellview Church of Christ**  
**4850 Saufley Field Road**  
**Pensacola, FL 32526**

hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Phi. 4:6-7).

He also went on to say, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content" (4:11).

For the faithful child of God, there are no "unanswered prayers." Rather than trying to see how God *meant* one's life to end up by

looking at his life, he should turn to the Bible and compare his life for understanding (John 17:17; Jam. 1:25ff). In this is found God's care, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; casting all your anxiety upon him, because he careth for you" (1 Pet. 5:6-7).

*Spring, TX*

## Rules for Living

*George DeHoff*

1. I try never to say anything behind a man's back that would give me the least embarrassment to say to his face (Psa. 5:6-9; Pro. 11:3; 17:9; Jer. 9:8; Jam. 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:15).
2. I try never to speak back to my personal critics; they would not believe the truth anyway and my friends do not have to hear the defense because they would not believe a lie against a friend (Psa. 31:13-18; Luke 6:27-28).
3. Every day I greet every person I see with a smile and make a special effort to do so if the person is poor or in unfortunate circumstances (Pro. 15:15; Luke 14:13-14).
4. The first thing when I awake in the morning I plan what my duty for the day is and try to go beyond it (Ecc. 9:10; 12:13).
5. Every day I read from the Bible and other good books; feeding the mind and soul is more important than feeding the body (Pro. 15:28; 1 Tim. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:15).
6. I try to pay every debt I owe on time and always save something from every paycheck, however small (Rom. 13:8; Eph. 4:28).
7. I like people and never harbor any malice or hatred toward any person in the world. I like various places and have yet to be anywhere that I do not like. I go there with the intention of liking the place (Mat. 7:12; Luke 6:31; Heb. 13:5).
8. I am a confirmed optimist, believing that even in this life evil men will be punished by their own unhappiness and good men will be rewarded. "It's better further on" (Luke 6:22-23; Gal. 6:9-10).
9. I try to close each day as if it were the last day I'd be on earth, closing the books on all regrets, worries, and annoyances (Psa. 55:22; Mat. 6:25-31; Phi. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:7).
10. The last thing I do at night is to count one by one the blessings of the day. This makes me so thankful and happy that I soon drift into pleasant sleep. In this spirit I hope to close life's journey and drift into eternity (Ecc. 5:12; Eph. 6:18; 1 Tim. 2:1; 4:4-5; Rev. 2:10).

*Deceased*

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Remember in your prayers:

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Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Paul Brantley
Al Flesher	Linda Worley
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	
Robert Burks (Nancy Travis' step-brother)	

## Please Remember

### February 19

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### February 20

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.



## YouTube Channel

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[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5\\_MGG3zjY0IW3qw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5_MGG3zjY0IW3qw)

## Spring Church of Christ

### CFTF Lectures

### *The Seven Churches of Asia and Christian Fellowship*

February 24-26, 2017

<http://www.churchesofchrist.com>  
[springcoc@gmail.com](mailto:springcoc@gmail.com)



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 8

February 20, 2017

A Publication of Bellview Church of Christ

4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526

850.455.7595

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Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Help Needed for Faithful Evangelist

*Dub McClish*

Let me introduce to you a faithful Gospel preacher, Joshua Aidoo, a native of the West Africa nation of Ghana. Joshua and his wife, Elizabeth, have five children, Richie and Connie (11-year-old twins), Joshua, Jr.—8, Michelle—2-1/2, and Augustus—1). Additionally,

two of Joshua's younger siblings live with them while they are attending school.

The Northpoint congregation, Denton, Texas, has been helping with this brother's work for the past 6 years. The Bellview congregation in Pensacola, Florida, and the Central congregation in Mount Pleasant, Tennessee (where brethren Michael Hatcher and Danny Douglas serve as evangelists, respectively) have also contributed to Joshua's support for an extended period. We have obviously found him to be sound in doctrine and very zealous for souls.

He possesses exceptional ability as a Gospel preacher and writer. He not only serves as the evangelist with the congregation in the town where his family lives, but he also teaches in the West Coast School of Preaching at Ituma, Ghana. He preaches on a radio program, which he broadcasts live from the station's studio and which he streams live by



means of his Facebook page (type his name in the FB search blank). He is a serious student of the Word and is effective in communicating it. Several times a year, he leads a group of preachers into remote areas where the Gospel has not gone, establishing congregations.

Joshua is doing all of the above work without a vehicle, having to depend upon hired or public transportation. (The photo indicates some of the *hired* transportation he and his fellow-preachers must use at times.) Ghana has few paved roads, and none in the remote



areas where he often conducts Gospel campaigns. This means that it is impossible to utilize public transportation (i.e., buses) for such journeys. Having to hire vehicles and drivers is an expense that soon constitutes a considerable sum—an expense that can be greatly decreased if he has a suitable vehicle.

The Northpoint congregation began discussing the possibility of helping Joshua secure funds for a vehicle in 2014, but because of other commitments, we were not able to under-take this project earlier. However, we are now in position to address this need and

are willing to help him ourselves to secure it and to encourage others to join us in doing so. At our request, we have asked Joshua to explain his need for and the uses he will make of a vehicle. He sent the following:

About the details of the kind of car I need, I will say, I need a car that can serve three purposes:

1) To serve as a “campaign car,” meaning a car that can help in our Gospel campaign programs. We are about 10 men. Most of the time, when the place for the campaign is too far from home, not all of us go. So we need a car that can seat at least 7 men, including the driver.

2) A car that can serve as a family car for my wife and me, including our 5 children. Going to the church building with my 5 little ones is difficult, especially during the night. And there is no tarred road in the area where I live, so from my house to where the church meets, when it rains, my wife and I and our little children walk through much mud on the road.

3) Also, due to the poor nature of most of our roads, I need a car that is very strong and durable. And the number-one car that has been proven to be good for our roads is Toyota. So getting a Toyota four-wheel drive will be very good for us. And I know a brand new one will be very expensive. But a second hand one won't cost as much as brand new.

Upon asking Joshua to make some inquiries in his area concerning the exact model and cost of such a used vehicle, he has found that a 2008 or 2009 model Toyota Highlander (a model frequently seen on US roads) may be purchased for about \$18,000. The Northpoint

congregation is not large, as most brethren likely know, but we have initially committed \$2,000 toward its purchase. Further, the Bellview congregation has consented to join with us in supplying this need. Her elders, Paul Brantley and Michael Hatcher, have not only likewise contributed \$2,000 toward this good work, but they have also consented to receive and oversee these funds. Since beginning to encourage others to help with this need a few weeks ago, the fund has now increased to almost \$9,000. Obviously, this amount will purchase only half the vehicle—and Joshua needs all four wheels and doors!

We plead with you to consider joining hands

with others and with us in this good work by contributing whatever amount may be within your ability to give. You might also think about encouraging the congregation of which you are a member to help with this need. If you are able to help, whether with a one-time, or with a monthly gift for a few months, please make your check payable to Bellview Church of Christ and mark it for “Aidoo Vehicle.” The church’s mailing address is 4850 Saufley Field Road, Pensacola, Florida 32526.

Thank you for your faithfulness to the Lord and for your consideration of the needs of this worthy brother.

*Denton, TX*

## Gospel Commands Are Not Figurative

*R. L. Whiteside*

So far as the record shows, the apostles never told sinners that they must be born again, or that they must be created. To sinners, they said, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38).

There is one truth which is necessary to observe in studying the Bible, which denominational preachers never seem to learn, and that is, that commands are given in plain unfigurative language, but conditions and relationships are expressed in highly figurative language.

No inspired man ever commanded an inquiring sinner to become a branch of the vine, or to become a sheep, or to become a child of God by being born again, or to become a member of the Lord’s body, or to become an epistle of Christ, or to be a graft, but these terms are all applied to Christians. Figures of

speech abound in the epistles, but if you want to read what inspired men, in plain unfigurative language, told sinners to do, read Acts.

Figures of speech abound in many speeches Jesus made, but there is no figurative language in the commands He gave the apostles in the Great Commission. Yet, people will turn away from the plain commands and promises of Jesus and His apostles, and hang their hopes of heaven on fanciful interpretations of figures of speech.

These figures of speech enlarge the views of the Christian and comfort him in his struggles and trials, but no figure of speech tells a sinner what to do to be saved.

Think on these things.

(Reprinted from *Doctrinal Discourses*, 134-136)

*Deceased*

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Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Paul Brantley
Al Flesher	Linda Worley
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	

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**March 6**

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

**YouTube Channel**

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**Realized Eschatology Debate**

H. Daniel Denham & Holger  
Neubauer

The video of the debate can be viewed  
at:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/52MichaelH>



# BEACON

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## Missing Scriptures

*Gary W. Summers*

Last week I was reading through what I thought was my Bible. It looked the same as mine, but it actually was one given to me by a friend who wanted me to look through it and see what I thought of it. It was called the APV, which I had not heard of before. He had given me a letter explaining about the translation (Hmmm. What had I done with that?). As I was thumbing through it, much to my surprise, I discovered that 2 John 10-11 was missing. What? How odd. Verses 1-8 were there, as were verses 12 and 13—only they were now numbered 9 and 10. “Who would dare to remove three verses from the Bible?” I thought to myself. I stared at it in disbelief, but those three verses remained gone.

I could not help wondering if any other verses were missing. It seemed to be otherwise normal. It took a while, but as I was skimming through it, I noticed that 1 Corinthians only

contained 15 chapters! When did that change occur? Surely, the entire text was not missing in early manuscripts. And 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 was missing entirely. Ephesians 5:11 was gone, and Titus 3:10-11 was also absent. “This is crazy!” I thought. I decided the only way to make any sense out of all this was to find the accompanying explanation. Where was that letter? After searching for a bit, I found it mixed in with some newspapers. It read:

The publishers of the APV hope that you enjoy the efforts of selected brethren to make the Bible relevant. The most appropriate title we could think of to describe the work is the APV (*As Practiced Version*). Everyone is aware that needless divisions have existed in the church over the past 20 years. Many different views have surfaced over such matters, and lines of fellowship have been drawn which exclude large segments of brethren from loving

and appreciating one another. We all agree that these barriers are harmful to the cause of Christ, so passages that might be misconstrued, along with those that have been misused, have been removed. Matthew 7:15-20 is now gone because who among us can identify someone else as “a wolf in sheep’s clothing”?

With this version you will be able to fellowship Rubel Shelly, Max Lucado, Jerry Rushford (who directed the Pepperdine lectures for 32 years), and many others. So what if some brethren, such as F. LaGard Smith and Edward Fudge, deny that Hell, as defined in the

Bible, exists? Can we afford to withdraw from everyone with whom we have honest disagreements? Why, we would have to banish to the theological scrap heap Mac Deaver and his Holy Spirit teachings, the AD 70 folks, and probably those who do not object to instrumental music in worship. Brethren, how far are we willing to go?

Eventually no one will be left. The *As Practiced Version* will unite all of us by removing that which divides us. Harmony ought to result among God’s people.

*Winter Park, FL*

## An Erring Brother

*Ken Chumbley*

Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins (Jam. 5:19-20).

An erring brother is one who, at one time, was a faithful Christian but one who has now erred from the truth. This could be an elder, a deacon, a preacher, or any other member of the church. Sadly, in the day in which we live, it seems that many preachers and elders find themselves in that situation, being an erring brother, either because of their having embraced false teaching or their fellowship of a known false teacher who has not repented and turned from his error. These elders and preachers, by upholding the unrepentant false teacher, are those in violation of:

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.

He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (2 John 9-11).

Note what is stated regarding the erring brother is referred to as a sinner and guilty of a multitude of sins. Having erred from the truth such an one needs to be converted back to the truth and to faithfulness, and we should do all we can to convert such a one.

The opposite of an erring brother is a faithful Christian. The faithful Christian is one who does not practice sin nor walk in sin. Note what John writes: “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (1 John 3:9). This does not mean that it is impossible for one “born of

God,” a faithful Christian to commit a single act of sin. To conclude such would place one in conflict with what John had previously stated in the same epistle:

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us (1 John 1:7-10).

We note that if a Christian says he never commits even a single act of sin, he is self-deceived and “the truth is not in him.” Further, if one says he has not sinned, he makes God a liar because He says that we do sin. However, the faithful Christian does not continue to live a life of sin. This is precisely what is indicated by the Greek verb that is found in 1 John

3:9. If one continues to live a life of sin, it also means, as John, by inspiration, sates: “his word is not in us.” This is the reason why the faithful child of God walks in righteousness. It is the seed, the Word of God (Luke 8:11) that controls his life. The sweet singer of Israel, the inspired David, said: “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, That I might not sin against thee” (Psa. 119:11). If we “walk in the light” (that is such is our daily practice) and confess our sins then the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, keeps on cleansing us from all sin (1 John 1:7).

*Deceased*

## Bellview Church of Christ Website

The website offers a vast amount of resources for your personal edification. Past issues of *Defender* and *Beacon*, written sermon outlines presented by Michael Hatcher, as well as Ira Y. Rice’s Basic Bible course are available. Videos of lectureships, sermons, and Gospel meetings can be viewed. Why not check it out at:

<http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

## Appeal for Joshua Aidoo’s Vehicle

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Dot Dodd
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Paul Brantley
Al Flesher	Linda Worley
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	

## Please Remember

### March 6

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### March 12

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### March 19

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### March 20

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### March 29

Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 p.m., in the auditorium.



## YouTube Channel

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# BEACON

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Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Onomatopoeia

*Jess Whitlock*

If you can pronounce that word, then you are ahead of me. The dictionary says: “The formation of words in imitation of natural sounds, as crack, splash, hiss, buzz, etc.” That reminds me of a word in God’s Holy Writ, i.e., “murmur.” Sometimes I will spew out a good case of murmuring, and Terry will ask, “What did you say?” I respond “nothing, dear.” Murmuring allows us to complain without having to explain to anyone. So, we think that no one knows, but the Lord God knows.

A family had gathered around the breakfast table. The father invoked God’s blessings on the food. After prayer, the father started complaining about bad times, the weather, politics, and the food they were eating. His little daughter asked, “Daddy, do you think God heard what you said in your prayer today?” With an air of confidence, the father responded, “Certainly.” Then, she asked, “Well,

daddy, did He hear all your complaints just now?” Not quite as confident, he said, “Of course.” Then she asked, “Daddy, which time did God believe you?”

There are chronic complainers among God’s people. Recall Israel of old and we discover numerous murmurings: Exodus 15:24, 16:2-8, 17:3, Numbers 14:27-36, 16:11, 41, Deuteronomy 1:27, etc. In the 40 years of wilderness wanderings the people of God wished for the fleshpots of Egypt (Exo. 16:3). They recalled the security, shelter, and stuff they had back in Egypt. They forgot the bondage of bad times. Then, the mercy of God came shining through. He promised manna from heaven because they had murmured about their hunger to Moses (16:4). It was not long until they were hungering for Egyptian delicacies again (Num. 11:5-6). It was on again/off again with their faithfulness to God.

Are we like them today from time to time? We complain about this issue or that matter and then wait for God's reply. Sometimes we are pleased, and sometimes we are displeased. After a while we become disenchanted and start complaining again. Consider carefully these words:

Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast

the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain (Phi. 2:14-16).

I would challenge any child of God's to complain (bicker, fuss, murmur) while quoting the word of Philippians 4:19: "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Let us, as His blood-bought children, seek to be "humbly grateful" and **not** "grumbly hateful." To constantly murmur and complain is a contradiction of **thanksgiving!**

*Denison, TX*

## "If It's Not Broke"

*Brad Green*

In regards to a good plan or a job well done, it may be said, "if it's not broke, don't fix it." The sentiment presented in this statement is true—if a plan is working effectively and efficiently, then any changes may disrupt (or break) the good that is being accomplished. In a humanly feeble attempt to revise or simplify God's plan to save man (as if God did not have the ability or the love for man needed to make a simple plan), many in the religious world have broken what God made perfect.

God's plan to save man necessitates an action from both parties involved. God has already done His part to save man. He sent His only begotten Son to die for man's sins (John 3:16), gave us His Will (the New Testament and Gospel of Christ) for how we are to live and worship, and has promised eternal salvation to all who will be obedient (Heb. 5:8-9). God has made this "covenant" (8:6) with man and, as is the case with any contract,

both parties must adhere to the tenets found therein. If man chooses to accept God's grace and promise of salvation, then man must be faithful to God's covenant (i.e., the New Testament). God's conditions for man's salvation include: hearing God's Word (Rom. 10:17), a living faith (Heb. 11:6; Jam. 2:17, 24), repentance (Luke 13:3), confessing that Jesus is Christ (Rom. 10:9-10), being immersed in water (1 Pet. 3:21), and continued faithfulness (Rev. 2:10). This is the only plan of salvation that God has given man today. This plan is the one preached by the apostles on the first Pentecost after Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, and

they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers (Acts 2:41-42).

The Lord has been using this plan to save man and add men to His church ever since (2:47). It is the same plan that Philip preached which led to the salvation of the Ethiopian eunuch (8:36-38). It is the same plan that the apostle Paul (22:16), Cornelius (10:34-48), and the Philippian jailor (16:30-34) obeyed to be saved. After the events recorded in Acts

2, everyone who has been saved and added to the Lord's Church has obeyed this plan. It is not broke. It works every time.

Since God's plan is not broke, why are so many bent on changing it? Changing God's plan, no matter how slightly, breaks the plan and renders it worthless. Once the change is made, the plan ceases to be God's; it is a plan devised by man. Man-made plans will not save (Eph. 2:8-9). Many in the religious world have broken what did not need fixing. Some preach that salvation is by "faith only" (cf. Jam. 2:24), eliminating God's conditions of repentance, confession, baptism, and faithful living. Some preach that salvation is by "grace only" which would eliminate all of man's responsibilities to God's covenant. No man has ever been saved by faith alone or grace alone. They are broken plans devised by men. The apostle Paul writes:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed (Gal. 1:6-8).

We must heed this warning and not preach any other plan of salvation other than the one which can save—God's.

God's plan is not broken, so there is no need to fix it. Men have endangered their souls by attempting to do so. Let us humble ourselves before God and love Him enough to simply do as He commands (John 14:15).

## In His Steps

"The road is too rough, dear Lord," I cried,  
"There are stones that hurt me so"  
And He said, "Dear child, I understand;  
I walked it long ago,"  
"But there is a cool green path," I said,  
"Let me walk there for a time."  
"No, child," He gently answered me,  
"The green road does not climb."  
"My burden is too great," I said,  
"How can I bear it so?"  
"My child," He said, "I remember its weight,  
I carried my cross, you know."  
"But I wish there were friends with me,  
Who would make my way their own,"  
"Ah, Yes," He said, "Gethsemane,  
Was hard to bear alone."  
And so I climbed the stony path,  
Content at last to know,  
That where my Master had not gone,  
I would not have to go.  
And strangely then I found new friends  
The burden grew less sore,  
As I remembered long ago,  
He went that way before.

*Author Unknown*

*Lenoir City, TN*

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Dot Dodd
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Paul Brantley
Al Flesher	Linda Worley
Bobbie LaBryer	
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	
OJ Savage (Karen Hatcher's father)	

## Please Remember

### March 12

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### March 19

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### March 20

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### March 29

Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 p.m., in the auditorium.



## YouTube Channel

Bellview Church of Christ has a YouTube channel Check it out and subscribe to the channel.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5\\_MGG3zjY0IW3qw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5_MGG3zjY0IW3qw)



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 11

March 13, 2017

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4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526

850.455.7595

Internet Website: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

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Bishops: Paul Brantley, Michael Hatcher

Minister: Michael Hatcher

Deacons: Henry Born, Elward Brantley,  
Bill Busch

Sunday Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Who Are You Seeking to Please?

*Bruce Stulting*

Preaching the Gospel of Christ is often spoken of as a privilege, debt, duty, or obligation. Regardless of how one views preaching, it must be understood that it is a very serious business. The only hope that the lost have is through hearing and obeying the Gospel. Consider the following Scriptures:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek (Rom. 1:16).

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe (1 Cor. 1:21). For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and

how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! (Rom. 10:13-15).

Unfortunately, everyone does not recognize the importance of the Gospel of Christ. In amazement, Paul stated:

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ (Gal. 1:6-7).

A perverted Gospel is powerless to save. The Christian is to “desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2). *Sincere* is translated from a Greek word meaning “unadulterated.” Only the pure, unadulterated Gospel will save from past sins

and promote growth in the Christian.

There are strict penalties awaiting those who pervert and preach another Gospel than the one delivered by the apostles (Gal. 1:8-9). No one, including angels, men, or apostles, have the authority to change the Word of God. However, the Gospel has never been popular and those who faithfully preach it are often persecuted. This has tempted many to change the message to make it more acceptable to man and, thus avoid the hardship that comes from persecution. In this regard, Paul said, "For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (1:10). Notice that those who seek to please men cannot be a servant of Christ. Yet, Paul assured his readers:

But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel

which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ (1:11-12).

The Christian is obligated to preach the Gospel to the lost (Mat. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16). It takes great courage and commitment to faithfully carry out the commission of our Lord. The question that must be asked is: "Who are you seeking to please?" Anyone seeking to please man by perverting the Gospel will save no one, including themselves. Those who choose to please God will faithfully preach the pure, unadulterated Gospel will save themselves and all that hear them (1 Tim. 4:16). Truly, "The fruit of the righteous *is* a tree of life; And he that winneth souls *is* wise" (Pro. 11:30).

*Huntsville, TX*

## Calling On the Name of the Lord

*Landry Brewer*

You might be surprised to know that "calling on the name of the Lord" does not mean praying. Many people think that you can initially have your sins forgiven by praying. This misunderstanding is based on Paul's words in Romans 10:13: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." However, this passage has nothing to do with prayer.

So, what does "calling on the name of the Lord" mean if it does not mean praying? To call upon someone's name is to appeal to that person's authority. An ambassador deals with foreign governments and speaks, "in the name of the United States" by speaking with the authority of our government. If you get married

in Oklahoma you must have a blood test, obtain a marriage license, have a man who's authorized by the state to perform the ceremony, and have witnesses attest that the ceremony took place, then the license has to be returned to the County Clerk for registration. By doing all of those things, persons who are married in Oklahoma appeal the state's authority. They "call upon the name of the state."

To "call on the name of the Lord" is to appeal to the Lord's authority. There are examples in the New Testament of appealing to the Lord's authority for various reasons. In Acts 3, Peter and John healed a lame man outside the temple in Jerusalem. In Acts 3:6, Peter

tells the lame man to arise and walk, “In the name of Jesus Christ.” Peter could as well have said, arise and walk, “by the authority of Jesus Christ.” Peter could not have healed the lame man by himself. He appealed to Christ’s authority, or “name,” to perform the miracle.

In Acts 4, Peter told the Jewish leaders, who had arrested him, that not only was the lame man healed “in the name of Jesus,” but that it is also through the name, or authority of Jesus that we are saved from sin. In Acts 4:12, Peter said, “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” That means if we are saved, it is because we have appealed to Christ’s authority for forgiveness.

That is the same thing Peter told the crowd on Pentecost in Acts 2. There, he used the same words that Paul used in Romans 10:13 when he told the audience that, “whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Acts 2:21). When Peter’s hearers were convinced of their lost condition, they cried out and asked what to do, Peter told them how to call upon the name of the Lord for

salvation. “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (2:38). If “calling on the name of the Lord” meant praying, Peter would have said that. But he did not. He told his audience to “repent and be baptized.”

There is another example in Acts of a man being told to, “call on the name of the Lord” for forgiveness. When Paul was on his way to Damascus to round up Christians and imprison them, he was blinded by a light. Jesus appeared to Paul and accused him of persecuting the Lord. When Paul asked Jesus what to do, Jesus told him to go into the city and wait for instructions.

Jesus then sent a man named Ananias to preach to Paul and some of his words are recorded in Acts 9. To get a fuller picture of what was said, we must look at Paul’s account of this event in Acts 22. Ananias asked Paul, “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (22:16). Paul had been praying for three days since he had seen Jesus. If any man could have been saved by prayer, it would have been Paul. Yet, he had to be baptized to wash away his sins, indicating that he was still lost when Ananias came to him.

No person in the New Testament was ever told to pray for forgiveness to be saved. But Peter told the thousands on Pentecost in Acts 2 to “repent...and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,” and Ananias told Paul to call on the name of the Lord by being baptized. That is what it means to “call on the name of the Lord for salvation.”

*Copied*

## Realized Eschatology Debate

Howard Daniel Denham  
Holger Neubauer

**April 20-23, 2017**

Location:  
Bellview Church of Christ  
Pensacola, Florida  
7:00 pm each evening

**BEACON**

Bellview Church of Christ  
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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

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Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Linda Worley

Al Flesher (Baptist Hospital)  
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)  
Dovie Morris (Ethel Pierce's sister)

## Prayers Requested

Pam Busch requested prayers on her behalf. Please keep Pam in your prayers and offer her encouragement.

## Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Debra and Denise Mowery in the death of their uncle, Stanley Litt, who passed away on March 7. Please keep them in your prayers.

## Please Remember

### March 19

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### March 20

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### March 29

Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 p.m., in the auditorium.



# BEACON

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March 20, 2017

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## Persistence in Perplexity

*Geoff Litke*

Hebrews describes the extraordinary faith of some of the Old Testament men and women (Heb. 11). Even so, James instructs us on patience by referring back to the steadfast sufferer Job (Jam. 5:11). While mourning the loss of his children, and many of his servants, Job was stricken with what may possibly have been the worst medical tragedy of all time. Many people in America today jump off buildings because of the loss of loved ones. Many more slit their wrists yearly due to the inescapable pain that plagues them day in and day out from some sickness or injury. Job had no such intentions while suffering both. Oh, sure he questioned why this way happening and how it was good, but he never tried to end it and never blamed God.

Sometimes brethren simply quit the church because they get tired. When Paul told the Corinthian brethren that “the saints shall judge the

world” (1 Cor. 6:2), he meant that as we succeed in living by faith and strive to enter the strait narrow way we condemn others by showing that it can be done. Job may very well be standing there to walk past at the judgment for all who gave up in the face of tiny little trials and with petty excuses. When in torment it may be that suffering servant Job whom they ask to quench their pain. Just like Abraham said in Luke 16 it may be Job saying then “son remember.” God expects and demands patience from us and that is exactly what James is saying in this epistle. There was only one man to grace the face of this earth whose patience exceeded that of Job, our Lord Jesus Christ. What is our suffering compared to that of Job or Christ? James said, “For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (Jam. 4:14). The Holy Spirit, through James, must have deemed it necessary

to remind us of the thoughts Job had on human life on this world, when He said, “Man *that is* born of a woman *Is* of few days, and full of trouble” (Job 14:1). Even when his friends mock him he stays true to God. So many today may stay faithful in the face of calamity, but when their friends offend them they will forsake God to get back at their friends. But what did Job do? Job stayed true to God.

Paul is one who we look to insight on dealing with tribulation, he told Timothy to “endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ” (2 Tim. 2:3). Paul was anything but a hypocrite in telling Timothy “stick it out,” for he had been through almost anything imaginable in his missionary journeys. Yet, Paul stayed the course through thick and thin.

Would you not like to know what Paul learned in the midst of all his hardships? He told the Philippians exactly that in his epistle to them when he wrote, “for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, *therewith* to be content” (Phi. 4:11). This may seem like no big deal when you think of Paul the prestigious Roman citizen who refers to his biggest problems as “light affliction” (2 Cor. 4:17). However,

consider Paul’s resume:

Of the Jews five times received I forty *stripes* save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; *In* journeyings often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils by *mine own* countrymen, *in* perils by the heathen, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness (11:24-27).

Remember the context of Paul’s “light afflictions” and you are sure to see the same mind in Job. Paul wrote:

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal (4:17-18).

Christians, today, must have the right perspective of life if they will finish the race and receive the crown. “Farther along we’ll know all about it,” besides, we are “just a passin’ through.”

*Spring, TX*

## Realized Eschatology Debate

Howard Daniel Denham

Holger Neubauer

**April 20-23, 2017**

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7:00 pm each evening

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# Road to Freedom?

*Lee Moses*

Robin Williams' suicide (8/11/14) caused quite a stir and outpouring of sympathy. Many lamented the loss of such a genius. His penchant for crudeness aside, he was certainly a talented and creative comic and actor. And his longstanding celebrity and perpetual good humor made his suicide all the more shocking. One can understand that, at times like this, people would try to put the best spin on things, to try to find comfort and make sense out of an evidently senseless event. However, not all the comfort and sense-making has been truly comforting or sensible, because it has not been true.

For example, consider the following, posted on Internet social media by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences (commonly known as "The Academy," the group known for the Academy Awards/Oscars): "Genie, you're free."

This post was widely viewed and "favored" by hundreds of thousands. The post derives from the film, *Aladdin*, in which Robin Williams performed the voice of the Genie. At the conclusion of the film, *Aladdin* has a wish to make, and instead of wishing something for himself, he wishes for the Genie to be free, thus liberating the Genie from his centuries-old bondage to a lamp and its owner. By applying the emancipative utterance, "Genie, you're free," to Williams' suicide, the implication is that suicide provided Williams the desired release from his struggles with addiction and depression.

This is an irresponsible suggestion. Others

could easily, but falsely reason, "If suicide made Robin Williams free from his problems, why can't it make me free from mine?" *Copycat suicide* is a well-documented phenomenon. As Christine Moutier, chief medical officer for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, said, "Suicide should never be presented as an option. That's a formula for potential contagion."

Suicide is not a viable option—not ever. It can never lead to freedom. Self-murder is still murder, and as such, brings condemnation (Gal. 5:21). It mocks God's right to give and take human life (Ecc. 12:7; Jam. 4:14). Suicide is surrender, and is a coward's way out. It is selfish, in that it gives no consideration to loved ones left behind, who will have to endure the remainder of their lives haunted by the nightmare their loved one left behind. Or suicide can be so selfish that it does give consideration to loved ones left behind, deliberately calculated to inflict the greatest degree of pain possible upon them.

This is not to suggest that those contemplating suicide are not facing significant problems. This is not to suggest that some people are not in serious need of help, because they are. We should be on the lookout for warning signs, ready to provide gentle encouragement to those so desperately in need of compassion. However, suicide should never be held up as praiseworthy, or as a road to freedom. That is a destination to which suicide can never bring anyone.

*Union City, TN*

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

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Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Linda Worley
Al Flesher (Bayside Manor)	
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	
Dovie Morris (Ethel Pierce's sister)	

## Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Rheba Stancliff in the death of her brother, Russell "Van" Stancliff, on March 19. Please keep Rheba and her family in your prayers.

## Please Remember

### March 29

Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 p.m., in the auditorium.

### April 3

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.



## Website

The website offers a vast amount of resources for your personal edification. Past issues of *Defender* and *Beacon*, written sermon outlines by Michael Hatcher, and the Basic Bible course by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. are available. Videos of lectureships, sermons, and Gospel meetings can be viewed.

Check it out at:

<http://www.bellviewcoc.com>



# BEACON

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March 27, 2017

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## Calling on the Name of the Lord

*Roelf L. Ruffner*

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved (Acts 2:20-21).

These words were uttered by the apostle Peter almost 2,000 years ago, to people who had been responsible for the crucifixion of the Son of God. Peter may have been referring to the prophet Isaiah who, over 700 years before, had proclaimed:

Seek ye the LORD while he may be found,  
Call ye upon him while he is near: Let  
the wicked forsake his way, And the un-  
righteous man his thoughts: And let him  
return unto the LORD, and he will have  
mercy upon him; And to our God, for he  
will abundantly pardon (Isa. 55:6-7).

Peter goes on in his sermon to show his audience from the Bible that Jesus was the

prophesied Christ, the Son of God. Ironically, the Christ was the innocent they had helped murder just fifty days before. He was to now save them from the wrath of the Father. Overwhelmed with grief and Godly sorrow, they cry to Peter and the other apostles, “Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). In other words, “What must we do to obtain pardon for this horrible crime we have committed? How will God forgive us of this deed against His Son? How may we ‘call upon the name of the Lord?’” Dear reader, how would you answer these folks, from the Bible?

Many go to Romans 10:13, where the apostle Paul repeats the statement of Peter in Acts 2:21, to try to back up their false teaching of “faith-only” salvation. In other words, according to them, there is **nothing** one can do to be saved from their sins except believe in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. They may also add,

“Just say this sinner’s prayer along with me”—a prayer which is not found in the New Testament—Matthew to Revelation. They also fail to read the next verse:

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? (Rom. 10:14).

Salvation from one’s sins involves more than just believing in Jesus Christ (cf. Jam. 2:19-20, 24).

Peter answered their urgent question in Acts 2 with a command. “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (2:38). These sinners (those continuing in a pattern of sin) were told explicitly by Peter and the Holy Spirit what **to do** to gain forgiveness or remission of their sins: (1) “repent” or turn from their sins, and (2) “be baptized” or be buried (not sprinkled!) in the watery grave with Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12). Not only were they forgiven, they were “born again” (John 3:3, 5) into the

kingdom of Christ, the church of Christ (Acts 2:41, 47).

Some may wonder if this is truly “calling upon the name of the Lord.” The Bible gives another example of the application of Acts 2:22.

In Acts 22 we see the poor penitent sinner Saul of Tarsus. Some say he was saved “on the road to Damascus.” If so, neither Jesus nor he knew it. On that road, this **believing** sinner was told by Jesus to go into Damascus, “and it shall be told thee what thou must do” (9:6). For three days and nights he fasted and prayed to God (not exactly the picture of a “saved” person!) God sent him a preacher—Ananias (cf. Rom. 10:14). He found a sinner who had truly repented of his sins but who lacked something to be “calling upon the name of the Lord.” Referring to him as “brother Saul” (a fellow Jew—Acts 2:27; 23:1), Ananias commanded him, “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (22:16). Saul was washed clean of his many sins by coming in contact with Christ’s blood and spiritually united with Him (Gal. 3:26-27).

Dear reader, have you Biblically “called upon the name of the Lord?” If you have not obeyed God’s Plan of Salvation you are not a Christian but still in your sins. Have you believed Jesus that He is the Son of God (John 8:24)? Have you repented of your sins (Acts 17:30)? Have you confessed Him as the Son of God (Rom. 10:9-10)? Have you been baptized for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38)? If not, “Why tarriest thou?”

42<sup>nd</sup> Annual  
Bellview Lectures

*Set Ye Up A Standard  
In The Land*  
(Jer. 51:27)

**June 9 – 13, 2017**

Open Forum Questions

If you have a question send it to:

**mhatcher@gmail.com**

*Columbia, TN*

# The Old Paths

*Gus Nichols*

Christianity is not some newfangled way, gotten up in modern times by men more zealous than well-informed. The whole of Christianity is in the New Testament. Anything in religion which is not as old as the New Testament is no part of Christianity. The “Old Paths” for us are the ways traveled by the apostles and early Christians who

were guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit (Jer. 6:16; John 16:13). The New Testament gives us a history of the church of Christ for nearly three quarters of a century. You should choose that church today and make your life as a member of it conform to the New Testament doctrine.

*Deceased*

## Realized Eschatology Debate

Howard Daniel Denham & Holger Neubauer

**April 20-23, 2017**

Location:

Bellview Church of Christ

Pensacola, Florida

7:00 pm each evening

View online: [www.bellviewcoc.com](http://www.bellviewcoc.com)

**The propositions will be:**

**Howard Daniel Denham** will affirm:

Resolved: **The Scriptures teach that the general resurrection of the dead is yet future and is a bodily resurrection.**

**Holger Neubauer** will affirm:

Resolved: **The Scriptures teach that the general resurrection is a bodily resurrection and is not still future.**

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Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Linda Worley
Bobbie LaBryer	Lee Hammac

Al Flesher (Bayside Manor)  
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)  
Dovie Morris (Ethel Pierce's sister)  
Alayna Neary (Heather Stark's 9-year-old neighbor)

## Please Remember

### Every Sunday

Ladies' Bible Class will meet after the afternoon service, in the zone room.

### April 3

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### April 9

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

## Correction

In last week's issue of the *Beacon* (March 20, 2017), it was announced that Rheba Stancliff's brother, Russell "Van" Stancliff, had passed away. His last name was Mathews not Stancliff. Our sincere apology to sister Stancliff for this mistake.



# BEACON

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April 3, 2017

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## Walking the Walk

*Charles Pogue*

Many people can speak a good line—“talk the talk,” if you will. It is one thing to **speak** the Truth, but it is quite another thing to **walk** according to it. In identifying the Pharisees as hypocrites, Jesus said, “they say, and do not” (Mat. 23:3). The words of the scribes and Pharisees bound heavy burdens on the people, but they would not “move them with one of their fingers (23:4). The things they did (such as broadening their phylacteries, enlarging the hems of the garments, and taking the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues), they did to be seen of men. These men paid tithes of mint, anise, and cumin, but they left undone the weightier matters of the law such as judgment, mercy, and faith (23:23). The scribes and Pharisees talked the talk, but they did not walk the walk.

Many members of the Lord’s church will sit in the pew on Sunday morning and sing, “Oh

how I love Jesus,” but fail to return for Sunday evening and for Wednesday evening Bible study. Like the scribes and Pharisees, they talk the talk, but do not walk the walk. Some of us are like the person James talked about who saw a brother who needed food and clothing and said, “be ye warmed and filled,” but did not give them the things they needed. Some of us talk about helping those in need, but when opportunity arises, find some excuse to deny our responsibility to them.

Christians are not to avenge themselves (Rom. 12:19). We are to pray for those who spitefully use us, pray for and love our enemies, and bless those who curse us (Mat. 5:44). How often do we acknowledge these instructions of the Lord, but in actual life, we declare we will get even with those who mistreat us? How often do we say, “Well, if that is the way he or she is going to be, I just won’t

talk to him or her anymore?” Do we walk the walk, or just talk the talk?

The apostle Paul instructed the Ephesian brethren, “See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Eph. 5:15-16). The same apostle charged the Colossians not to talk, but to walk, worthily of the Lord (Col. 1:10). That is the only way to please Him.

One of the areas in which brethren have long talked the talk but failed to walk is in the matter of fellowship. In many congregations, for year after year, there have been brethren who were living contrary to the commands of the Lord, but who would still occasionally, or in some cases, regularly, attend the worship assemblies. Instead of reproof, rebuking, and exhorting them with all longsuffering, many congregations applied only the longsuffering, leaving the reproof, rebuking, and exhorting undone. Just like the scribes and the Pharisees who paid their tithes, these brethren left undone the weightier commandment of God by failing to practice first instructive, then when that failed, corrective discipline. As the old saying goes, the chickens will come home to roost, and roosting they are relative to fellowship! One brother [Phil Sanders—editor], who publicly expressed the view that members of the Christian Church denomination are brethren, is still used on lecture programs that were once sound and renowned, but which now deserves frowns. Brethren talk the talk when it comes to fellowship, but if walking the walk involves paying a personal price, the walk does not even reach the pace of a shuffle!

When we obeyed the Gospel, we did not rise from the watery grave of baptism to **talk** in the newness of life, but to “**walk** in the newness of life” (Rom. 6:4). The “old man” walked in disobedience to God’s commands, the “new man” walks in lock step with the Lord’s will. Another way to say that is that we walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (8:1). If we walk in the Spirit, we will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (Gal. 5:16). We will not just talk the talk, but walk the walk. Paul’s instruction to the church at Ephesus states this matter very directly: “For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light” (Eph. 5:8).

A sad reality exists concerning those who do not walk according to the will of God. Paul expressed this truth to the brethren at Philippi: Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ (Phi. 3:17-18).

Those who walk after the flesh are presumptuous and self-willed (2 Pet. 2:10), and if they happen to be those who claim to have fellowship with God and yet walk in darkness, they are liars who do not do the truth (1 John 1:6). Jude adds that mockers walk in their own ungodly lusts (Jude 18). It is not a surprise that Jesus describes man’s advancement toward eternity as a journey. A journey implies a walk, and those who walk the narrow way (after God’s commands) will enter through the gate into life. Those who walk the broad way (after their own wills) will enter in through a wide gate to a road that ends

in destruction (Mat. 7:13-14). For this very reason, Jesus posed the serious question, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?” (Luke 6:46).

The only real difference between the person who willfully disobeys God—making no bones about it—and the person who claims to be the child of God, but who fails to walk the walk, is that the latter has added lying to the

list of his sins. As the children of God, let us **speak** the Truth, never wavering from it to the right hand or to the left. Error saves no one; it will be the reason many are lost. Let us also walk the walk so we do not stand before God as self-deceived hypocrites, our actions betraying us for what we really are, thus finding ourselves with the many who go into destruction.

*Beeville, TX*

## Realized Eschatology Debate Howard Daniel Denham & Holger Neubauer

**April 20-23, 2017**

**Location:**

Bellview Church of Christ  
Pensacola, Florida

7:00 pm each evening

View online: [www.bellviewcoc.com](http://www.bellviewcoc.com)

**The propositions will be:**

**Howard Daniel Denham** will affirm:

Resolved: **The Scriptures teach that the general resurrection of the dead is yet future and is a bodily resurrection.**

**Holger Neubauer** will affirm:

Resolved: **The Scriptures teach that the general resurrection is a bodily resurrection and is not still future.**

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Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Linda Worley
Lee Hammac	Bobbie LaBryer
Al Flesher	
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	

**Please Remember**

**Every Sunday**

Ladies' Bible Class will meet after the afternoon service, in the zone room.

**April 9**

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

**April 16**

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

**April 17**

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

**April 20-23**

Realized Eschatology Debate at 7:00 pm.

**April 30**

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 15

April 10, 2017

A Publication of Bellview Church of Christ

4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526

850.455.7595

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Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Resurrection Sunday?

*Roelf L. Ruffner*

The other day I received an 8 ½" x 5 ½" postcard from the Nazarene Church in town inviting me to their "Palm Sunday Celebration, Good Friday Service and Resurrection Sunday" services April 14-16. It goes on and says, "We invite you and your family (and friends) to join us as we celebrate Jesus, our Risen Lord, this Easter season." I imagine it will be an elaborate affair with a chorus, singing groups, egg hunt, and pageantry. For many people who claim to be Christians the observance of Christmas and Easter are the **heights** of their religious observance. I am also reminded of what the Holy Spirit and the apostle Paul command the Christian in the New Testament:

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him (Col. 3:17).

There is no "name of the Lord" or Scriptural

authority in these festivities. You may read the Holy Bible from Genesis to Revelation and you find no mention of a special day out of the year in which to remember the resurrection of Jesus Christ. History records that the observance did not begin to appear until the middle of the second century AD (during a time of growing apostasy) or over one hundred years after the church of Christ was established in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 2) in AD 30. Which means that the apostles, Barnabas, Stephen, Philip, Paul, Jude, Philemon, Aquila, Priscilla, Phoebe, or any other Christians mentioned in the New Testament had ever heard of or practiced "Resurrection Sunday" and its accoutrements. Yet, Paul and the Holy Spirit wrote the Thessalonian brethren, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 The. 2:15). We

can only conclude that “Easter” was not one of those inspired traditions.

When may we remember our Lord’s resurrection? We start by being baptized for the remission (or forgiveness) of our sins (Acts 2:38). As Paul and the Holy Spirit wrote:

Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead (Col. 2:12).

The act of baptism or immersion in water is not a symbolic gesture we do **after** we are saved from our sins. It is not based on the faith of someone else, like a parent or “godparent.” It is a spiritual act in which we obey Him, come in contact with the sin cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, and are resurrected from spiritual death—no longer a sinner but a Christian (cf. Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:1-6).

When I contemplate my own mortality I also remember Jesus’ resurrection. I am a finite

being and, if the Lord tarries in His return, will die. Is it the end of my story; the final curtain to my existence? No! The resurrection of Jesus Christ on that Sunday morning almost 2,000 years ago, proves that there is something after death—a general resurrection of the dead followed by the Judgment Day and eternal life or eternal damnation (cf. John 5:23-29; Acts 17:30-31; 1 Cor.15:12-26; 2 Cor. 5:10).

Dear reader, are you ready for that resurrection and judgment? Forget about “Easter Sunday” and all the unauthorized attempts to *celebrate* a man-made holy day (Mat. 15:9). Obey Christ’s Plan of Salvation: Hear, Believe, Repent, Confess, and Baptism, and rejoice in His resurrection **every day** of the year!

Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ (Col. 2:8).

*Columbia, TN*

## America—About to Die?

*Thomas B. Warren*

A nation is a lot like a person. It is born. It lives. It grows old. It dies. Many great nations have arisen during the history of the world. Some of them experienced a pattern somewhat like this: They began with strong spiritual and moral conviction, followed by the growth and eventual dominance of materialism, eventually to be destroyed by moral decay, apathy, and anarchy. Sounds all too familiar, doesn’t it?

America began with spiritual conviction, and at least a great many people who meant it when “In God We Trust” was stamped on

its money. Then came the industrial revolution, the agricultural revolution, the glorification of materialism in general, and a people who began to trust more in money than in God. Now we see signs of decadence and apathy, the next-to-last-stage. As one of the Nobel Peace Prize winners pointed out several years ago, not just in America, but in the rest of the world, our moral fiber is unraveling rapidly.

Is it all over? Is it the end? Is America about to die? Well, that depends upon America. It depends on what we Americans decide. God gives us the choice, both as individuals and

nations to follow our way or His way (Mat. 7:13-14). It is up to us. He wants us as willing followers, not as robots with no freedom of choice (11:28-30).

Centuries before Christ, Nineveh, much like America today, was faced with a choice. Nineveh could pursue either its own self-centered course or turn back to God. In what must have been one of the greatest spiritual revivals in history, Nineveh heard God's warning. Its citizens believed God, proclaimed a

fast, turned around from wrongdoing, and were saved from destruction (Jon. 3:5-10).

The same thing can happen in America today. America has been great. It can be even greater. Our permissiveness, violence, and overindulgence can be either the beginning of the end or the crisis experience that gives us rebirth in God's will. It is up to us which of the two it will be.

*Deceased*

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Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Linda Worley
Al Flesher (Bayside Manor)	
Robbie Cravey (The Haven)	

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## YouTube Channel

Bellview Church of Christ has a YouTube channel Check it out and subscribe to the channel.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5\\_MGG3zjY0IW3qw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5_MGG3zjY0IW3qw)



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 16

April 17, 2017

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## Do You Really Want to Go to Heaven? A Philosophical Investigation of Luke 18

*Johnny Oxendine*

Few Biblical scenarios are as sad to read about as the conversation that took place between Jesus and a young man recorded in Matthew 19:16-22, and also found in Luke 18. It is one of the more compelling conversations because the “young ruler” actually realizes that so much is at stake.

Let us look at the conversation:

And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none *is* good, save one, *that is*, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing:

sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich (Luke 18:18-23).

The question here is whether this man really wanted eternal life at all. He makes inquiry as to whether it can be obtained; he certainly goes to the right person. However, when told of what is required, he balks because he does not consider what he *wants* to be of equal value to that he already has.

Also to be taken into consideration here is the fact that Christ knew that covetousness was the sin which most easily beset this young man; though he had obviously gotten honestly what he then possessed, yet he could not cheerfully part with it (even with a clearly stated assurance from the Lord of eternal life—“treasure in

heaven”), and by this his lack of sincerity was shown.

It is this total lack of sincerity that brings us to ask the question: **Why don't people really want to go to heaven?** He did say he wanted eternal life, but that was all he did. He did not, through his actions, show any faithfulness to

the *announced* conviction. It is from his question that we know he views himself to be a spiritual person.

Anyone hearing him would also likely think that his first priority was spiritual. His actions, however, reveal his true convictions, his “comments, questions, or prayers” notwithstanding.

## *Set Ye Up A Standard In The Land* 2017 Bellview Lectures

### Chapters On:

My People Are Destroyed for a Lack of Knowledge .....	Jess Whitlock
Study to Show Thyself Approved.....	Johnny Oxendine
God Hath Spoken by His Son...Refuse Not Him That Spoke .....	Michael Hatcher
Will We Come No More Unto God?.....	Jess Whitlock
Go Stand and Speak.....	Gene Hill
Set Ye Up a Standard in the Land .....	Bruce Stulting
And Having Done All to Stand .....	Roelf Ruffner
Mechanical Instruments of Music .....	Terry Hightower
As Hard as an Adamant Stone .....	Danny Douglas
The Prophecy of Hosea .....	Phil Smith
The New Birth.....	Daniel Denham
Restoring the Erring .....	Paul Curless
This Is the Love of God .....	Paul Curless
Be Thou an Ensample .....	Johnny Oxendine
If You Weary Running with the Footmen, How Can You Contend with Horses?...	Gary Summers
Are We Carrying the Right Banner? .....	Gene Hill
The Book of Ezra .....	Jerry Brewer
When Is an Example Binding? .....	Terry Hightower
The Church Is Precious in God's Eyes .....	Jerry Brewer
The System of Salvation .....	Harrell Davidson
Who Did Hinder You That You Should Not Obey the Truth.....	Phil Smith
Growing in Grace and Knowledge .....	Daniel Denham
Living Soberly, Righteously, and Godly .....	Roelf Ruffner
Confess Your Faults One to Another .....	Danny Douglas
The Prophecy of Micah.....	Harrell Davidson
Spiritual Gifts .....	Bruce Stulting
There Is a Balm in Gilead.....	Gary Summers

He knew that by the way he framed his question that it would seem as though his quest was first and foremost heavenly.

Why then does he turn away from his request? **Because when it comes down to follow through, he is as shallow as his pretense of faith obviously displays to others.** Further conversations with him would perhaps reveal his true interests.

Though for a few *moments* he would probably be able to discuss spiritual matters, he more likely would have eventually turned the conversation around to what he knew best (his true love)—possessions and other material matters. How sad can a person be?

*San Mateo, CA*

## Luke 12:15-21

And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry. But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night dthy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God

## Bellview Lectures Information

### Housing

The Red Roof Inn (2591 Wilde Lake Blvd; Pensacola, FL 32526) is providing a special rate for those attending the Bellview Lectures. The price (tax not included) is \$69.99—one King size bed and \$79.99—two Full size beds. Their phone number is 850.941.0908. **Tell them you are attending the Bellview Lectures when making your reservations.** If you are planning on attending the lectureship you may want to make your motel reservations early.

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Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Dot Dodd
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Henry Hignite	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Linda Worley

Al Flesher (Bayside Manor)  
John Godwin (Aleacia Godwin's  
husband)  
Nancy Smith (Debra & Denise  
Mowery's sister)

## Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family of Robbie Cravey who passed away on April 7, 2017. Please keep her family in your prayers.

## Please Remember

### Every Sunday

Ladies' Bible Class will meet after the afternoon service, in the zone room.

### April 30

Fifth Sunday Dinner: singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

## 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bellview Lectures

*Set Ye Up A Standard*

*In The Land*

(Jer. 51:27)

June 9 – 13, 2017

### Open Forum Questions

If you have a question send it to  
**[mhatcher@gmail.com](mailto:mhatcher@gmail.com)**



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 17

April 24, 2017

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Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Did Christ Die in Vain?

*Dub McClish*

The whole Christian system centers around the death of Jesus on the cross. He “died for the ungodly” (Rom. 5:6, 8). He “gave himself for our sins” (Gal. 1:4). He “gave himself a ransom for all” (1 Tim. 2:6). He “laid down his life for us” (1 John 3:16). In spite of these and numerous like statements of Scripture, certain things, if true, would mean that Christ died in vain.

**If salvation is by law of Moses:** Paul argued: “If righteousness is through the law, then Christ died for nought” (Gal. 2:21). The Galatians had fallen victim to the teaching of Jewish Christians who sought to bind at least parts of the law (i.e., circumcision, 5:2-4; cf. Acts 15:1) upon Gentile Christians. If Moses’ law could have saved it, it would not have been necessary for the Word to become flesh (John 1:14). The Hebrew nation had been under that law for 1,500 years by the time of

Jesus’ birth. It was but a “tutor” that pointed to the Christ (Gal. 3:24); its sacrifices were but typical of the **only** “Lamb of God, that **ta-keth away** the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Jesus slew the authority of Moses’ law on Calvary (Col. 2:14). All who seek to justify religious practices by it (e.g., Sabbath observance, priesthood, instrumental music in worship, holy water, et al.), by implication render the death of Jesus worthless.

**If religious division is right:** Though diversity in religion (including various “world religions”) is applauded by the masses, the Bible condemns it. Jesus built **only one** religion/church (Mat. 16:18), and He intended for its members to be **one**, as He and the Father are **one** (which includes/demands doctrinal unity) (John 17:20-23). He did not even tolerate division in a single congregation of His church (1 Cor. 1:10-13). He died to establish this **one**

body (Eph. 2:16; 5:25). If Jesus is as pleased with the gross divisions in religion as with the **one** church He established, then “Christ died for nought” in that regard.

**If the church is non-essential:** Jesus “purchased” His church with His blood, which He shed on the cross (Acts 20:28). **Jesus yes, the church no** is still a common concept. If one is considering only man-made counterfeits of Jesus’ church, the slogan is true, for He died for none of them. His church consists of those who have been saved from sin and who will be saved eternally through His death (Rom. 5:10; Acts 2:38, 41, 47). To include His church merely as one acceptable religion among the many implies that Christ paid that

awful price for it in vain.

**If I am lost:** Jesus’ death will have been wasted, as far as I am concerned, if I am lost. This will not be the case for others, of course. He “gave himself a ransom for all” (1 Tim. 2:6), so all have the opportunity to be saved. But as for me, if I am lost, He may as well have spared Himself the misery of the cross, for it was for nought.

It behooves each of us to obey Jesus’ plan of salvation (Acts 2:37-41), whereupon He will add us to His church (2:47), thereby accepting the salvation He offers. We thus attribute the true value to His death in a very personal way.

*Denton, TX*

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# 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bellview Lectures

## *Set Ye Up A Standard In The Land (Jer. 51:27)*

June 9 – 13, 2017

Friday, June 9

- 7:00 pm Set Ye Up a Standard in the Land  
Bruce Stulting
- 8:00 pm Are We Carrying the Right  
Banner? Gene Hill

Saturday, June 10

- 9:00 am God Hath Spoken by His Son...  
Refuse Not Him That Spoke  
Michael Hatcher
- 10:00 am My People Are Destroyed for a  
Lack of Knowledge Jess Whitlock
- 11:00 am Confess Your Faults One to  
Another Danny Douglas

*Lunch Break*

- 1:00 pm When Is an Example Binding?  
Terry Hightower
- 2:00 pm The Prophecy of Micah  
Harrell Davidson

- 3:00 pm Open Forum

*Dinner Break*

- 7:00 pm The New Birth Daniel Denham
- 8:00 pm Who Did Hinder You That You  
Should Not Obey the Truth?  
Phil Smith

Sunday, June 11

- 9:00 am Study to Show Thyself Approved  
Johnny Oxendine
- 10:00 am The Church Is Precious in God's  
Eyes Jerry Brewer

*Lunch and Dinner Break*

- 1:00 pm This Is the Love of God  
Paul Curless
- 2:00 pm As Hard As an Adamant Stone  
Danny Douglas

Monday, June 12

- 9:00 am If You Weary Running with the  
Footmen, How Can You Contend  
with Horses? Gary Summers
- 10:00 am Mechanical Instruments  
of Music Terry Hightower
- 11:00 am We Will Come No More Unto  
God Jess Whitlock

*Lunch Break*

- 1:00 pm Be Thou an Ensample  
Johnny Oxendine
- 2:00 pm Spiritual Gifts Bruce Stulting

- 3:00 pm Open Forum:

*Dinner Break*

- 7:00 pm And Having Done All to Stand  
Roelf Ruffner
- 8:00 pm The System of Salvation  
Harrell Davidson

Tuesday, June 13

- 9:00 am Growing in Grace and  
Knowledge Daniel Denham
- 10:00 am Restoring the Erring  
Paul Curless
- 11:00 am The Prophecy of Hosea  
Phil Smith

*Lunch Break*

- 1:00 pm The Book of Ezra Jerry Brewer
- 2:00 pm Living Soberly, Righteously, and  
Godly Roelf Ruffner

- 3:00 pm Open Forum:

*Dinner Break*

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- 8:00 pm There Is a Balm in Gilead  
Gary Summers

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**Sick**

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Dot Dodd
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Al Flesher	Cary Parks
Rheba Stancliff	Linda Worley
Henry Hignite (Sacred Heart Hospital)	
John Godwin (Aleacia Godwin's husband)	
Nancy Smith (Debra & Denise Mowery's sister)	

**Please Remember**

**Every Sunday**

Ladies' Bible Class will meet after the afternoon service, in the zone room.

**April 30**

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

**May 1**

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

**May 14**

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

**May 15**

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

**May 21**

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

**May 31**

Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 p.m., in the auditorium.



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 18

May 1, 2017

A Publication of Bellview Church of Christ

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## Courage in the Face of Adversity

*Bruce Stulting*

One of the hardest things for a Christian to do is remain faithful when faced with adversity. Paul warned Timothy, “Yea, and all that would live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution” (2 Tim. 3:12). True godliness is at odds with the world. The wicked will always oppose the good. Jesus faced similar opposition in His time.

And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil (John 3:19).

The question that ought to concern every Christian is, “How will I respond to adversity when it comes my way?” Some Christians take the easy way out. Some keep quiet when they should speak up. This led Peter to deny the Lord (Mat. 26:69-75). Others go along to get along. Paul had to rebuke Peter to the face for this behavior (Gal. 2:11). Still others give up altogether (Mat. 13:20-21). Such failure is

hardly worthy of God’s blessings.

Paul is a great example of one who knew how to face adversity. Consider Paul’s courage in the face of adversity:

And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: save that the Holy Spirit testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:22-24).

Paul was not ashamed of the Gospel. He was always glad to be identified with Christ. He stated on one occasion:

For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and

also to the Greek (Rom. 1:16).

Paul was not afraid of a goal. He knew where he was going. He pressed toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (see Phi. 3:14). He also knew what it was going to cost him to get there, yet he still refused to ease up. We need Christians today who are not lukewarm or halfhearted! Are you such a person? May we all be willing to learn the will of the Lord and have the courage to do it regardless of the personal cost.

Huntsville, TX

## Realized Eschatology Debate

H. Daniel Denham  
and  
Holger Neubauer

Videos of the 2016 and 2017 debates  
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# 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bellview Lectures

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*Defender and Beacon*

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## Be Prepared

*Geoff Litke*

“Be Prepared” is the Boy Scout Motto. It is a common sense quip applied to everything that people hold dear. Patients value their lives and trust the advice of doctors. There are stipulations patients must follow in preparation for surgery. Sometimes, people will fast up to 24 hours prior to their procedures. Other difficult guidelines are given depending on what is necessary. These are things that, if neglected, could cause the loss of physical life.

An SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) preparation website gave this advice for preparing to take that crucial examination:

Whatever preparation method you use, start as early as you can, and do some study and review EVERY DAY. Don't wait for the last month to start, and don't cram the night before. Get a good night's sleep and eat a good breakfast.

Career minded students take these tips very seriously. Failing of this test could cost money,

time, stress, or in some cases could change the direction of one's life.

It is common sense, but in things that are **truly** important these easy tips are overlooked. More important than surgery or tests is ones service to God. Jesus said, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Mat. 6:33). One of the most important things children of God must do is worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). Christians know that this is done each first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2; Acts 20:7). Yet, how many parents see that the Bible class lessons are studied before Sunday morning? Is it a habit to stay out late each and every Saturday night? Why not guard that evening to ensure the best possible preparation on Sunday morning. A family who is exhausted from toiling on trivial things (maybe entertainment)

cannot be prepared to worship properly on Sunday morning. Families who are tired wake up late, fight or snip at one another. They get to class late or just skip. They do not bring a reverential attitude to church as they approach the heavenly father.

Remember, that Rehoboam “did evil, because “he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD” (2 Chr. 12:14). These principles extend into every aspect of ones life, but how one

makes preparations for the worship assembly is one way that they let their lights shine for the world or demonstrate darkness. Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Mat. 5:16). The foolish virgins missed the marriage because they had not prepared to let their lights shine (25:1-13).

Spring, TX

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## The OMG and Other Cultural Comments

*Johnny Oxendine*

Almost daily now I come in contact with kids and, occasionally, teachers at school who, without a thought, will utter the now ubiquitous OMG comment. It has become quite common in conversation today, and many of the people are not even aware of just what this type of speech is saying.

The acronym stands for “Oh My God,” or “Oh My Goodness,” or “Oh My Gosh,” and is in everyday slang a use of God’s name that is not appropriate because of the verse in Exodus 20:7 and (repeated in) Deuteronomy 5:11 that implores us not to misuse the Lord’s name. The Third Commandment reminds us of the importance of the manner in which we use God’s name. It speaks to the fact that the way we use God’s name is an indication of how we understand our relationship with Him.

*Vain*, as used in that verse is defined as

“uselessly,” “worthlessly,” and in “emptiness of speech.” The original meaning of this verse is literally, “You shall not lift up the name of Yahweh unto vanity.” To *lift up*, means to invoke God’s name in taking an oath. In other words, when we take an oath, we are calling upon God as a witness to confirm the truth of our word. God is saying, “Do not call upon My name to confirm the truth of your word when it is a vain, worthless, empty cause.” To attach God’s name to emptiness is to misuse it. If we think of how many people in the world today casually throw out the Lord’s name (and how often this occurs), we can understand even better the general disregard there is for all things spiritual. This means nothing to them as can be testified by the fact that this acronym is commonly used on the Internet in chat sessions, whether Facebook or Twitter, or any other sites.

When we (God’s children) call on the Lord, we are to honor Him. To revere His Holy Name. Those in the world for whom the Lord means so little obviously are not only careless, but in some instances they are callous, as it belittles the Creator by associating and invoking Him with things that are secular and insignificant. “Did you see that, OMG?,” or, “OMG, I almost LOL...,” and such other blatant disregard for the Almighty.

I remember just a few years ago it was so

trendy for people to say, “hella” as if it was just the coolest use of the English language. “Oh, that was just, hella cool man...,” or some such derivative. Christians have to know the difference, and this is especially important for young people, as they are usually the group most influenced by these loose standards of speech. Our responsibility is to teach those we come in contact with that the Lord’s name is not to be used lightly. “Think on these things.”

*San Mateo, CA*

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## Can Paperclips Talk?

*Dub McClish*

Most folk believe that only human beings and parrots can talk, but that is just not true. Although paperclips are not very high on the intelligence scale (and while they do not actually form and speak words), they nonetheless can talk. What then do they say?

**“Our form didn’t ‘just happen.’** Men needed a means of temporarily holding pieces of paper together. Bill Middlebrook invented, designed, and patented us in 1899. He sought (and found) a specific gauge and temper of wire. He cut long pieces of wire into lengths of exactly 3-3/4 inches. He then bent this piece of wire in just the right places to form us—lowly and simple (but practical, if we may say so) paper clips. Multiplied billions of us have been made since that first one.”

**“Our wire didn’t ‘just happen.’** Some ingenious person discovered long ago that by melting a solid material dug from the earth

he could make a strong, hard metal. Someone then discovered he could process this metal into steel. A manufacturer then produced the steel wire that forms our backbone (actually, our entire being), and sold it to our designer and maker. As the saying goes, ‘The rest is history.’”

**“The ore from which our wire was made was also made.** Some men with very large brains say that it ‘just happened,’ but even we of very little brainpower know that’s just silly. If even we humble paper clips didn’t ‘just happen,’ how could the ore out of which our wire was made ‘just happen’? Others say the iron ore ‘created itself,’ but that’s even sillier. If **we** didn’t make **ourselves** (but one unimaginably-more intelligent and powerful than we ever hope to be designed and made us), how could **iron ore** make **itself** (its IQ and power are even less than ours)? Yet others claim that

iron ore never had a beginning. Surely, they don't expect us to believe that one. If we paperclips had a beginning (as we did back in 1899), then it doesn't seem at all rational to claim that the raw material out of which we were made did **not** have a beginning (some of those men-types really have strange ideas, for all of their acclaimed smartness). Others smarter than we are will have to figure out exactly when our 'ancestor,' iron ore, was made,

but we know it didn't create itself. Someone caused it to exist and to be where it was."

Paperclips not only *talk*, but they make sense. Some very smart men agree with these observations by and about simple paperclips, but remain in foolish denial of the same facts regarding our complex universe and ourselves. If paperclips can figure these matters out, why can't these *smart* men do so?

Denton, TX

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# 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bellview Lectures

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June 9 – 13, 2017

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Banner? Gene Hill

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Refuse Not Him That Spoke  
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*Lunch Break*

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- 3:00 pm Open Forum

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- 9:00 am Study to Show Thyself Approved  
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Eyes Jerry Brewer

*Lunch and Dinner Break*

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Henry Hignite
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Chip Crowe	(Bill & Peggy Crowe's son)

## Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family of Al Flesher, who passed away on May 12. Please keep his family in your prayers.

## Baptized

Kathy Beck was baptized into Christ on May 15. She has placed membership with the Bellview congregation. Please keep Kathy in your prayers and offer her encouragement.

## Please Remember

### Every Sunday

Ladies' Bible Class will meet after the afternoon service, in the zone room.

### May 31

Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 p.m., in the auditorium.

### June 4

Pre-lectureship meeting after the afternoon service, in the auditorium. All members of the congregation are encouraged to attend.



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 22

May 29, 2017

A Publication of Bellview Church of Christ

4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526

850.455.7595

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Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Death Come to All

*Jerry C. Brewer*

Death is the common denominator of all men. Rich and poor alike must someday walk through the valley of the shadow. That truth is expressed in these lines from the classic poem, *Thanatopsis*, by William Cullen Bryant: “All that wealth, all that beauty e’er gave await alike the inevitable hour, the paths of glory lead but to the grave.”

Death is an appointment that every man, woman, and child upon the earth shall keep. This fact is plainly stated by the Hebrews writer who said, “it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27).

Death is not a pleasant thing to think about, so many people simply ignore it. And not only that, but they have some strange ideas about death that are not found in the Bible.

For instance, many people think that death automatically makes a person a Christian and sends him to heaven. But that is not true. As

one dies, so he remains for all eternity. One who dies in sin is forever separated from God’s presence. Jesus demonstrated that fact in His account of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31). He said there is a “great gulf” fixed between the wicked and the righteous dead that can never be crossed after death.

Neither is death extinction. The good and the bad continue to exist after death. Jesus said the righteous will exist in eternal bliss, or rest, and the wicked will go away into the everlasting punishment of hell fire. Of both He said, “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal” (Mat. 25:46). The apostle Paul further said that God will recompense tribulation to the wicked and rest to the righteous when Christ returns in judgment (2 The. 1:6-9).

Death is an appointment that is both certain and uncertain. According to Hebrews

9:27, it is **certain** in that all shall die, but it is **uncertain** in that no man knows when that hour shall come to him, and life, at best, is brief. “For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (Jam. 4:14).

However, there is hope of life after death for Christians. For them, death is the end of labors and trials, which will be rewarded (Rev. 14:13). But the key to eternal rest is

faithfulness in this life. One’s eternal destiny is sealed at death. There is no “second chance.” Now—in this life—is the time to prepare for death by believing in Christ (John 8:24), repenting of our sins (Luke 13:3), confessing our faith in Christ (Acts 8:37), being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and living a life devoted to Christ. Death will come to all of us. Are you prepared for it?

*Elk City, OK*

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Remember in your prayers:

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Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
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Ray Foshee	
OJ Savage (Karen Hatcher's father)	
Jennifer Carter (Peggy Crowe's great-niece)	

## Please Remember

### June 4

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### June 9-13

42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bellview Lectures:  
Theme – “Set Ye Up A Standard In  
The Land” (Jer. 51:27).

### June 18

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## YouTube Channel

Videos of sermons, lectures, and Gospel meetings can be viewed on the Bellview Church of Christ YouTube channel. The videos are also linked from our website. Check out the YouTube channel and subscribe to it.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5\\_MGG3zjY0IW3qw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5_MGG3zjY0IW3qw)



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 23

June 5, 2017

A Publication of Bellview Church of Christ

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## Emotion

*Brad Green*

There are two extremes in regards to emotion within the religious world. One extreme, formalism, is the attempt to avoid and refrain from any emotion at all. The other extreme emotionalism, attempts to base all conclusions upon emotion rather than upon facts and evidence. As is the case most of the time, the truth finds itself somewhere in the middle of these two extremes.

The Bible teaches that emotion must be a part of a Christian's life and worship.

- The Christian is to **love**—John 13:34
- The Christian is to **hope**—Romans 8:24
- The Christian is to **rejoice**—Philippians 4:4
- The Christian is to **hate**—Matthew 6:24
- The Christian is to **sorrow**—2 Corinthians 7:8-10
- The Christian is to **fear**—Matthew

10:28.

Thus, the first extreme of formalism is false, as is evidenced in the list of Scriptural emotions above.

However, the second extreme, emotionalism is just as sinful. The Bible commands emotion, but not emotion just for the sake of having emotion. There is a purpose for each of the emotions listed above.

- Love leads man to obedience (John 14:15)
- Hope leads man to endure (Rom. 8:24-25)
- Sorrow leads man to repentance (2 Cor. 7:8-10), etc.

The Bible never commands emotion to be a result rather emotion is a catalyst which leads the Christian to bear fruit for the Lord. Many in the religious world, and sadly, some in the church of Christ look at emotion as if emotion itself were the goal. They practice a “better felt than told” religion. They would rather sit and

talk about themselves and their experiences instead of **examining** themselves to see if they are faithful (13:5). Many desire to practice what they **feel** rather than what is taught in God's Word. According to the Scriptures, "There is a way that **seemeth right** unto a man, But **the end thereof are the ways of death**" (Pro. 16:25). The goal is obedience to God's Word, not emotion. Emotion is that which can lead man to the goal if it is done scripturally. Jeremiah stated, "O LORD, I know that the way

of man **is not in himself**: *It is* not in man that walketh to **direct his steps**" (Jer. 10:23). Many direct their own steps based upon what they feel and ignore the Truth of God.

Let us avoid both of the extremes of formalism and emotionalism. They will lead to destruction. Let us instead pattern our lives according to God's Word and express emotion scripturally as it will lead us to bear fruit for God.

*Lenoir City, TN*

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Randall Johnson (Joyce Johnson's  
husband)

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## Bellview Lectures on the Internet

Lessons from *Set Ye Up A Standard In  
The Land* will be available for viewing  
during and after the lectures at:

**[http://www.bellviewcoc.com/  
lectures.html](http://www.bellviewcoc.com/lectures.html)**

### Open Forum Questions

If you have a question send it to  
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# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 24

June 12, 2017

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## How Brethren Dodge the Duty of Correcting Sin and Departures from the Faith

*Charles Pogue*

An honest and thorough examination of ourselves today (1 Cor. 13:8) sometimes reveals the serious problem that we are dodging the duty of correcting sins of immorality or departures from the faith. Our example should be the apostle Paul. When he saw there was a problem or problems with either an individual or a congregation; he wasted no time; he contacted them about it (1 Cor.; Gal.; 1 & 2 The.; etc.). It is nothing to brag about, but brethren today have become very skillful at making excuses to let sin and error go uncorrected. Following here are four of those excuses.

One thing brethren will do is deny that the problem is their problem. How often brethren will say, it is none of my concern. Let someone else deal with it. When is a problem my problem? When I know it exists, that is when. Again, that is the example we have

so frequently in the writings of the apostle Paul. If anyone says, but Paul was an apostle, take note that he wrote twice to the church at Corinth (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1) and once to the Philippians (Phi. 3:17) for them to be followers of him. Interestingly enough, that charge was written both to a congregation that was full of problems and one that was not. Jude wrote that we are to contend earnestly for the faith, and that includes every one of us. When there is sin or error creeping into a congregation or into the brotherhood at large, it is everybody's problem.

Second, brethren deny that what happened was a departure at all. It has been this writer's observation of late that people either lack Bible knowledge, they take passages out of context, or they twist them to prove what they want to believe is okay. Is that not the very



eyes, yea, have we become so afraid that standing up for the truth will cause a confrontation either with ourselves or with others that we are unwilling to admit that what happened actually did? If the man who walked off the edge of the bluff had opened his eyes, he would not have ended up lying dead at the bottom!

In the fourth place, there are those who will admit that a problem exists but who deny that it needs to be dealt with now. There is a world of difference between having patience with one who has sinned, and keeping one's mouth shut about the problem. The attitude far too often is, let us see if this problem will not straighten itself out. That cannot be reconciled with passages such as Galatians 6:1. If one sins his soul is too precious for his brethren to delay approaching him about it. The truth of the matter is that such people are spineless, backbone-less cowards, who place an unwarranted condition of peace over the value of souls. Jesus asked the question: what would a man give in exchange for his soul (Mat. 16:26; Mark 8:37). Man answers back, counterfeit peace. If a person is engaged in sin, it needs to be dealt with immediately even if repentance does not come forth immediately. That is because our lives are a vapor that can dissipate at any moment (Jam. 4:14). The rich fool decided to stay in his greed, but that very night he would die (Luke 12:19-20). If there is sin or error present, it must be taken care of as soon as it is found out.

Members of the church have gotten very skillful in making excuses to let that which is wrong go uncorrected. We cannot afford to do that because not only is reproof, rebuke, and exhortation needed by the one in sin; just like

Ezekiel of old, if sin is present and we fail to warn the sinner, his blood will be required at our hands (Eze. 3:20). We will give account for it in the day of judgment (Rom. 14:12). Let us neither deny, dodge, nor delay when correction is needed.

*Beeville, TX*

## Not a Day to Waste

*H.L. Gradowith*

There is not a day to waste  
If you want to live with Him!  
Just think of those who've gone on  
Don't you want to live with them?  
There is nothing in this old world  
That comes close to what's in store  
For the ones who'll follow Him  
To that lovely, peaceful shore!  
Won't you Trust Him and obey...  
For there is no other way  
To the City that now waits  
In the Land of Endless Day!  
What's blocking now you're coming?  
What is stopping you, my friend?  
Give your all to Christ the Lord  
Lest you meet an awful end...  
He gave His all for us on  
The curs'd Cross of Calvary!  
He shed His very life's blood  
Just to make us fully free!  
He is coming in the clouds  
At the end to take us Home!  
To that blessed Land from which  
We will never want to roam!

*Deceased*

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Marge Williams	Henry Hignite
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Linda Parks
Jennifer Carter (Peggy Crowe's great-niece)	
Randall Johnson (Joyce Johnson's husband)	

## Please Remember

### June 18

Lectureship critique after the afternoon service, in the auditorium. All members of the congregation are encouraged to attend.



## Bellview Lectures on the Internet

Lessons from *Set Ye Up A Standard In The Land* will be available for viewing after the lectures at:

<http://www.bellviewcoc.com/lectures.html>

## *Defender and Beacon*

### Available Via E-Mail

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# BEACON

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June 19, 2017

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Minister: Michael Hatcher

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Bill Busch

Sunday Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## The Bible Is Enough!

*Roelf L. Ruffner*

I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter (2 Cor. 12:2-4).

In my short life I have seen, read, and heard of many examples of misplaced religious enthusiasm. I am not writing about the faithful that have a fire in their hearts for God and His Word (Psa. 119:97). I refer to those who misuse and abuse the God-given thirst all men have for the Divine. People claiming that they have seen an angel, God the Father, Jesus, the devil, demons, and the perennial favorite among Roman Catholics—the Virgin Mary. In the last few years there have been a slew of

books and movies made about folks claiming that they have visited Heaven and even Hell. One such case was Alex Malarkey who chronicled his supposed experience in the book, *The Boy Who Came Back From Heaven: A True Story*, co-authored with his father, Kevin, who was a denominational preacher in Nebraska. The book told the story of how six-year-old Alex was in a terrible car accident in 2004 which left him a quadriplegic. He claimed he died in the accident and was transported to Heaven where, among other fantastical things, he saw angels and heard the voice of God. He claims he returned from Heaven and in 2009 the book was released. It sold over a million copies. In 2010 it was made into a successful movie, *Heaven Is For Real*.

Even at first glance this book is erroneous in many ways. The first error promulgated in this book/movie is the erroneous teaching that

when one dies they go directly to Heaven or Hell. Yet, the New Testament teaches that they go first to Hades, the unseen waiting place for the dead, which is divided into Paradise for the righteous and Tatarus for the unrighteous (cf. Luke 16:19-31). There all the dead await the Judgment when the final sentencing to Hell for the wicked and the eternal reward of Heaven for the righteous will take place.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment (Heb. 9:27).

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad (2 Cor. 5:10).

Second, this account assumes that the living can visit Heaven and return. Yet, the rich man in Jesus' true account of the rich man and Lazarus was told by Abraham when he beckoned Lazarus to visit him and relieve him of his torments:

And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence (Luke 16:26).

When Jesus raised righteous Lazarus from the dead after having been four days in Paradise, the New Testament is silent about any stories of Lazarus's impressions of the Hadean world. Likewise, the apostle Paul may have

visited Paradise but dared not report a word of his experience (2 Cor. 12:4). Yet, men and women assume the right to speak of something which Paul would not.

In 2012, Alex's mother, Beth (now divorced from his father) relayed in interviews that the whole account was made up. In 2015, Alex, now a teenager, issued this honest and revealing statement.

"I did not die. I did not go to Heaven," Alex wrote. He continued:

I said I went to heaven because I thought it would get me attention. When I made the claims that I did, I had never read the Bible. People have profited from lies, and continue to. They should read the Bible, which is enough. The Bible is the only source of truth. Anything written by man cannot be infallible.

He concluded, "Those who market these materials must be called to repent and hold the Bible as enough." (As summarized in a National Public Radio article.)

Yes, dear reader, the Bible is enough! We do not need so-called witnessing, contemplative prayer, testimonials, subjective experiences, church manuals, séances, visions, modern day revelations, or even "another testament of Jesus Christ" (i.e. the Book of Mormon) to show us the way to Heaven and how to avoid Hell. That which says less than the Holy Bible says about these places is not enough and

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Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
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Ray Foshee	Linda Parks
Jennifer Carter (Peggy Crowe's great-niece)	
Randall Johnson (Joyce Johnson's husband)	

## Please Remember

### July 9

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### July 10

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.



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# BEACON

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## Being a Member of “The Body of Christ” Is the Same as Being a Member of the “Church of Christ”

*David P. Brown*

And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.... Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church (Col. 1:18, 24).

If anyone who claims to be a Christian, but does not like the descriptive New Testament term “church of Christ,” he can always boldly declare that he is no part of Christ's church, even though the Lord adds all of those He saves to His church (Acts 2:37-38, 41-42, 47; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Pet. 3:21). What does such an affirmation say about one's understanding of the New Testament's teaching concerning the church of our Lord? Surely, the church of Christ, as that term is defined and used in the

New Testament, is worth the price our Lord paid for it, which price was His own precious blood (Acts 20:28). Imagine, one who claims to be a Christian (as that term is also defined and used in the New Testament), who says he is saved by the blood of Christ (the same blood with which He purchased the church of Christ), but he rejects a Scriptural term describing the relationship of the saved to the one who saved it or vice versa. Is not the great worth of the church seen in the price Jesus paid for it? Is it not the case that when one denigrates the church of Christ, one also denigrates the price our Lord paid for it, which price was His own precious blood? If not, why not? The New Testament of the Christ also teaches that Jesus is the head of the church of Christ, the church He built (Mat. 16:18), that was purchased with the blood of Christ, and



spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church (Eph. 5:23-32).

It is also a fact that the inspired apostle wrote:

And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all (1:22-23).

So, the church is Christ's spiritual body and He only has one of them (Col. 1:18; Eph. 4:4). Thus, there is only one head of the church, which is Christ's one body. This is the case because Jesus built it, purchased it with His own blood, adds all the persons He saves to it, is the sole head of it, and the church that He will present to Himself at the end of time. How sad and shameful that denominationalists have corrupted the New Testament's teaching regarding the church of our Lord. However, the Word of God has not changed and, thus, continues to teach what it always did concerning the Christ and His bride, the church of Christ, which is His body, the realm of the saved (2:16; John 17:20-23; 1 Cor. 1:10; John 12:48). This is the way that is right and cannot be wrong.

*Spring, TX*

## Seven Vacation Suggestions

1. Notify the elders or preacher when you will be away so they will not have to wonder about your welfare.
2. Take your Bible with you. While the body is relaxing you will want to feed the spiritual man by reading and meditating on God's Word.
3. Plan to assemble with Christians wherever you may be. Do not try to leave God at home, but keep in tune with Him by worshipping with others.
4. Remember the financial obligations of your congregation continue even while you are away. Leave your contribution with someone, or make up for the Sundays you missed when you return. Do not let the Lord's work suffer because of your vacation.
5. Make note and observation of effective ways that others are serving the Lord or accomplishing certain tasks.
6. Drive carefully! Life is precious for you, your family, and those you meet on the road!
7. Return with new vigor and deeper insight into the spreading of the Lord's church, determined to be a more effective Christian!

*Author Unknown*

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Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Linda Parks

## Restored

Cary and Linda Parks were restored to Christ on June 25. Please keep them in your prayers and offer them encouragement.

## Please Remember

### July 9

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### July 10

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.



## Bellview Church of Christ Website

The website offers a vast amount of resources for your personal edification. Past issues of *Defender* and *Beacon*, written sermon outlines presented by Michael Hatcher, as well as Ira Y. Rice's Basic Bible course are available. Videos of lectureships, sermons, and Gospel meetings can be viewed. Why not check it out at:

**<http://www.bellviewcoc.com>**



# BEACON

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July 3, 2017

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## Barabbas Is Every Person Who Is Lost

*Jerry C. Brewer*

Paul said Christ Jesus died for sinners, but perhaps the most notable of those sinners is Barabbas, who represents all for whom Jesus died. *Barabbas* is a compound word. The prefix *Bar* means “son of” and *abba* is the Aramaic word for “father.” His name, then, is a generic term and literally means “Son of Father.” As Jesus died in the place of this man, so He died for all who are the sons of fathers.

Pontius Pilate was a moral coward who knew Jesus had done nothing worthy of death (Luke 23:4) but had not the courage to release Him. Like many people today, Pilate did not want to displease the people by deciding in favor of Jesus. As a result, he looked for ways to avoid doing what he knew he should do. He tried to get Herod to make the decision (23:6-12), but that failed and the fate of Jesus was placed back in Pilate’s hands, who again told the Jews, “I, having examined *him*

before you, have found no fault in this man” (23:14). Then Pilate *remembered* that at this time of the year, during the Passover week, it was his custom to release one prisoner, whoever the people desired. He also *remembered* that a man named Barabbas was being held on a charge of sedition and murder and offered to crucify him and release Jesus (Mat. 27:21), but the mob insisted that the murderer Barabbas be released and the innocent Jesus be crucified.

There is nothing good recorded about Barabbas. His life was distinguished by sin. Matthew 27:16 calls him a “notable prisoner” and Mark records that he had made insurrection against Rome and committed murder (Mark 15:7). John also records that he was a robber (John 18:40). You will not find a man more worthy of death than the felon Barabbas. He was imprisoned and

marked for execution for his crimes, but he was also eternally lost because of his sinful life (Rom. 6:23). This lost man stood only a few feet from Christ. He was so near the Lord, yet he was still lost. That is the condition of many today who know what the Bible teaches concerning salvation in Christ but never come to Him in obedience. One may be inches, seconds, or thoughts away from Jesus and still be lost. The tragedy of that condition is like the Greek soldier who helped in the pillage of Persopolis and, finding a leather bag of jewels, tossed them away and kept the bag for a bread sack.

Barabbas was a man unloved by mankind. He was a violent criminal and an outcast, a rebel, and troublemaker who was under the sentence of death. You know, even the world has little affection for its own. The world is selfish and quickly drops a man whose value to them is gone. Millions of people today are in the shoes of Barabbas—unloved and unappreciated by the world, but loved by God. That is right, God loved Barabbas. Jesus said, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Yes, God loved Barabbas as He loves all mankind. John also wrote, “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for

our sins” (1 John 4:10). When Jesus died that day in the place of Barabbas, He died for all of us whom Barabbas represented, and though Barabbas was unloved by others, God loved him, as He loves all of us.

## Insufficient Standards

As the bank returns a hot check stamped “insufficient funds,” so one day God will turn away our self-serving standards of morality as insufficient. Have you heard or used one of these phrases to justify something lately?

I like (Jer. 10:23)

I feel (Gal. 5:16-21)

I want (Acts 8:18-24)

I think (2 Kin. 5:1-15)

They do it (1 Sam. 6:4-8)

It seems right (Pro. 14:12)

I am sincere (2 Sam. 6:6-7)

I am always right (2 Cor. 13:5)

No one will see me (Pro. 15:3)

It is for a good cause (Rom. 3:8)

I don't see why not (Acts 5:1-11)

The preacher said so (Gal. 1:6-9)

Others do worse things (Mat. 7:5)

God didn't say not to (Lev. 10:1-2)

God doesn't mind (1 Cor. 2:10-13)

It isn't against the law (Acts 5:26-29)

It hurts no one but me (1 Cor. 8:12-13)

Most people think it is okay (Mat. 7:13-14)

My parents and grandparents did it (Gal. 6:5)

It doesn't bother my conscience (Pro. 30:20)

We have done it this way for years (Jos. 5:2-9)

It's alright if we do it in God's name (Mat. 7:21-23)

God doesn't expect us to be so technical (1 The. 5:21)

*Author Unknown*

It is possible that Barabbas had heard the philosophers of his day who said, “Live right,” “Be sincere in what you believe,” or “Do the best you can.” However, he had not lived up to a perfect standard of morality and neither do you or I. He could not live up to the standard of philosophers, much less God’s standard. That is why Paul wrote that, “by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:8-9). Two sides of salvation are presented in this passage. Our salvation is a matter of grace on the part of God and of faith on the part of man. God’s grace has been extended to all (Tit. 2:11-12) and now it is up to man to reach up, by obedient faith, and grasp the grace that is in Christ. Barabbas wasted his lifetime on unimportant things, as many do today in pursuit of worldly goods and ambition.

Of all the people in Jerusalem on that day,

Barabbas had the best opportunity to understand Christ’s atoning sacrifice. When Barabbas was released, he was not only saved from physical death, but he represented all who are released from the guilt and consequences of sin when they believe in the Lord (John 8:24), repent of their sins (Luke 13:3), and are baptized into Him (Acts 2:38). Barabbas could have accompanied John and the women to the cross, but the door of history slams shut without further mention of this poor wretch’s name.

Pilate nods, the guards unlock Barabbas’ chains, they clang to the pavement and he dashes into the milling crowd. The condemned is free, Christ is beaten, and the rough cross is thrust upon Him. Friends, you are Barabbas. What will you do? Flee with your guilt, or obey Him who died in your place? Only you can decide.

*Elk City, OK*

## Apostolic Preaching

*Foy E. Wallace, Jr.*

Often people will remark, “I think you should just preach Jesus and say nothing about so and so or this and that.” Well, is that the way Philip did it? Did Paul do it that way? How did the apostles preach? That is a questions for some of my own preaching brethren to ponder, for some of them have the speak-softly, tread-lightly, step-carefully, method-of-approach-kind of “soft-pedal” preaching, too.

I would not call it “soft-soap”—it slanders soap, for soap is a mighty good thing, but I have never found that kind of preaching

good for anything except to spoil the brethren and please the sectarians.

The apostolic way of preaching is the only right way to preach. How, then, did Philip preach Christ? Take this passage: “But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women” (Acts 8:12). Do you suppose Philip should have “just preached Jesus” and have said nothing about the “kingdom,” or the “name,” or about being “baptized”?

*Deceased*

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Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Linda Parks
O.J. Savage (Karen Hatcher's father)	

## Please Remember

### July 9

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### July 10

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### July 16

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### July 17

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### July 30

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.



## YouTube Channel

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[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5\\_MGG3zjY0IW3qw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5_MGG3zjY0IW3qw)



# BEACON

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July 10, 2017

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## The Christian and Violence

*Charles Pogue*

Right from the beginning chapters of the Bible, we learn God hates violence. When Cain rose up in anger and jealousy and slew his brother, Abel, God demonstrated how much He detests hostility. God told Cain he was cursed from the earth and a vagabond for his wicked deed (Gen. 4:11-12). After the earth was cleansed of evil by the flood, God decreed that if a man shed another man's blood, then man was to shed his blood (9:6). "Thou shalt not Kill," do no murder, is one of the ten commandments (Exo. 20:13). Murderers will have their place in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (Rev. 21:8).

It is not just murder that God has revealed to man that is detestable to Him. We are instructed to put away anger and wrath (Col. 3:8). When the soldiers asked John the baptizer what his instruction to them was, he told them to do violence to no man (Luke 3:14).

One of the reasons God destroyed the Earth with the flood was that it was filled with violence (Gen. 6:11). The Psalmist sums it all up with the words, "The LORD trieth the righteous: But the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth" (Psa. 11:5).

The world was filled with violence in the days of Noah, and it is filled with violence today. Every day the newspapers, television, radio, and Internet are filled with stories of murder, rape, child and domestic abuse, and horrible beatings that individuals suffer at the hands of another person or gang of persons. The sports of Ultimate Fighting and ice hockey are extreme in violence, yet both are very popular with many people just for the violent content. Violence is also a part of television, movies, books, computer games, and more. It would likely be impossible to know just how much these evil entertainment venues have

had on acts of violence committed by some, but no one in his or her right mind would deny that they do play a role. Nor would anyone thinking correctly attempt to justify their involvement in the same by saying, I would never do those things. It does not matter; enjoying it is still wrong.

All of the foregoing matters concerning violence, leads us to a question that is to say the least confusing as to why it has to be asked at all. Why is it that so many Christians, like the immoral world about them, love these entertainment venues that are filled with violence? How can they relish such rubbish when as the Psalmist wrote, “The LORD trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth?” (11:5). We fail to understand how there rises a claim from any Christian, that they, like God, hate violence when they watch television and movies or play the games and read stories that are filled

with violence. Those who watch and/or participate in those things are akin to the man who claims he believes it is sin to drink, but works in a brewery or drives a beer delivery truck. Though in some cases we know of, it has fallen upon deaf ears, yet we have written in other articles that it is a sin to love to be entertained by that which God has told us He hates. A true Christian does not love violence even when it is consumed via a fictional work. Instead, he hates the depiction of such activity as much as he hates the real-life occurrences of it, and he avoids it. If he does not, why does he not? Some people love violence; some people love the depiction of it. I challenge anyone to convince me (or more importantly, God) that at the end of this life, there will be any less guilt on the part of the latter group than there will be on the former.

*Beeville, TX*

## Situation Ethics or Being Considerate?

*Geoff Litke*

This morning I was listening to the Dr. Laura radio program and was baffled at her apparent inconsistencies of her own teachings. Dr. Laura told a caller to outright lie to her child to maintain her reputation in the child's eyes. This is not the first time that I have heard her show her true priorities of peace among family above peace with God, and her view of religion as a social good instead of spiritual.

As the Jewish author of a recent book on the relevancy of the ten commandments in today's world, one would think that the principles of the ninth commandment (Exo. 20:16)

would hold a higher rank in her priorities. The Old Testament that she claims to follow as God's Word is set aside for her social views of the ideal family. Today, in the world this attitude is prevalent in many areas of routine life. It is nothing more than situation ethics white-washed with “it's for the children.”

The philosophy is that rather than to confess to children of mistakes in the past you should cover them by telling a lie, and that such is **good** for kids. The best thing for children is to see their parents abiding in doing the will of God which has never included lying.

You might hear one person say when discovered lying at work “it’s only business.” Friends and acquaintances justify their lies by saying “it’s OK—it’s just professional.” The teaching of the humanists has captured the consciences in a way that they can preach themselves out of hell even in the worst sins such as an “alternative lifestyle.” When even one of America’s voices of morality tells others to lie there needs to be a heavy dose of Bible preaching done in the world on how God **views** any lying.

This self-confessed student of the Old Testament—Dr. Laura—needs to get acquainted with passages such as Proverbs 16:6ff which tells of practices that are hated by the Lord, and lying is mentioned twice here. Lying is an abomination to God, and mankind can no more lie to spare the feelings of children than babies can be killed to protect a grandmother’s image of her innocent granddaughter. God still feels that way about any lying under the law of Christ and tells us so in Revelation 21:8: “all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” Liars are listed right along with murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, and idolaters. There is no such thing as a little white lie, any more than little white prostitution, little white murder, or little white idolatry. God wanted us to know that there is nothing wise about lying when he told us “the folly of fools *is* deceit” (Pro. 14:8), instead we need to strive to bring up our children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4). The Lord does not condone lying in **any** circumstance. He condemned the deception of the Jews in their “only business” wickedness through the prophet Micah.

He asked “Shall I count *them* pure with the wicked balances, And with the bag of deceitful weights?” (Mic. 6:11). This scathing rebuke for just “overcharging a little.”

The Lord Himself made it clear that family ties were no reason for setting aside His will in Matthew 10:34, and the law of Moses demanded death if a family member enticed one to do evil (Deu. 13:6-8).

There will come a time in the life of every Christian when he must choose to offend mother, father, grandma, or children rather than offend their Lord and Savior who went to the cross for all of them.

*Shenandoah, TX*

## The Sculptor

I took a piece of plastic clay  
And idly fashioned it, one day.  
And as my fingers pressed it, still  
It moved and yielded to my will.

I came again, when days were passed,  
That bit of clay, was hard at last,  
The form I gave it, still it bore,  
And I could change that form no more.

Then I took a piece of **living** clay  
And gently formed it, day by day.  
And molded with my power and art,  
A young child’s soft and yielding heart.

I came again when years were gone,  
It was a man I looked upon.  
He still that early impress bore,  
And I could change it, nevermore.

*Author Unknown*

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Anthony Polnitz            Tim Busch  
Debbie Dawson            Nancy Travis  
Cary Parks                 Rheba Stancliff  
Ray Foshee  
O.J. Savage (Karen Hatcher's father)

## Please Remember

### July 16

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### July 17

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### July 30

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.



## Realized Eschatology Debates

H. Daniel Denham  
and  
Holger Neubauer

Videos of the 2016 and 2017 debates  
can be viewed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/52MichaelH>



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 29

July 17, 2017

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Minister: Michael Hatcher

Deacons: Henry Born, Elward Brantley,  
Bill Busch

Sunday Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## “Not to Baptize”

*Dub McClish*

Paul wrote: “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel” (1 Cor. 1:17). Attempts to misuse this passage to obviate the necessity of baptism demonstrate the desperate lengths to which men will go to justify error in spite of the clear New Testament teaching. Context clearly indicates the meaning of Paul’s statement: The Lord did not send him with a mandate **personally** to **administer** baptism to each one who would be converted by his preaching of the Gospel.

Beginning at verse 10, Paul rebuked the division among the Corinthian saints resulting from their following various preachers who had been among them and/or perhaps had baptized them. Some thought Apollos to be the best preacher, some Paul, others Cephas (Peter), and (thankfully) some still followed Christ. Through some rhetorical questions, Paul demonstrated how foolish their behavior

was (1:13). He was therefore thankful he had baptized only a very few **with his own hands** (1:14-16), lest others follow him instead of Christ.

If Paul’s statement in verse 17 is a denial that Christ sent His disciples to command baptism as they preached the Gospel, then he:

- **Contradicted Himself in this Context:** He named the few he had **personally** baptized (1:14-16). Why did he baptize any—and by whose authority—if Christ’s commission excluded baptize?
- **Contradicted Himself in Other Contexts:** In various remote contexts we learn that he baptized people, people were baptized at his preaching, and/or he clearly sets forth baptism as necessary for salvation (e.g., Acts 16:14-15, 31-33; 18:8; 19:3-5; Rom. 6:3-4, 17-18; Gal. 3:27; etc.).



of baptism), but the Lord did not send Paul to baptize believers, then the Lord sent Paul to preach a deficient Gospel. Did Paul and Peter preach different “gospels” regarding baptism?

- **Contradicted the Christ Himself:** When He gave the apostles the Great Commission, Jesus commanded them to baptize those whom they taught in the process of making them disciples (Mat. 28:19-20). The Gospel they were to preach in all the world and to all creation demanded belief in the Gospel and submission to baptism for those believers to be saved (Mark 16:15-16). Did or did not the Lord “send them to baptize” those to whom they preached the Gospel? If Paul preached the same Gospel Jesus commissioned (cf. Gal. 1:6-9), then

he was “sent to baptize,” for it was a condition of salvation—if words have any meaning whatsoever.

Anytime one interprets one statement that it contradicts another statement of Scripture, one can know that he has misinterpreted one or both of them. Inspired men do/did not contradict other inspired men. The veracity of the entire Bible depends upon this fact.

Again, Paul simply told the Corinthian saints that the Lord did not require him to baptize penitent believers **with his own hands** when he said, “Christ sent me not to baptize.” Contrariwise, the Gospel the Lord sent him to preach included and demanded the act of baptism. One does not faithfully “preach Jesus” while omitting the command to be baptized (Acts 8:35-38).

*Denton, TX*

## Self-Judgment

*Leroy Brownlow*

A man went to hear a visiting evangelist in a little town. The preacher preached that night on money, and presented the sermon under three points. First point: “Make all you can.” The man nudged his wife and said, “This preacher is the best I’ve ever heard. He is no nitwit. He knows what it’s all about. He is one smart man.” Second point: “Save all you can.” This excited the man, and he whispered again, “This beats anything I’ve ever heard. He’s smart enough to be President. This town has never had a preacher that could hold a candle to him.” The preacher commended hard work and thrift, denouncing laziness and waste. The man could not keep quiet. He whispered, “I’ve

believed this all my life.” Third point: “Give all you can.” “Oh my,” exclaimed the man, “now he’s gone crazy. He has quit preaching and gone to meddling.”

Isn’t it strange that some people’s conception of great preaching is a sermon that compliments them and rebukes others? Remember—your preacher did not write the Bible. He is not responsible (as to source) for any word in it, but he is definitely responsible for **preaching every word in it** (Acts 20:27). And when it is preached, people judge themselves by their reaction to it.

*Deceased*

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Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Heather Stark
O.J. Savage (Karen Hatcher's father)	
Mathew Dawson (Debbie Dawson and Linda Parks' nephew)	
Billy McDermont (Phyllis Brantley's friend)	

## Please Remember

### July 30

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a  
devotional service at 1:00 pm.

## Pantry Items Needed

Chili

Tuna



## Website

The website offers a vast amount of resources for your personal edification. Past issues of *Defender* and *Beacon*, written sermon outlines presented by Michael Hatcher, and the Basic Bible course by Ira Y. Rice, Jr. are available. Videos of lectureships, sermons, and Gospel meetings can be viewed.

Check it out at:

<http://www.bellviewcoc.com>



# BEACON

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## Blessed Assurance

*Jess Whitlock*

If anyone had cause to be discouraged, it was Fanny J. Crosby. As an infant, she was accidentally blinded by a doctor's mustard poultice applied to her eyes. Her father passed away while she was a small child. Fanny married at the age of 38 and her only child died in infancy. After 25 years of marriage she was widowed. Fanny lived her remaining 32 years of life alone. Yet, she wrote over 7,000 hymns in her lifetime, including "Blessed Assurance."

In 1 John (with its 5 chapters, 105 verses, and 2,523 words), John reminds us that our assurance is in Christ. The child of God has assurance in light of our continued walk with Christ. We must walk in the light, as Christ is in the light (1:6-8). We are assured that the "blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses [i.e., keeps on cleansing] us from all sin." We confess our sins to have forgiveness of those iniquities (1:9-10).

It is imperative that we avoid willful sin in our daily walk, but if we sin, we know that we have Christ as our Advocate (2:1-2). We are to "keep His commandments" (2:3-6). Failure to keep His commandments shows that we do not love Him. It is important that we "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world" (2:15-17—KJV). All sin in this world has always come and will always come through three avenues of temptation: (1) lust of the flesh, (2) lust of the eyes, and (3) the pride of life. John tells us that if "anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Life on earth is brief and fleeting, so we must make sure that we abide in Him (2:26-27).

Then, after all of this, John states: "And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him" (3:19). Note the word, *know!* This section of Holy

Writ culminates in the words of 1 John 3:24, “And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.” This is the crowning statement of knowing that our “blessed assurance” is in Christ!

Perfect submission, all is at rest;  
I in my Savior am happy and blest;  
Watching and waiting, looking above,  
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.”

Paul preached in the Areopagus warning, “He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given **assurance** of this to all by raising Him from the

dead” (Acts 17:31). Therefore, “let us draw near with a true heart in full **assurance** of faith” (Heb. 10:22).

This “blessed assurance” is reserved for those who are “in Christ” (Eph. 1:3). Are you “in Christ”?

*Denison, TX*

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The file you will receive will be a PDF.

## Don't Follow Me!

*Lee Moses*

Much could be said for the power of example. Many faithful Christian parents have by their example led their children, and their children's children, to live faithful Christian lives. Many have left lives of debauchery because they were each influenced by the example of a Christian co-worker whose distinctively pure conduct pointed the way to something better. As long as there have been faithful Christians, there have been human examples to follow. To the Thessalonian church Paul could say, “So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia” (1 The. 1:7). The Holy Spirit compelled Paul to instruct the Corinthians, “Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1; compare with Phi. 3:17). Of course, Christ Himself gave the perfect example—as He said, “Follow me” (John 21:19).

But the power of example goes both ways. As many have been encouraged to the path of righteousness by a faithful Christian's example, an innumerable host have fallen from that path because they followed the wrong example. Many continue to do so, failing to realize the danger. Some refuse to obey the Gospel because their parents were not Christians (compare with Mat. 10:37). Some refuse to be restored to the Lord because their close friends are no longer faithful (cf. 2 Tim. 4:16-18). Some follow false doctrine because a preacher they admire has embraced a particular false doctrine (cf. 1 Cor. 3:4-7; 7:23). Some think the wrong way must be right because larger numbers follow that way (cf. Exo. 23:2; Pro. 11:21; Mat. 7:13-14).

Perhaps those providing the poor examples enjoy having others follow them. But consider

that no person who provides a wrong example is in his right mind. The only right example is a Christ-like example, and a Christ-like example comes from a Christ-patterned mind. Why could the Thessalonian Christians be the example they were? They were enabled to be exemplary because they first “became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word” (1 The. 1:6). When Christ spoke of “the blind leading the blind,” He was not speaking of visual blindness but of minds that were spiritually clouded. Blind leaders may love playing the piper for the time being. A person fallen into the miserable pit of disfellowship with God may want others with them—as it is said, “Misery loves company.” However, what would those bad examples say if they were in their right minds?

Jesus spoke of a rich man who, as the world would see it, “lived life to the fullest”—he “was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day” (Luke 16:19). He probably enjoyed the companionship of many friends, and wanted his family to live as he did. He probably looked with contempt on Lazarus, the beggar at this gate who “put first things first.” The rich man was not in his right mind—he was **not** putting first things first. However, he was given a double dose of reality upon his death, when in Hades

he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame (16:23-24).

The rich man was reaping what he had sown; he had reached the destination of the path he had walked.

By their thinking, many would be forced to conclude that the rich man would have wanted those closest to him to follow him to this destination. After all, those people say, “My mom, dad, grandma, and grandpa were members of (insert manmade religion of our choice), and if that condemned them to an eternity in Hell, then I’m going with them.” Their parents and grandparents apparently wanted them to follow them while they were alive.

Does anyone really want those he cares about to follow him to eternal misery? As self-consumed as the rich man appeared to be, he no longer wanted those he loved to follow him when he was in his right mind. As he pled with Abraham:

Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment (16:27-28).

The rich man did not want to see those he loved ever again, if it meant their joining him in torment. Misery may love company as a general rule, but no person experiencing **that** misery wants to see those for whom he cares ever again.

I have three children, and am striving to do all that I can to rear them to become faithful Christians throughout their lives. But if, God forbid, I should ever fall from the path of righteousness, my plea is to them—and to anybody else—“Don’t follow me!”

*Union City, TN*

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Cary Parks                              Rheba Stancliff  
Ray Foshee                              Heather Stark  
Dale Cunningham  
Mathew Dawson (Debbie Dawson and  
Linda Parks' nephew)  
Billy McDermont (Phyllis Brantley's  
friend)  
Thelma Ricker (Nelda King's sister)

## Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Karen Hatcher in the death of her father, OJ Savage, on July 17. Please keep Karen, Michael, Andrew, Daniel, and the rest of Karen's family in your prayers.

## Please Remember

### July 30

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

### August 7

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### August 13

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

## Pantry Items Needed

Chili  
Tuna



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 31

July 31, 2017

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## Preaching

*Brad Green*

Many people fail to recognize preaching as an act of worship. This sad fact may be because individuals fail to realize what is taking place during a sermon. Due to the fact that preaching usually takes place behind a podium, in a pulpit, and presented by one man, it may be easy to forget that, due to the nature and purpose of Godly preaching, the entire congregation is (supposed to be) participating in this act. The action being practiced in this act of worship is perhaps the hardest of the five mentioned in the New Testament and the one in which the most effort must be exerted—listening. Though the preacher is speaking, he should also be listening. Listening and hearing require dedication and focus. One must determine to “clear his mind,” and focus intently upon what is being preached to fully understand. The citizens of Berea were called noble, because

they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so (Acts 17:11).

Sadly, many have either not heard what is being promulgated from their congregation’s pulpit or have not taken the time to “search the scriptures” to see if what is being said is true.

God told Jonah, “Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee” (Jonah 3:2). The only preaching that will do anyone any good is the preaching that God authorizes and commands. Every preacher and every Bible student is commanded to

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more

ungodliness (2 Tim. 2:15-16).

The best Gospel sermons are the ones that contain the most Gospel (i.e., Book, Chapter, and Verse). What is heard in most “churches” today is better categorized as “motivational speeches”; not Gospel preaching. In an article titled, “The Kind of Preaching We Need,” brother Dub McClish, former preacher for the Northpoint Church of Christ in Denton, Texas, writes:

If we hear only jokes, amusing anecdotes, personal experiences, and “nice little talks” instead of God’s Truth, our souls will die from spiritual malnutrition. So much of what is being heard in our pulpits currently is not at all distinctive, which true Gospel preaching always is. Instead, many pulpits are platforms for brief popular psychology lectures or religious “pep rallies.” Sadly, many members refuse to listen to anyone who is determined to preach the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). Such debunk Bible preaching that cites book, chapter, and verse, labeling it “concordance” preaching. Even if some reject Bible preaching...the preacher who is more serious about helping people get to Heaven than he is about keeping his job will pay the price to keep on preaching it (4:5). Listeners who are more interested in going to Heaven than in satisfying their own selfish, carnal desires will support, encourage, yea, demand such preaching and will refuse any other kind as...pulpit waste material. If one is not going to preach (or hear) the Bible, why preach (or listen) at all?

God commands us to “preach the word”

(2 Tim. 4:2) and hear it (Rom. 10:17). If what we preach or hear is not found in God’s Word (either by explicit statement, example, or implication), it is not the preaching of God’s bidding, but of man’s. God warns:

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (2 Tim. 4:3-4).

Preaching is necessary to fulfilling God’s will and for His plan for worship. The apostle Paul writes:

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! (Rom. 10:13-15).

The Bible teaches that preaching is necessary for salvation because it is how God chose to bring about Scriptural faith—“So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (10:17). Since it is the case that man cannot be saved without faith, it is the case that man cannot be saved without hearing the Gospel preached. God chose to reveal His message to man by means of preaching (Tit. 1:1-3). Faithful Gospel preaching is also necessary to further strengthen Christians (Rom. 16:25-26), to ensure that Christians are “not moved away from the hope of the gospel”

(Col. 1:23), to remind (1 Tim. 4:6), to comfort (1 The. 4:18), and to motivate men to action (Acts 2:37).

Let us worship God “in spirit and in truth” as we preach and hear God’s Word. Let us demand Scriptural sermons and focus our minds on hearing, understanding, and obeying what God says.

*Lenoir City, TN*

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## That Magnificent Arrow

*Roelf L. Ruffner*

I stepped outside before sunrise on July 16, 2012, to a clear but humid Tennessee morning and witnessed a spectacular sight. In the eastern sky there was the crescent moon in its sultry splendor. Above and to the right of the moon were two bright luminaries in perfect vertical alignment. I recognized the brightest bottom star as the planet Venus and its less luminous partner, the planet Jupiter. I knew that they were planets and not real stars because they did not twinkle in the dark sky.

Before the coming of the completed revelation of God, the Holy Bible, our ancestors could look to the night skies and know that they were not alone in the universe. They asked themselves that age old questions, “Who am I and why am I here?” King David wrote:

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, The moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? (Psa. 8:3-4).

Mankind’s imagination went wild, constructing stories of gods, goddesses, heroes,

and monsters in the night sky. Some went so far as to vainly worship the stars. Others formed fanciful, complicated astrological charts trying to predict the future.

Many in our modern enlightened age see that same created perfection in the night sky and darkly project upon it the blind chance of evolution. They concoct equally fanciful tales, such as the Big Bang Theory, to explain how this perfection just **happened** to predictably come together in the morning sky so we might gaze in wonder upon it. Others look at this same wonder and mentally exclaim, “So what!” and continue on in their purposeless existence.

However, I looked at that astronomical wonder and thought, “Thank you, Lord.” Thank you, Lord that You created this celestial arrow in the sky for a purpose—to point to You. I can **know** that I was created in Your image, not as an intelligent but groveling primate. I was a being handmade to reflect Your glory—an arrow in God’s bow of Creation. All praise and thanks to the King of the Universe.

*Columbia, TN*

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Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Heather Stark
Dale Cunningham	
Matthew Dawson (Debbie Dawson and Linda Parks' nephew)	
Billy McDermont (Phyllis Brantley's friend)	
Thelma Ricker (Nelda King's sister)	

## Please Remember

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### August 13

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

## Pantry Items Needed

Chili

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## YouTube Channel

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# BEACON

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## “Let no man Deceive you”

*Philip Smith*

The phrase, *Let no man deceive you*, is found three times in the New Testament (Eph. 5:6; 2 The. 2:3; 1 John 3:7). The admonition in Ephesians 5:6 comes with a warning: “Because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.” The danger is very real, and we must take heed; but the question is, “Who is most likely to deceive us?”

Satan himself deceived Eve (Gen. 3:1-6; 1 Tim. 2:4). He has been leading men away from God since the beginning (Rev. 20:3, 10). He is so effective because he tempts us with our own desires (1 John 2:16). If we allow him to deceive us, we are sure to lose our souls (Rev. 20:10).

False teachers continue to cause men and women to lose their souls. Jesus called them “ravening wolves” because they tear and devour the people of God (Mat. 7:15). They do

not appear showing their fangs; rather they appear in sheep’s clothing so they can enter the flock unrecognized. They deceive through good words and fair speeches (Rom. 16:18). The number of false teachers deceiving and devouring the Lord’s people today is legion. One needs merely to read bulletins and/or visit websites to see how very difficult it is nowadays to find a “Church of Christ” that is following the simple New Testament pattern (Heb. 8:5).

Once-faithful Gospel preachers that have fallen into Satan’s snare deceive many. These preachers—due to pressure from the congregation, friendships, or respect of persons—no longer preach the whole Truth of God (Acts 20:27). In some cases, they have left the truth completely (20:30). It was a prophet of God who deceived the young prophet, costing him his life (1 Kin. 13).

It is easy to adopt the attitudes and philosophies of those around us. We want to fit in with our friends and loved ones. This tempts us to follow the majority. This requires little effort and is certainly the easiest course, but not the best or safest course (Exo. 23:2; Mat. 7:13-14). Being a Christian takes both courage and strength to follow a difficult but better way.

Often our friends help mold our thinking for good or for evil. Those who dance, drink, gamble, or engage in other sinful activities like to bring in others with them. That is why we must be careful in our choice of friends. The Bible states, “Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals” (1 Cor. 15:33—ASV). Leaving old friends is difficult—but sometimes necessary—if we are to safeguard our souls.

Our own family members may deceive us. Jacob and his mother deceived Isaac (Gen. 27), and Jacob was eventually the victim of

family deceit. Of special note is the way his sons deceived him into believing that Joseph had been killed by a wild beast (Gen. 37). Loved ones today deceive many people so they choose the world over God, a false religion over the Truth, or the philosophy that it really does not matter what one believes or does. Yes, even those closest to us can deceive us and lead us into error.

The worst danger may be self-deception. The Bible warns us not to deceive ourselves (1 Cor. 3:8; Jam. 1:22; 1 John 1:8), convincing ourselves that we are safe when we are not. We must constantly compare our lives with the Word of God to insure our salvation (2 Cor. 13:6).

So, we ask, are we being deceived? Let us always be vigilant, growing in knowledge of God’s Word and continuing to be faithful to God and Jesus Christ.

*Denton, TX*

## There Is Forgiveness

*Ron Cosby*

Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD. Lord, hear my voice:... If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But *there is* forgiveness with thee (Psa. 130:1-4).

We want God to hear us in times of despair. There is hope. Though man’s sins are many and shameful and degrading, still “*there is* forgiveness with thee.” There awaits us loving kindness that will not fail.

If the Lord of Glory should mark iniquities, none could stand, for all men have sinned

(Rom. 3:23, 9). No, man did not inherit sin from Adam or anyone else. Each one of us bears his own sin: “The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son” (Eze. 18:20). My sin is too heavy. Will God forgive?

No one has to beg God for pardon; He is “ready to forgive” (Psa. 86:5). Do you want proof of God’s loving kindness? The cross (John 3:16). “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins” (1 John

4:10). After watching the movie, *The Passion of Christ*, a viewer exclaimed, “I love my son too much to allow him to suffer what God allowed His Son to endure!” This is understandable. However, in addition to loving Jesus, God also loves the sons who were guilty of crimes against Him, and their salvation demanded the death of the innocent Son (Rom. 5:6-8).

Though forgiveness is available for all, it is only granted through the Son.

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins (Acts 5:30-31).

Like any inheritance, conditions accompany God’s inheritance. A believing, penitent

persecutor of Christians was told to “arise and be baptized” (Acts 9, 22, 26). If you are a penitent believer like Saul, then be immersed for the remission of sins.

Reportedly, “in a graveyard somewhere around New York City is an unmarked grave, no name, no date of birth, no date of death, no inscription but this: “**Forgiven!**” One day all of us will stand before the glorious throne of the eternal God. Will we hear Him say, “Forgiven”? To hear this then, one must call upon Him now.

*Oklahoma City, OK*

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## The Effects of Evolution

*Paul Vaughn*

“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ” (Col. 2:8). Paul wrote this warning to the Colossians, but it endures as a warning to all. There are philosophies being taught today which will cheat Christians by human knowledge or human values. One such philosophy is evolution.

The Bible teaches that man is made in God’s image. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Gen. 1:26). Evolution teaches that man evolved from monkeys.

In the past one hundred fifty years, since evolution was first begun to be taught, there has

been a transformation in American thought. Morality has eroded and ethical thinking has changed. Our nation is slowly growing away from God and the moral standard He has established in the Scriptures. All of these changes cannot be blamed on the teaching of evolution, but once people are convinced they are evolved from monkeys and not created in God’s image, it is not long until they start acting like animals.

Man is made in God’s image and all the false philosophies will not change it! The evidence is on the side of the Bible. Let us start teaching God’s way for man before our great nation is destroyed through false philosophies.

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Thelma Ricker (Nelda King's sister)

## Please Remember

### **August 13**

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### **August 20**

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### **August 21**

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### **August 30**

Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 p.m., in the auditorium.

## Pantry Items Needed

Carrots  
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Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Everyone Wants to Be Rich (Don't You?): The Eternal Question Is How, and to What End?

*Johnny Oxendine*

We are often consumed with this life. We are supposed to be concerned about our well-being; but there is more to life than this life. There is a life beyond this life, beyond this world, and that life is eternal. The Bible teaches that all who have ever existed will spend a conscious eternity somewhere, either in a place of great bliss or in a place of great torment. A very well-known rich man learned this lesson too late.

The rich man in Luke 16 had the finest clothes and lived in the finest surroundings. He had taken good care of himself in this life. However, after he died, he found that **he had failed to provide for his comfort in the life to come**, and he was in torment. Now it is good to be concerned about one's well-being, but that concern must be directed properly so we are storing up for what is really important:

our well-being in the life to come. Jesus ended his illustration in Luke 12 by saying "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (12:21). That tells us that it is possible to be the wrong kind of rich, and **the reason many people are not rich toward God is that**, like the main character of Jesus' story, **they never give a thought to the life beyond this life**. This is what Jesus meant when He said in Luke 6:25: "Woe unto you, ye that are full now! for ye shall hunger." They were rich and had taken good care of themselves, but they were investing in the wrong life. In another context, Jesus spoke of laying up treasures in heaven (Mat. 6:20) and concluded that discussion by saying "Ye cannot serve God and mammon [wealth]" (6:24).

How do we become rich toward God? The answer is surprisingly simple: by using what

God has given us for the good of others. This was exactly what Jesus did. Of Him Paul says:

For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich (2 Cor. 8:9).

He gave up His glory for our benefit, and this pleased God. Likewise, we are to take the blessings we have received from God and use them for the good of others. So Paul told Timothy:

Charge them that are rich in this present world, that they be not highminded, nor have their hope set on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, that they be ready to distribute, willing to communicate [share] (1 Tim. 6:17-18).

Notice Paul's play on *rich*. If we are striving to be rich in anything, we are to be rich in good works, rich in using our worldly riches for others. That is what makes us rich toward God. Think back to the story of the rich man and Lazarus. Where had he gone so wrong? By being rich? No. There is not one hint that his sin was simply that he had accumulated

much wealth. Instead his fault lie in the fact that every day he had an opportunity to use his wealth to help the poor beggar Lazarus that lay at his gate and whom he saw every day as he went in and out of his fine, luxurious house—but he did nothing.

It is entirely possible to be both rich and poor at the same time. A person may be rich in the world's goods and poor towards God, as were the characters we have noted from Jesus' stories. Consider also what Jesus said to the church in Laodicea:

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art the wretched one and miserable and poor and blind and naked (Rev. 3:17).

It is also possible to be poor in the world's goods and be rich toward God. To the church at Smyrna Jesus said, "I know thy tribulation, and thy poverty (but thou art rich)" (2:9). Which type of wealth do we really seek—that of the world, or that which comes from serving God? Our time will tell: our interest in the Lord's work will reflect in our attitude and effort!

*San Mateo, CA*

## The All-Sufficiency of the Scriptures

*N. B. Hardeman*

*Scripture* simply means a writing, regardless of the kind of character. *The Nashville Tennessean*, *The Nashville Banner*, and other publications fulfill the demands of that word in its primary sense. That is why the apostle said: "Every scripture **inspired** of God *is* also profitable" (2 Tim. 3:16). There is not an idle word

nor an empty phrase connected with any of the writings inspired of God. Paul continues by saying that every Scripture is profitable for four things. Note how comprehensive and inclusive they are: (1) for doctrine or teaching; (2) for reproof; (3) for correction; (4) for instruction in righteousness.

You cannot imagine any condition or need of mankind but one or the other of these statements will adequately apply. Their completeness is in the fact that the man of God may be perfect—not perfect in morals, not perfect in character, but perfect in this respect, namely, that he is thoroughly, completely, furnished unto every good work (3:17).

I wish that text would register with all who may chance to hear or read what Paul said. The all-sufficiency, the absolute adequacy, and adaptability of the Bible to meet all the demands of the human family are here emphasized. Christians believe that passage. When I claim, therefore, to believe the Bible, I endorse all the statements as therein found. I mean to subscribe to all of its requirements, and to try to be governed by its teaching.

Now for me to accept any such booklet as a ritual, handbook, manual, catechism, prayer book, confession of faith, discipline, or what-not, would deny my faith in the Scriptures which I have read. If the Bible thoroughly furnishes a man unto every good work, why have a supplementary book?

When the great infidel, Robert Owen, of New Lanark, Scotland, came to this country and challenged the clergy in our Southern Crescent City of New Orleans, they paid no attention to him. He waxed bolder and extended that challenge throughout America. And then it was that news of such came over the hills and across the vales to a young man teaching school at Bethany, West Virginia. He at once asked, “Who is this uncircumcised infidel that he should challenge the Word of the living God?” I presume that you know the sequel. Alexander Campbell accepted the

challenge and a great debate was on. It was held in Cincinnati in April 1829. Since that time infidelity has been on the defense, and it never has been able to uproot and destroy the Word of the Lord.

Let me now ask, Why was it that the clergy, with all of their grand titles and much learning, refused to meet in public discussion the great infidel? The truth is, they were conscious of the fact that Mr. Owen would say to them first of all: “You don’t act the Bible yourself, because you have a human creed that evidences your lack of faith in the all-sufficiency of God’s Word.” Campbell had no creed to defend, and hence, he was not creed-bound. The whole sectarian world owes a debt of gratitude to him whom some despise. Small sectarian preachers will try to belittle Alexander Campbell, when the truth is that if the least thought Campbell ever had were to enter the little fellow’s head, it would explode like a bomb. We are debtors to such men as Campbell. No self-respecting man will ever make fun of what he did.

Let us try to impress upon every person the all-sufficiency of God’s Word. If we need teaching, the Bible is the source whence it comes. If we go astray, as, doubtless, some of us will, we need reproof. But it is not enough simply to reprove. We still need correction and instruction in righteousness. In all that we need, the Bible is sufficient.

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## Please Remember

### **August 20**

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### **August 21**

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

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# BEACON

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## Alienated Brethren

*David P. Brown*

Today, as it was one hundred years ago, we see the Lord's church divided. As in the nineteenth century faithful brethren are battling those who would loose men from what God in the Bible has bound on them. It is an "up-hill battle" to say the least!

Sometimes, however, we forget that those brethren of the last century, and for that matter this century, who opposed the liberalism of an earlier day, had problems among themselves. I am not just speaking of problems that dealt with making obligatory on brethren what the Bible sets forth as optional ("Anti-Bible College," "Anti-Sunday School," "Anti-Located Preacher," etc.) or other differences on the meaning of Scripture and its application. **I am talking about problems arising out of personality clashes, pride, jealousy, misunderstandings, gossip, and such like.**

Earl West points out that in 1902:

a personal war broke out between McGary and Joe Warlick when McGary accused Warlick of spreading rumors that C. R. Nichol, Foy E. Wallace and J. H. Lawson were all "bitter foes" of McGary... Wallace urged them to pray. "Think of it—two leaders harboring malice, envy and hatred! I have never allowed my name to be used as witness against any man," he added. "I envy no one, praise the Lord." But McGary was resentful of Wallace's intrusions and responded "to teach the young man a lesson that he seems not to know" and offered to help him see himself as others see him, and with pointed acerbitly declared that these "goody, goody fellows are as free from being what they claim to be as the rest of us fallible mortals" (65).

Although Wallace was not able to heal the

breach, in a few weeks the affair blew over.

West also pointed out in Vol. IV (160) of the aforementioned series that a serious “misunderstanding” had developed between N. B. Hardeman and A. G. Freed. Some time later this problem was settled. West points out that:

Human judgments are never infallible, and the best of men make mistakes, including the whole gamut of preachers in this period of time (211).

In the decade of the eighties alone I noticed problems develop whereof prominent and influential Gospel preachers who are opposed to this present liberal apostasy have become alienated. **Brethren are aware that certain men no longer associate with one another, but most of us do not know why.** All that we can do is to plead for brethren who know the facts of the problems to Scripturally settle their differences.

If something is separating brethren because someone is teaching false doctrine and refuses to repent, then such brethren should be marked accordingly so the rest of us will know how we should conduct ourselves toward the impenitent. The same is true regarding impenitent preachers and elders who are fornicators, liars, and/or thieves.

Now, am I naive enough to think that the future is going to be any better than the past? My answer is, No! Reality demands that I recognize that people (yes, even preachers, and sometimes especially preachers) are not apt to change. While I would that those who are so capable in their knowledge of and ability to teach and defend the Gospel would change, I do not expect it to happen with everyone. Brethren, let us face it: it is much easier to

teach a thing than to do it!

Personally, I do not intend to let various “anti” doctrines arising from over zealous preachers or elders to stop me from teaching the truth of the Bible regarding the liberalism of our day. The same is true regarding personality clashes or other kinds of personal problems that separate brethren of which I am not in a position to help solve.

If I know my heart, I will do anything to uphold the truth and expose false doctrine, be it “anti” or “liberal.” I have tried not to have friendships or family relations develop that are more important than the truth of God’s Word. It is wrong for me to think that friendship means that you must always *line up* on my side. Or, if you are my friend you cannot have anything to do with this lectureship or that paper because I do not like the way they conduct their affairs. Again, some of us do not know what caused some brethren to part company, but fellowship has ceased to exist without any attempt, in so far as I know, at Scriptural discipline.

Which of the following is better: (1) going to hell because you have worshipped God contrary to the way He has authorized; or, (2) going to hell because you hate your brethren? Hell will not be any cooler for having gone there guilty of the above number two though innocent of the above number one! I will also do my best to help brethren to settle any problems developing out of personality clashes or any kind of sins separating brethren. **But when all is said and done, the repenting and forgiving must be done by the persons involved in the problem.**

Brethren, whether sin arises out of “liberal”

or “anti” doctrines, or unchristian acts we must correct them. **But**, whether sinful brethren repent or not, I do not intend to become so frustrated and discouraged that I cease to do what I know the Bible teaches. I **know** that this is the way that is right and **cannot** be wrong! We must ever remember the words of our Lord and His apostle Paul. “It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come!” (Luke

17:1; Also note verses 2-4). “For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you” (1 Cor. 11:19).

**Work Cited**

West, Earl Irvin. *The Search for the Ancient Order*. Vol. III. Germantown, TN: n.p., 1979. 65.  
 --- *The Search for the Ancient Order*. Vol. IV. Germantown, TN: n.p., 1979. 160.

*Spring, TX*

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## Please Remember

### **August 30**

Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00  
p.m., in the auditorium.

### **September 10**

Deacons' meeting will be held prior  
to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### **September 11**

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00  
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## “Believeth Not”

*Brad Green*

Jesus, in His Great Commission, states:

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (Mark 16:15-16).

Belief has always been a prerequisite for salvation, for

without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Heb. 11:6).

However, faith alone has never saved anyone.

Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone...by works [of obedience—BG] a man is justified, and **not by faith only** (Jam. 2:17, 24).

The New Testament clearly teaches that a dead faith will not save, but a faith that leads

to acts of obedience, (i.e., repenting of past sins—Luke 13:30, confessing that Jesus is the Son of God—Rom. 10:9-10, being baptized in order to have one’s sins washed away—Acts 2:38, 22:16, and faithful living until death—Rev. 2:10; 1 John 1:6-9), is the faith that will save. Thus, as Jesus teaches, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

However, Jesus also teaches, “he that believeth not shall be damned.” Some, in the religious world, have claimed that all one must do to be saved is believe and that Mark 16:16 does not teach, “he that is not baptized shall be damned.” Let us examine the verse further, taking care to harmonize any conclusion with the entirety of New Testament teaching.

1. **“He that believeth not shall be damned,”** because Jesus says, “if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). Faith is a requirement

and condition of salvation.

2. **“He that believeth not shall be damned,”** because he will not repent of his past sins. One who does not believe in God or God’s Word will not use the Bible as a standard of how one is to live and act. Therefore, he will not see the need to turn away from anything that he practices. He will most likely determine for himself what he believes to be right and wrong irrespective of the truth of God’s Word. Without repentance, one will die in his sins (Luke 13:3; John 8:24).
3. **“He that believeth not shall be damned,”** because he will not confess that Jesus is the Son of God. If one does not believe the teachings of the Bible, then he will not believe that Jesus is God’s Son and therefore will not confess His name before men. Without making the confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, one cannot be saved (Mat. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:10).
4. **“He that believeth not shall be damned,”** because he will not be baptized. One who does not believe will not accept the truth that baptism saves and therefore will not be immersed in water to have his sins washed away. If one does not accept the truth that baptism saves, he will not spend the time to do so. The New Testament teaches that baptism saves:
  - a. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16).
  - b. “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38).

- c. “Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins” (Acts 22:16).

- d. “Baptism doth also now save us” (1 Pet. 3:21).

Baptism alone will not save, just as faith alone will not save. However, the New Testament teaches that a living faith, which comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17), will lead one to obey God’s commands to repent, confess, be baptized, and remain faithful in service to God until the end of his life. One who does not believe in God or His Word will not be baptized and will, as a consequence, not be saved.

Mark 16:16 is very clear, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” If one wants to be saved, he will believe and allow that faith to lead him towards the culminating act of God’s plan to save—baptism. One cannot be in Christ, unless he is “baptized into Christ” (Gal. 3:27). God will not add one to the church of His Son, Jesus Christ, without being baptized into that one body (Acts 2:38, 47; Eph. 1:22-23).

*Lenoir City, TN*

Bellview Church of Christ  
Gospel Meeting  
with  
John West  
*October 1-6, 2017*

Make plans now to attend.

# A Distinctive Plea

*F. G. Allen*

Unless we have a distinctive plea we have no right to exist. The day we become like the denominations around us, that day ends our right to exist as a distinct religious people. If we have a distinctive plea, in that consists our strength. I believe that our distinctive principles are made less prominent in our pulpit now than formerly.

I do not mean that our preachers should be always on what is called “first principles.” Very far from it. I do mean that all our members should be deeply indoctrinated in the things that distinguish us from other religious peoples. The people should understand **why** they occupy the position they do. The better this is understood the more it will be appreciated, and the more firm and consistent will be the Christian life.

When people are led to believe that

sectarianism is about as good as New Testament Christianity their influence for the cause we plead is positively hurtful. Whenever we begin to curry favor with the sects and fawn upon them for recognition, we are certain to say but little about a plea that lays the axe at the root of the whole denominational tree.

Whenever we begin to curry favor with the world, we are certain to fall in with the world's notions, and adjust ourselves to the world's ways. Hence much of that in which churches now indulge in the way of worldly amusements, carnal methods of raising money, the spirit of mere entertainment in the worship, etc., is due to the fact that they copy the sects, rather than the New Testament churches and are filled with the spirit of the world, instead of the spirit of Christ.

*Deceased*

## Out of Print Books

The Bellview congregation has been producing books since 1988. Through the years many of these have sold out and are only available on the *Books On CD* produced by the congregation. The last two years, instead of a hardback or softback book, we decided to do everything “in house” and produced those books in an 8 ½ by 11-inch spiral binding. During our last lectureship on the theme *Set Ye Up A Standard In The Land* from Jeremiah 51:27, someone made the suggestion that we print those books that are out of print using this same format instead of the hardback or softback (perfect binding) format.

We thought this was a good idea so have begun reformatting the books that are out of print. It is taking us a little while to change them over to the new format, but some are now ready. We decided not to make any changes or corrections other than the format. At this point, we have completed four books: *Leadership* (1997), *Christian Fellowship* (1998), *Worldliness* (1999), and *Innovations* (2013). If you would like to order one of these books in the 8 ½ by 11-inch spiral binding, please contact the Bellview church office. The price of each book will be \$5.00 with \$3.75 shipping and handling charges.

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Henry Hignite
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	
Joyce Johnson (The Haven)	
Billy McDerment (Phyllis Brantley's friend, Specialty Care)	

## Please Remember

### September 10

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### September 11

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### September 17

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### September 18

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

## Pantry Items Needed

Carrots  
Mixed Vegetables  
Potatoes



## YouTube Channel

Bellview Church of Christ has a YouTube channel. Check it out and subscribe to the channel.

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5\\_MGG3zjY0IW3qw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5_MGG3zjY0IW3qw)



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 36

September 4, 2017

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4850 Saufley Field Road; Pensacola, FL 32526

850.455.7595

Internet Website: <http://www.bellviewcoc.com>

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Minister: Michael Hatcher

Deacons: Henry Born, Elward Brantley,  
Bill Busch

Sunday Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## The Hope of the Gospel

*Roelf L. Ruffner*

Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth (Luke 15:10).

Monday, January 11, 2016, I was listening to the news and two glaring events dominated the newscast: the death of David Bowie and the profane, vulgar Golden Globe Awards Show the night before.

David Bowie was a rock star. I remember when he burst onto the music scene in the late 1960s. He was known back then for being “bisexual.” He sometimes claimed to be homosexual but the last twenty years he lived as a heterosexual, married man, with three children. His death was treated by the media as if a great and noble personage had passed into eternity.

The Golden Globe Awards show is an annual event honoring acting which I never watch. However, by all accounts this year it was a vulgar exhibition of profanity and sexual

innuendo, with much of the dialogue bleeped out. This took place in a time slot which used to be known as the “Family Viewing Hour” or 8-9 p.m. EST. Most of the reporting centered on the various states of nudity actresses exhibited in their attire for the show.

Our once vibrant society has descended to the depths of lasciviousness in the last two generations. I am ashamed of the pseudo-culture of the United States and it tears at my heart to see her in such a state. The moral, spiritual, and ethical vacuum grows deeper each day.

Yet, what can the Christian do about it? Hand wringing, article writing, and complaining goes only so far. Fill that vacuum with Christ—live, think, and act as Jesus would! In the face of an ungodly world become Godly?

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick;

and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven (Mat. 5:14-16).

We must begin by purging sin from our own lives. The apostle Paul and the Holy

Spirit viewed the rotting Gentile world of the First Century A.D. and exclaimed, "Wherefore God also gave them up" (Rom. 1:24). In his epistle to the roman church he pivoted to the religious Jews and wrote:

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for

## Bellview Lectures Books Order Form

**Make checks or money orders out to Bellview Church of Christ.**

Please send the following:	Date: _____	Total Price
_____ copies of <i>Set Ye Up A Standard In The Land</i> (2017) @ \$5.00 (spiral-bound)		_____
_____ copies of <i>Typology</i> (2016) @ \$5.00 (spiral-bound)		_____
_____ copies of <i>Refuting Realized Eschatology</i> (2015) @ \$25.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>Understanding The Will Of The Lord</i> (2014) @ \$11.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>Innovations</i> (2013) @ \$5.00 (spiral-bound)		_____
_____ copies of <i>What The Bible Says About:</i> (2012) @ \$11.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>Back To The Bible</i> (2010) @ \$4.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>Preaching From The Major Prophets</i> (2008) @ \$5.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>A Time To Build</i> (2007) @ \$5.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>The Blight Of Liberalism</i> (2005) @ \$5.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>Great New Testament Questions</i> (2004) @ \$5.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>Great Old Testament Questions</i> (2003) @ \$5.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>Beatitudes</i> (2002) @ \$5.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>Encouraging Statements Of The Bible</i> (2001) @ \$5.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>Sad Statements Of The Bible</i> (2000) @ \$5.00		_____
_____ copies of <i>Worldliness</i> (1999) @ \$5.00 (spiral-bound)		_____
_____ copies of <i>Christian Fellowship</i> (1998) @ \$5.00 (spiral-bound)		_____
_____ copies of <i>Leadership</i> (1997) @ \$5.00 (spiral-bound)		_____
_____ copies of <i>Preaching God Demands</i> (1996) @ \$5.00		_____
	Postage/Handling (\$3.75 per Book):	_____
_____ Books-on-CD (1988-2017) (PDF format) @ \$37.75		_____
	(includes postage/handling)—call for upgrade price	_____
	<b>Total:</b>	_____

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wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things (2:1).

He was condemning them for their hypocrisy in shaking their heads at the Gentiles while tolerating sin in their own lives. To bring the Light to a godless culture one must first rid themselves of sin.

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.... Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness unto God (Rom. 6:6, 12-13).

The **only** hope for our dying world is the Gospel. Why not show the above mentioned verses (or other verses) to your lost neighbor, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, friend, enemy, etc.? They might pull a knife on you (unlikely!) or just turn away with rolled eyes or they might begin to think. Many people do not know a

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John West  
October 1-6, 2017

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single Bible verse and yet they still are repulsed by sin in their lives when it is humbly pointed out to them (Acts 2:36-37; 24:24-25; Rom. 7:24). Why not give the Bible a chance to do its work and produce the hope of the Gospel in this world?

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: It shall not return unto me void, But it shall accomplish that which I please, And it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it (Isa. 55:11).

And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh (Jude 22-23).

*Columbia, TN*

## The Critic

A little seed lay on the ground,

And soon began to sprout.

“Now, which of all the flow’rs around,”

It mused, “shall I come out?

The lily’s face is fair and proud,

But a trifle cold.

The rose, I think, is rather loud,

And then, its fashion’s old.

The violet is very well,

But not a flower I’d choose.

Nor yet the Canterbury bell—

I never cared for blues.”

And so it criticized each flower,

This supercilious seed,

Until it woke one summer morn—

And found itself a weed!

*Author Unknown*

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Henry Hignite
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Joyce Johnson
Ethel Pierce (Sacred Heart Hospital)	
Billy McDerment (Phyllis Brantley's friend, Specialty Care)	

## Please Remember

### Every Sunday

Ladies' Bible Class will meet after the afternoon service, in the zone room.

### September 10

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### September 11

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### September 17

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### September 18

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

## Pantry Items Needed

Ramen Noodles - Beef  
Ramen Noodles - Chicken



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 37

September 11, 2017

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Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Reverence for God (Or a Lack of It)

*John West*

In Hebrews 12:28, we read, “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” As Christians, we are always to reverence and respect God, but there are many in the world today who fail to do so. In thinking of such a group, we may be inclined to name murderers, prostitutes, alcoholics, homosexuals, etc., but we often fail to name those who are the most irreverent and disrespectful of all, “Christians.” Christians, of all people, know the importance of showing God respect and giving Him reverence. Why then, do many Christians show a lack of reverence to God? They do not love God as they should (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3).

There are many ways today in which some Christians show a lack of reverence toward

God. Let us notice just a few:

1. **Many Are Not Reverent Because They Take God’s Name In Vain.** God, in giving Moses the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:7, said, “Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain.” Taking God’s name in vain carries more than the idea of curse words, it also carries the idea of euphemisms. Many today say “Oh Lord,” “Lord,” “Oh my God,” “Jesus,” “gosh,” etc., in a flip-pant way. In doing so, God’s name is being taken in vain. Many do it merely out of habit, but that is a habit that should be stopped. When we use the Lord’s name, it should **always** be used out of respect, but today it is used in vain in many places. Let us always be careful not to vainly use God’s name. James 4:17 records, “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.”

2. **Many Are Not Reverent Because They Do Not Respect God's Word.** Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say" (Luke 6:46). Matthew records, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that

doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (7:21). Many today show a lack of respect for God by not following His Word. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (Jam. 1:22). Many do not respect God's command to worship regularly. "Not forsaking the assembling of

## Gospel Meeting

with

John West

October 1 – 6, 2017

"Practical Christianity"

From the Book of James

Sunday, 9:00 a.m. .... The Trials of Faith (1:2-17)  
 Sunday, 10:00 a.m. .... Be Ye Doers of the Word (1:19-27)  
 Sunday, 1:00 p.m. .... The Sin of Prejudice (2:1-13)  
 Monday, 7:00 p.m. .... Faith and Works (2:14-26)  
 Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. .... The Danger of the Tongue (3:1-14)  
 Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. .... Worldliness or Godliness? (4:1-10)  
 Thursday, 7:00 p.m. .... The Sin of Doing Nothing (4:13-17)  
 Friday, 7:00 p.m. .... Christians Dealing with Sin and Sickness (5:13-20)

The Gospel Meeting will be broadcast live on the Internet at:  
<http://www.bellviewcoc.com/meeting.html>

A covered-dish meal will be provided

Monday – Thursday at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

Visitation Group 1 will provide the meals—Monday & Wednesday

Visitation Group 2 will provide the meals—Tuesday & Thursday

Visitors are invited to every meal.

Come and enjoy a meal and Gospel preaching.

ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:25). Many do not attend worship as they should and thus sin. They will lose their soul on the Day of Judgment because they are willfully forsaking the worship assemblies. Many disregard the doctrine of God. Today, the false teachers in the church are trying to lessen the importance of doctrine to allow things that are not found in God’s Word. They show disrespect and irreverence to God when they do these things. They think God’s grace will cover all these unscriptural practices. God’s grace is **never** going to cover doctrinal or moral sins unless they are repented of by the ones involved.

**3. Many Are Not Reverent Because They Fail To Worship God.** Many Christians today come to worship, but they fail to worship. They will talk, pass notes, sleep, or think about everything else but God. Some do not sing, pray, or learn from God’s Word. Singing is commanded by God (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16).

When someone fails to sing praises to God, he violates the command to sing. When some talk during the sermon or Bible class, they do not listen to what God is saying through His Word. When this is done, others are distracted from worship and cannot concentrate on what is being said or done. When someone is late for worship, it disrupts the service. This also shows a lack of respect for God. A person will not be late for his job, but is late for worship every time. If we truly wanted to please God, then we will be on time for worship.

When a Christian fails to give God the reverence He deserves, then he sins in the sight of God and **will** ultimately be punished. Sadly, **every** day there are those who do not give God the reverence He deserves because they do not live, talk, or act like a Christian. The Hebrews writer gives a warning in Hebrews 10:31: “*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*” Those who are irreverent to God now will forever lose their soul on the Day of Judgment.

*Montgomery, TX*

## A Congregation Is Almost Certain to Grow When:

1. Each member has a deep concern for the lost.
2. Each member enters into the worship service with enthusiasm.
3. Each member is interested in an aggressive Bible School.
4. Each teacher is interested in improving his teaching ability.
5. Each elder and deacon is dedicated to the work.
6. The preacher preaches the Word with love.
7. Each member is personally involved in the work.
8. Each member lets brotherly love express itself to every other member—his own brotherly love!

Let us strive to be the one that is helping the congregation to grow.

*Author Unknown*

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Henry Hignite
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Joyce Johnson
Ethel Pierce	
Paul Brantley (Sacred Heart Hospital)	
Billy McDerment (Phyllis Brantley's friend, Specialty Care)	

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### September 18

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## Pantry Items Needed

Spaghetti Pasta  
Fruit Cocktail



## YouTube Channel

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[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5\\_MGG3zjY0IW3qw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCF7GC2zn5_MGG3zjY0IW3qw)



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 38

September 18, 2017

A Publication of Bellview Church of Christ

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Bill Busch

Sunday Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## “Let Us Go into the House of the Lord”

*John W. West*

In Psalms 122:1, The Psalmist David wrote, “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.” He knew the great joy there was in worshipping God Almighty. There should be the same joy in each one of our hearts when we have an opportunity to worship God. We are afforded many opportunities today to worship God, not only on Sunday and Wednesday, but during Gospel meetings, lectureships, singings, and numerous other times when Christians assemble to pay homage to our Lord. In observing lessons from this text, we can see several aspects related to worship. From this text, we can observe:

### The Joy of Worship

We should be glad when we have the opportunity to worship God. Worship does many things for us. First, it builds us up as Christians. We need this strength to help us

in our fight against Satan (Eph. 6:12; 1 Tim. 6:12). It also helps us to be closer to God (Jam. 4:8). With God on our side, we can and will overcome any obstacle placed in our way (Rom. 8:28-39). Last, it shows the attitude of our heart. Many who come to worship do so as a mere obligation and fail to worship from the heart. To please God, we must worship “in spirit and in truth.” It is not enough to worship in truth, but it must also be in spirit—from the heart—(Heb. 10:22). What a great joy it is to assemble with the saints on the first day of the week to worship our Father in heaven!

### The Call of Worship

In the text, David was “called” or invited to worship. Today, we fail in inviting people to worship, and as a result have lost sight of our goal to “seek and save the lost” (Luke 19:10). We should urge our friends and family, on a

daily basis, to attend worship services. In Hebrews 10:24, the Hebrews writer urges us to “consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works.” In the next verse he writes, “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is: but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” It is interesting

to note that in verse twenty-four he tells us to provoke one another to good works and in verse twenty-five he says that we are not to forsake the assembling together. By provoking others, we are *calling* them to worship. We need to have enough concern for the souls of men that we would be willing to *call* or invite them to worship.

## Gospel Meeting

with

### John West

October 1 – 6, 2017

“Practical Christianity”

From the Book of James

Sunday, 9:00 a.m.	.....	The Trials of Faith (1:2-17)
Sunday, 10:00 a.m.	.....	Be Ye Doers of the Word (1:19-27)
Sunday, 1:00 p.m.	.....	The Sin of Prejudice (2:1-13)
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Visitation Group 2 will provide the meals—Tuesday & Thursday

Visitors are invited to every meal.

Come and enjoy a meal and Gospel preaching.

## The Place of Worship

David called the place of worship the “house of the Lord.” In 1 Timothy 3:15, Paul called it the “house of God.” He goes on to explain that the “house of God is the “church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” The “house of God” is the church where God dwells (Eph. 2:21-22). The church is not the physical structure in which we meet;

it is the Christians who assemble together to worship God.

We are afforded many opportunities to worship and should always be joyful for these occasions. It should never become a ritual, but always come from the heart. May we always be able to say, “I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the LORD.”

*Montgomery, TX*

## New Internet Bible Class

*Jerry C. Brewer*

The Internet provides a tremendous tool for reaching the lost with the Gospel of Christ. It is now possible for someone in Western Oklahoma, or Maine, to sit at a computer and teach the Word of God around the world. That is precisely what we propose to do in a new Bible class over the Internet.

The brainchild of brother Jim Miller of Gray, Maine, he and I will begin teaching this class September 28. It will be a study of first principles of the faith which will enable those who are not Christians to know the saving Gospel of Christ—with an added advantage. It will be an opportunity for Christians to have their faith strengthened by participation in it as well. Please share this information with your friends and loved ones who are out of Christ and who may have an interest in Bible study. This is your chance to do personal work and perhaps lead a soul to Christ.

Jim and I will be live in the class and there is a chat window for students to participate and ask questions. Lessons will also be archived on Jim’s YouTube Channel, so they will always be available for viewing. To

participate, students will need to download a program from this website: <https://zoom.us/j/641473816>. When you go there, you will be prompted to download and install the program. It is free of charge and McAfee has designated this as a safe site for downloads. Jim and I have both downloaded it. This program that will take you to each of the classes, which will be conducted each Thursday evening at 6:00 p.m., Eastern Time (5:00 p.m. Central Time) and will last for 30 minutes. This Internet program can accommodate up to 100 people, so there is plenty of room for everyone. If you need help in getting this program or have any questions about it or the class, Jim and I will be happy to assist you. See you in class, September 28!

*Elk City, OK*

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Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Joyce Johnson
Ethel Pierce	Paul Brantley
Bill Busch (Sacred Heart Hospital)	
Billy McDerment (Phyllis Brantley's friend, Specialty Care)	

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# BEACON

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## Saved by the Grace of God

*John W. West*

The apostle Paul stated in Ephesians 2:5, “by grace ye are saved.” A few verses later he added, “for by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is* the gift of God” (2:8). The Scriptures teach that we are saved by the grace of God. It does not, however, teach that we are saved by “grace alone.” In verse 8, Paul teaches that it is by grace, but it is through faith. He shows two sides to salvation. On God’s part, it is grace; but it must be through man’s faith for us to obtain salvation.

God offers us the gift of His grace. We can, however, accept or reject that gift. We reject that gift when we continue to live in sin in rebellion to His will. We can accept God’s gift of grace on His terms and will be saved from our sins. James 1:17 points out that

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no

variableness, neither shadow of turning.

The good gift of God’s grace has come and has offered salvation to all. In Titus 2:11-12 we read:

For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.

God’s grace has appeared to **all** who will accept it. It is not for the *elect* as many teach. God has not arbitrarily chosen a certain number to be saved and caused everyone else to be lost. That is not the God pictured in the Bible. God loved the entire world enough to send His Son (John 3:16). This passage does not teach, “for God so loved the elect that he sent his only begotten Son.” That doctrine is a very dangerous doctrine; it is not taught in the Bible and should be avoided.

In Mark 16:15, Jesus said, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” God’s invitation is extended to all people today who will accept it. In Acts 2, all who were present were given the opportunity for salvation through obedience to the Gospel of Christ. How do we today receive the gift of God’s grace? By obeying the Gospel of the grace of God (20:24). Paul told the Romans it is by this means that one is saved (Rom. 1:16). The Gospel of the grace of God requires that one have faith in God (Heb. 11:6), which comes through the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). With faith in Christ as the Son of God (John 8:24), we are commanded to repent of our sins (Acts 17:30). When we are willing to die to sin and Satan (Rom. 6:2), we must be

immersed in water for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27; 1 Pet. 3:21). This puts us in contact with the blood of Christ, for it was in His death that He shed His blood, and it is our baptism into this death that puts us in contact with that blood (Rom. 6:3-4). From baptism, we rise as a new creature (6:4) and begin a walk with God in faithfulness to His word (6:17-18).

Have you been saved by the grace of God on His terms or have you followed the “doctrines and commandments of men”? To be saved, you must follow God’s way and reject sectarian and denominational teachings! Simply follow the Bible as the guide to your salvation!

*Montgomery, TX*

## “Brought Up in the Church”

Some people seem to have the absurd idea they are Christians simply because, as they put it, “they were brought up in the church.” They mean by this that their mothers and fathers were members of the church and as children they regularly attend the services of the church. They may be as spiritually ignorant, as hogs, as spiritually cold as proverbial cucumbers, and as worldly minded as infidels, yet because they were “brought up in the church,” they assume the Lord has a reserved seat for them in Heaven.

This reminds me of a joke we read in a recent publication. The story is this:

A man was giving a government clerk information for filling out a required form. When the clerk came to “nationality,” he said, “you’re French, aren’t you?” “No, English,” replied the

citizen. “Both my father and mother are English.” “But you were born in France,” protested the clerk. “What’s that got to do with it,” demanded the exasperated citizen. “If your dog had puppies in a stable, you wouldn’t call them horses.”

Some of these “brought-up-in-the-church” folks, on the basis of their reasoning concerning their spiritual state, would very probably call the puppies *horses*.

Brother J. D. Tant, Sr. once told us of an experience he had with a man whose wife was a member of the church. On meeting brother Tant, he advised him that he was a “brother-in-law to the church.” Brother Tant asked, “How is that?” The man replied, “Well you see, my wife’s a member of the church.” Brother Tant then said “In that case I suppose one could say

your wife is a sister-in-law to the Devil.”

Some of the most useless members of the church we have ever known have been those who could have laid claim to being “brought-up-in-the-church.” Fortunately, ancestry in the church is not the standard by which God judges His people. Fidelity to the Word of

God is the determining factor in being listed in the divine *Blue Book*. “The Lord knoweth them that are his,” and it is no accident that inspiration appends to this fact the admonition, “Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Tim. 2:19).

*Author Unknown*

## Gospel Meeting

with

### John West

October 1 – 6, 2017

### “Practical Christianity”

From the Book of James

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Sunday, 10:00 a.m. ....	Be Ye Doers of the Word (1:19-27)
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Thursday, 7:00 p.m. ....	The Sin of Doing Nothing (4:13-17)
Friday, 7:00 p.m. ....	Christians Dealing with Sin and Sickness (5:13-20)

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<http://www.bellviewcoc.com/meeting.html>

A covered-dish meal will be provided

Monday – Thursday at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

Visitation Group 1 will provide the meals—Monday & Wednesday

Visitation Group 2 will provide the meals—Tuesday & Thursday

Visitors are invited to every meal.

Come and enjoy a meal and Gospel preaching.

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# BEACON

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## Will a Man Rob God?

*John W. West*

Throughout the ages, there have been men who have robbed and who have stolen from others. It is an awful thing for someone to come in and steal things from us. However, on a weekly basis, many who call themselves Christians, rob and steal. When we as Christians fail to give “as we have been prospered,” we are stealing from God. Malachi dealt with the same type of *thief* in his day. In Malachi 3:8-9 it is recorded:

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye *are* cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, *Even* this whole nation.

The Jews in Malachi’s day were cursed, “*even* the whole nation,” because they had withheld their tithe and offering from God. This is done in the Lord’s church weekly. Eventually, God will curse on **all** who have stolen from Him. We want to notice the account of

Malachi 3:8-9, the *robbing* that takes place today in the Lord’s church, and giving as set forth in the New Testament.

### The Jews Robbed God

The Jews robbed God in “tithes and offerings.” They withheld part of their offering. The Jews did not give all they should have to God and upon them was pronounced a curse. Ananias and Sapphira were guilty of the same sin (Acts 5:1-11). They, wanting to receive glory, lied about what they gave to the apostles.

The Jews not only robbed God by not giving as they should but they also robbed Him when they offered the sick and lame of their animals. Malachi 1:8 records:

And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, *is it* not evil? And if ye offer the lame and sick, *is it* not evil? Offer it now unto thy governor; Will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

The Lord said it was evil to offer the blind, lame, and sick. If we offer something to anyone who is highly esteemed, we will offer them the best. But we often give God our second best.

The Lord promised to curse anyone who withheld their offering or gave Him second best. In Malachi 3:9, he pronounced a curse on those who would rob Him. In Malachi 1:13-14, He pronounced this same curse to those offering the lame and sick of their animals.

### Many Today Rob God

Just as the Jews of Malachi's day robbed God, many today are guilty of the same sin. Many in the Lord's church rob God of their giving. We are **commanded** to give on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1-2). We are commanded to give as we have been prospered (16:2). Many in the church today fail to give as they have been prospered when they give God the *left-overs*. Paul commended the Macedonians for their liberality in giving (2 Cor. 8:1-5). They were in deep poverty, but that did not stop them from giving liberally. Paul said that they went "beyond their power" to give (8:3). He commended them for first giving themselves to the Lord for a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1-2).

Many today rob God of their time. Some complain about *having* to spend a few hours a week worshipping God. Some rob God of their time by not doing God's work (Luke 19:10). We should be spending more time doing the Lord's work, and less time complaining. We never give God as much of our time as we should. It may be because too much time is spent in front of a television, or playing sports, or with other things that take us

away from serving God.

Many today rob God of praise. Moses and Aaron robbed God of glory when they failed to follow the commands of God (Num. 20:10, 12). Because of this disobedience, they were not allowed to enter the land of Canaan. When a Christian in the pew fails to sing praises to God and fails to participate in prayer, he robs God of glory the He deserves (Heb. 13:15).

### Giving Back to God That Which Belongs to Him

Solomon wrote in Proverbs 3:9: "Honour the LORD with thy substance, And with the first fruits of all thine increase." We must honor God today by giving back to Him as we have been prospered. Everything that we have belongs to God and we are to be good stewards. We are not good stewards when we fail to give back to God.

In Mark 12:41-44, the poor widow that cast in only two mites, gave more than anyone else there because she gave all that she had. While others were able to give great amounts to God, they only gave a part, but she gave **everything**. She put **all** of her faith in God, knowing that He would provide for her. Today, some only put a *small token* of faith in God. It is evident by the amount given to God. He has promised to take care of us when we put Him first (Mat. 6:33). Will we ever learn that valuable lesson?

### Blessings Received from Giving

God has promised to bless us in our giving. When one gives liberality to God, he will be blessed. In Proverbs 3:10 it is recorded, "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, And thy presses shall burst out with new wine." In

Psalm 23, David praised God for all his blessings. David said his “cup was running over” because of blessings from God. Luke wrote in Luke 6:38:

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

We have been **promised** blessings when we give. These blessing will be *running over* when we give as we should. In 2 Corinthians 9:6b we read, “and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” The more we sow, the more we will reap. We need to give

“cheerfully” and liberally (9:7).

Let us not be guilty of the same type of robbery that the Jews were in Malachi’s day. If we do not give as we have been prospered, then we are **in sin**. When we leave this earth, we cannot take our money or possessions with us. We need to use them wisely while we still have the opportunity.

Do not lose your soul because you robbed God. Give as you have been prospered. We must always remember the principle found in 2 Corinthians 9:7: “*so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*”

Montgomery, TX

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### John West

### October 1 – 6, 2017

## “Practical Christianity”

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# BEACON

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## Can We Put Too Much Emphasis on Baptism If It Is in the Scriptures?

*Johnny Oxendine*

Sometimes we find ourselves having to just go back to the Scriptures to show people that what we preach and teach is what the Bible says, not what we want it to say. This comes up with numerous issues, but today we just want to look at a very simple, but sometimes misunderstood topic: baptism.

Why would a topic like baptism (for the remission of sins) be so controversial for many in the world and denominations today? Perhaps it is because in the church we often hear that we are legalists, or that we put too much importance on *minor* things like baptism in relation to salvation. In view of what the Bible teaches, I do not see how this could be possible. There are five very clearly written passages in the New Testament that mention both baptism and salvation in the same verse. Here is the list—see for yourself: Mark 16:16,

Acts 2:38, Romans 6:4, Acts 22:16, and 1 Peter 3:21. In every one of these passages, water baptism precedes salvation, the remission of sins or walking in the newness of life. Do you know of a single exception?

Just read this verse, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). This passage clearly contains the conditions for salvation: faith and baptism. It also contains the conditions for damnation: a lack of faith. If anyone wants to know what to do to go to hell, have them read Mark 16:16—all that is necessary is a lack of faith. If they want to know what to do for the salvation of their soul, have them read the same verse—it tells them to believe and be baptized. We can also read in Acts 2:38 that Peter told a group of believers to “Repent, and be baptized every one of you

in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” Our denominational friends (mostly Baptists) often focus on *for* in this passage and insist it means “because of,” even though it is never translated that way in the Bible. We have to remind them that if baptism is “because of” the remission of sins, then so is repentance. Baptism and repentance are joined by the little conjunction *and*, which means that whatever baptism is “for,” repentance is “for” also. After one is buried with Christ in baptism, they are raised to walk in a newness of life (Rom. 6:1-4). This new life comes after baptism. Many denominationalists obviously want to *bury* the *new man*, since they claim the newness of life comes before our burial.

Remember that three days after the Lord appeared to Saul of Tarsus, Ananias told him to “arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins” (Acts 22:16). Some people today claim Saul was saved three days before Ananias met him. Well, Ananias must not have known it, for he told Saul how to “wash away” his sins.

## Gospel Meeting with John West

Lessons can be viewed at:

<http://www.bellviewcoc.com/meeting.html>

If Saul had been saved on the road as some groups claim, he must have been the most miserable saved man in the Bible. Saul was blind and spent three days praying and fasting until Ananias arrived.

In 1 Peter 3:21 the Bible plainly states baptism “now saves us.” I realize that baptism alone is not the only thing necessary for salvation. Other requirements must be met, like faith, love, and repentance. I do not know of anything “alone” that will save a sinner, not even faith (Jam. 2:24). So, as always, we want to speak where the Scriptures speak (without additions).

*San Mateo, CA*

## How the Holy Spirit Leads Men Today

### *Dub Mowery*

Just how does the Holy Spirit lead a person in this present age? Many mistakenly think that their own subjective feelings are the supernatural action of the Holy Spirit. If this were so, how would a person distinguish between his natural inner feelings and those brought on supernaturally? Solomon warns, “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: But who so walketh wisely, he shall be delivered” (Pro. 28:26). Again, “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, But the end thereof *are* the ways of death” (16:25). These two passages

reveal that our inner feelings are not a reliable source in determining right from wrong.

This is especially true in respect to morals, and learning what the Lord would have us to do. Our outlook on life philosophically is determined by how we were raised, experiences in life, knowledge obtained by observation, and by what we were taught. From these sources we develop a philosophy to guide us in life. This internal understanding of right and wrong may not coincide with the inspired Word of God. That is the reason different

people, who think their inner feelings mean they are guided by the Holy Spirit, arrive at opposite concepts from each other and from what the Bible actually teaches. These conflicting claims of being guided by the Holy Spirit cannot be blamed upon the Lord. The apostle Paul informs us that, “God is not *the author of confusion*” (1 Cor. 14:33).

In reality, how does the third person in the Godhead communicate unto mankind? From the beginning of time, Divine messages were always delivered in a language understood by the recipients of those messages. A person has never received communication from Heaven by way of his inner feeling. How did Adam and Eve come to knowledge of the will of God for them in the Garden of Eden? It was by words.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die (Gen. 2:16-17).

Several passages of Scripture reveal that the Holy Spirit used words to communicate. David declared:

The Spirit of the LORD spake by me,  
And his word *was* in my tongue (2 Sam. 23:2).

The apostle Peter said:

Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus (Acts 1:16).

The apostle Paul wrote:

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1).

The Holy Spirit did not communicate heavenly messages to every person, but rather inspired certain men as spokesmen. Moses received the Decalogue for the children of Israel at Mount Sinai. The apostle John pointed out that “the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). During the Mosaic Dispensation, God chose certain men as prophets to deliver His Word to the Israelites. The apostle Peter, in referring to the writers of the Old Testament, said, “holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pet. 1:21). In Hebrews 1:1, the Scripture states, “GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.” For the New Testament dispensation Jesus Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit unto the apostles to guide them unto all truth (John 14:26; 16:13). Not only did the apostles and the New Testament prophets speak by inspiration, but they also wrote as guided unto all truth (2 Tim. 3:16-17). In 1 Corinthians 2:10-13, the apostle Paul pointed out that the very words he wrote were the words of the Holy Spirit. The days of miracles and receiving messages from heaven supernaturally ceased at the close of the first century (13:8-10; Jude 3; Rev. 22:18-19). The Bible is the complete revelation of the Heavenly Father for mankind’s eternal redemption. Those who claim to be led directly by the Holy Spirit today are either deceived or false prophets (Mat. 7:15; 1 John 4:1).

*Deceased*

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## Our Scientific Bible

*Jerry C. Brewer*

The Bible is the most remarkable book ever written. It is remarkable in one aspect because it anticipated much of what modern science has discovered. The Bible is not a book on science, but every scientific statement in it is absolutely correct.

Although the Bible was written centuries ago, it is the most modern of all books, and is the perfect spiritual guide for man. The inspired Paul wrote that “All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16). That God inspired the Bible writers is obvious from the fact that whatever scientific statements they made were made long before those facts were discovered by man.

Many people suppose there is a conflict between true science and the Bible. After all, they say, “the Bible is an ‘old’ book,” and they

presume that as science advances it disproves the Bible. To say that, is to say truth conflicts with truth, but scientific truth can never contradict spiritual truth. Science is classified knowledge. It is systematized knowledge based on fact, and while theories of science change, true science never changes because all truth is absolute. Much of what science has discovered through the centuries was already written in the Bible long before modern science was developed.

Herbert Spencer was a brilliant 19<sup>th</sup> century agnostic philosopher and scientist. In his studies, Spencer concluded that power manifests itself in five distinct forms. In his treatise on “Manifestations of The Unknowable,” Spencer said power manifests itself in the following order: Space, Time, Matter, Motion, and Force. Those very things which he discovered through scientific inquiry had already

been listed in the first verse of the Bible for about 3,500 years. Genesis 1:1 says, “In the beginning [there is Spencer’s “time”] God [there is his “force”] created [there is his “motion”] the heavens [there is Spencer’s “space”] and the earth [there is his “matter”]” Moses wrote those words by the inspiration of God about 1,500 years before Christ. Moses was not a scientist and had no knowledge of Spencer’s findings, yet what he wrote was scientifically accurate. That kind of knowledge could only come from God.

For centuries men believed the earth was a flat disc of land surrounded by a great world river. Ancient Greeks even believed the earth was borne on the shoulders of Atlas. Many of these ideas persisted until the 16<sup>th</sup> century when Magellan sailed around the earth and men discovered that it was a sphere poised in space. But the Bible stated that truth more than 3,000 years earlier. In Job, one of the most ancient books of the Bible, it is stated that He “hangeth the earth upon nothing” (Job 26:7). Christopher Columbus was warned of a “falling off place,” but the Bible had clearly revealed the shape of the earth centuries before when Solomon wrote, “He set a compass [or “circle”] upon the face of the

depth” (Pro. 8:27), and when Isaiah spoke of Him “that sitteth upon the circle of the earth” (Isa. 40:22). God’s scientific truth predated and anticipated modern science.

Another example of that is found in modern medicine. A little more than a century ago it was a common medical practice to bleed people and many patients were literally bled to death. It is believed that George Washington died in this way because he thought he possessed too much blood. However, modern medical science has discovered that life is in the blood—a fact set forth by Moses long before modern medicine was developed. He wrote in Genesis 9:4: “But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.” The life of the flesh is in the blood and today’s highest medical authorities agree with Moses’ statement. Today, blood is given through transfusions to save lives.

These are just a few of the Bible truths regarding science. True science does not conflict with the Bible. It only discovers what God has already stated in it. The Bible is, indeed, the very Word of God, immutable, eternal, and verbally inspired.

*Elk City, OK*

## Lukewarmness

### *B. C. Goodpasture*

The seven churches of Asia Minor fall into three classes: those in which the Master found something to praise and something to blame—Ephesus, Pergamos, and Thyatira; those in which He found only something to praise—Smyrna and Philadelphia; and those in which He found nothing to praise—Sardis

and Laodicea. There was an exception in Sardis, in that there were a “few names” in the congregation that had not defiled their garments, and they would walk with Christ in white. But of the church as a whole, nothing good is said. It had a name that lived but was dead.

These three classes are all-comprehensive. One cannot conceive of a congregation that would not fall into one of these groups. All congregations are either wholly bad, wholly good, or partly good and partly bad. Then, as now, the largest group was composed of congregations in which there was a mixture of good and bad.

The church in Laodicea was wholly bad. For it, there was no word of praise. It was the worst of the bad. In it there was no exception as in Sardis. Yet, this church was not disturbed by the vicious works of the Nicolaitans, as was Ephesus; unlike Pergamos, Laodicea was not troubled by those who held the doctrine of Balaam; it was not subjected to bitter persecution as was Smyrna; no self-styled prophetess, like Jezebel, sought to seduce her members, as in Thyatira; yet, Laodicea was in the most deplorable condition of the seven churches. It was a victim, not of false teaching, not of immoral practices, not of relentless persecution; but a victim of a more deadly malady—lukewarmness, indifference.

Laodicea was the church of the excluded Christ! The saddest words addressed to any of the seven churches fell upon the dull ears of Laodicea. “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Rev. 3:20). Mark you, these words were not addressed to the alien sinner. They were written to a church that had expelled the Christ who died for it.

What is the gravest threat to the churches? What is the deadliest malady that haunts the Christian? Worldliness, digression, modernism? Do not forget lukewarmness, indifference. It drove Christ from the hearts of the Laodicean brethren. It benumbed them into a false sense of independence and self-sufficiency. **They mistook lack of pain for absence of malady.** They thought they needed nothing when they needed everything. When you come to appraise the dangers besetting the church, remember indifference!

*Deceased*

## Believe the Gospel

*Foy E. Wallace, Jr.*

Jesus Christ said, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:15-16). He that believeth—what? The Gospel. The idea that all one must believe in order to be baptized is the mere fact that Jesus is Christ did not originate with the Gospel. One may believe the fact that Jesus is Christ, and not believe the Gospel. “He that believeth [the Gospel] and is baptized, shall

be saved.”

When a man believes that he is saved before he is baptized, he does not believe the Gospel, and he cannot be baptized, in any Scriptural, valid sense. When one is baptized into a denomination, knows that he is being baptized into one, no matter what he believes about baptism, it becomes an institutional act, a denominational baptism.

*Deceased*

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Henry Hignite
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Joyce Johnson
Ethel Pierce	Bill Busch

## Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Bobbie LaBryer in the death of her mother, Virginia Baskins, who passed away on October 12. Please keep Bobbie and her family in your prayers.

## Please Remember

### October 29

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

## Gospel Meeting with John West

Lessons can be viewed at:  
<http://www.bellviewcoc.com/meeting.html>

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The Bellview Church of Christ YouTube channel has a new URL address:  
<https://www.youtube.com/c/BellviewChurchOfChrist>



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Bill Busch

Sunday Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## The Most Offensive Thing to the World

*Charles Pogue*

All around us there is murder, theft, hatred, unfaithfulness, and more. These are all offensive. Most people recognize that, though sometimes some of them may falsely accuse some others of being guilty of one or more of them when they are not. When understood, and applied correctly, though, all of those things truly are offensive. However, not one of them is the most offensive thing to the world. What is? Increasingly, most of us who love it, recognize that the most offensive thing to a growing number of people is the Bible.

Why do we say that the Bible is the most offensive thing to many people? Because they love the things the Bible identifies as sin. The Bible identifies drunkenness as a soul condemning sin (Gal. 5:1). Since the Bible condemns drunkenness, drunks are offended by the Bible, and by those who call their attention to the fact that drunkenness is sin. The Bible

says that homosexuality is a soul-condemning sin (Rom. 1:26-27). However, society at large has come to accept homosexuality as a natural alternative life style (which it is not), thus they hate the Bible and all of those who stand with the Bible against that sin. When one considers the fact that people are offended at the truth, the only logical conclusion must be that they are offended at the God who created them, has the power to save and destroy their souls in His hands (Mat. 10:28), and who revealed the truth to them (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Paul fitly describes the world, and the folly of its rejection of the Bible:

For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise (2 Cor. 10:12).



of objective right and wrong, but because the world misidentifies concern for hatred. A loving person knowing that drunkenness, homosexuality, immodesty, etc., are sinful and understanding the eternal implication for those who commit such things, will speak out. They do not do so because they hate the sinner, but because they hate the sin, and they know that the sin will cause the sinner to be lost eternally. That is not hatred, it is love and concern, but the world rejects that truth. They will not even listen to it. Just as God does not want anyone to be lost (2 Pet. 3:9), neither does any caring faithful child of God. Paul well describes the attitude of the world at the end of the list of things the Gentiles turned to after rejecting the Creator when he wrote:

Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them (Rom. 1:32).

Why should the Bible not be offensive to the sinner? Because it tells of a loving Father who sent His only begotten Son into the world to save the world (John 3:16). That same Father, loves that world enough that He

has revealed to His offspring the things that are sin, and has given the instructive and corrective charge, not to walk after those things (Rom. 8:1-4; 13:13; Gal. 5:16; Eph. 4:17). The world does not understand that if the things that are sin are sin, and that if an individual does one or more of those things anyway, God must send them away into eternal punishment. Why is that so? Because it would be unjust of God to save those who are sinful along with those who are righteous. Not knowing that and other truths, the world is offended by the Bible that reveals the fact that there is a hell as certainly as there is a heaven, and there will be far more people occupying the heat than the heaven.

Many people who are in the public's eye, and who are even suspected of opposing the sin of homosexuality are aggressively attacked. Some of those who are attacked do not have the backbone to stand up and say, "Yes, that is sin, and I want anyone who does it to quit, because it will cost the person his or her soul. When they are unwilling to take such a public stand, is it not in fact the truth that they too are just a smidgen offended by the Bible, too?"

*Beeville, TX*

## Changes

*Tim Smith*

All live, all die, all stand before the Lord in judgment, and all "spend" eternity somewhere—if you have been to a funeral (especially one I preached) then you have probably heard something on that order before. That is the constant for all men of all ages. That never changes. As individuals, however, we all change. We grow older, fatter, thinner, richer,

poorer, healthier, sicker, saner, senile, and etc. We start as babies and end up as dead folks. We are constantly changing. It is not a matter of will we change, but where will our changes take us. May yours never take you from the protection and care of Him with Whom we have to do...

*Deceased*

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Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Joyce Johnson
Bill Busch	
John Godwin (Aleacia Godwin's husband)	

## Please Remember

### Every Sunday

Ladies' Bible Class will meet after the afternoon service, in the zone room.

### October 29

Fifth Sunday Dinner; singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

### November 6

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.



## Website

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# BEACON

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Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Conversion Confusion

*Dub McClish*

*Conversion* is the theme of the New Testament. It embraces redemption, forgiveness, and salvation—the purposes of Christ's coming. To *convert* means "to change/turn from ones' present course." One's salvation depends upon his conversion (Mat. 18:3; Acts 3:19), so we **must** understand the New Testament's teaching concerning it. Few subjects, however, involve more confusion than this one does.

Conversion brings one from sinner to saint, from lost to saved, from non-Christian to Christian, and it involves three distinct and necessary changes.

### Conviction change

Suppose one is a *casual* unbeliever in God and Jesus—one who has just not thought seriously about the subject. He drives a car, consults a GPS unit, depends on a smart phone, and operates a computer. He knows such products required great intelligence, design, and

manufacturing. He applies this reasoning to the universe and to his own body and cannot attribute them to blind accident. He reads the Bible's declaration that an omniscient, omnipotent, eternal God created all things (Gen. 1:1)—the **rational** explanation of origins. He reads of Jesus in the Gospel and, moved by His miracles and His love for mankind, he believes in Him as God's Son. His convictions have now changed from unbeliever to believer. Jesus said, "Except ye believe that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). Millions think that belief equals full conversion, but what does the Bible teach?

### Mind-life change

The Bible word for this change is *repentance*. The basic meaning of this word is a change of mind—the decision to turn **from** a life of sin and self **to** one that follows wherever Jesus leads. One may believe that Jesus is the Christ without

deciding to abandon sin and serve Him. Repentance is the point at which he “makes up his mind” to do so, and then he does so (Mat. 3:8). Jesus said one will perish if he does not repent (Luke 13:3). Does repentance complete conversion? The Bible answers, “No.”

### Relationship-to-God change

While faith and repentance move one **toward** God and His Son, these do not bring one **into fellowship** with them. This is accomplished in

baptism, wherein one’s sins are forgiven, washed away in the blood of Christ (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Rev. 1:5). At this point—and not before—one is added to the church because he is saved (Acts 2:47). In baptism (i.e., immersion in water)—and not before—one enters “into Christ” (Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27). Thus **believers** on Pentecost were commanded to “repent and be baptized” to receive forgiveness (Acts 2:38).

*Denton, TX*

## Does Silence Give Sanction?

*Winfred Clark*

It is a matter of verbal conjecture on the part of many that God’s silence on a subject of human preference makes such allowable. Such is advocated by those who presume to use mechanical instruments in New Testament worship. It is assumed that since there is no declared prohibition against it such is then allowed. It seems the battles of the past fought in this same arena must again occur. The same questions need to be asked again. The same simple lessons much be learned again.

### Wasn’t God Silent About All Other Wood Except Gopher in Building the Ark?

Such seems to be a foolish question to those who read Genesis 6:14. In fact, as you read this verse, and others related to the ark, you would affirm the silence of God on all other kinds of wood to be used in the ark. This would be a good place to show His silence.

Would you at the same time argue that His silence would give sanction to the use of any other kind of wood? Would you even care to assume that His silence gave sanction to the use of such? In fact, would you not oppose the

use of any other kind of wood? If you did, on what basis would you oppose it?

Would you argue that His silence does not sanction it and that you would have to have His Word to authorize the use of any other kinds of wood? Should it not follow then that the silence of the New Testament does not authorize the use of mechanical instruments in New Testament worship?

### Wasn’t God Silent About the Kind of Fire Used by Nadab and Abihu?

And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not (Lev. 10:1).

What did they do? They did something God had not commanded. They used a kind of fire about which God was silent. Did His silence give sanction to what they did? If such were sanctioned, why were they punished for such?

Would God by His silence sanction a practice, and then punish those for doing what He

sanctioned? You and I know better. We would not dare argue that His silence gave sanction to what they did, but we do have to admit that God was indeed silent about the kind of fire they did use.

### **Wasn't God Silent About the Need of Gentiles to Be Circumcised to Be Saved Under the Gospel?**

Do you remember those who went from Jerusalem to Antioch saying such as the case (Acts 15:1-2)? Do you recall that the apostles and elders met in Jerusalem about this question? Do you remember that they sent an epistle back to Antioch and other places saying, "We gave no such commandment" (15:24)?

They were silent concerning the necessity for Gentiles to be circumcised. To add such to God's requirement for salvation was equal to the invasion of God's silence. This would constitute an addition and perversion. For men to add the mechanical instrument to New Testament worship is no less an invasion of God's silence.

### **Wasn't God Silent About Washing Hands Before Eating?**

Some would add such and seek to have the Lord endorse it, but to no avail (Mat. 15:1-9). Jesus showed such to be nothing more than a human tradition. It has its origin with men and not with God. God was silent concerning such, and Jesus did not accept that as authorization to bind such on His disciples.

### **Wasn't God Silent Concerning One Serving as A Priest Under the Law from the Tribe of Judah?**

One has but to read the following:

For he of whom these things are spoken pertaineth to another tribe, of

which no man gave attendance at the altar. For *it is* evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood (Heb. 7:13-14).

The Hebrews writer used this as an argument to show that Jesus was of a higher order of priest.

Would you not think the overall priesthood would be better by having one perfect priest such as Jesus? Surely we would, but such would not authorize invading God's silence and making Jesus a priest from the wrong tribe. The unanswerable argument is that since nothing was said concerning one from the tribe of Judah serving as priest, then one from Judah was not authorized to serve as a priest. Then what would it take for one to be authorized? Certainly, not silence, but rather a statement to that effect.

What would it take for the authorization of the mechanical instrument in New Testament worship? Would it not take a supporting statement like we have in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 for singing? You certainly do not have any authorization based on silence. If so, there is absolutely no limit to the additions one can make. No, silence does not give sanction and God does not need to be treated as an idol that cannot speak. He has told us how to worship and in doing this we have His sanction based on His Word.

*Deceased*

*Defender and Beacon*

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## Sick

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Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Ray Foshee	Joyce Johnson
Bill Busch	

John Godwin (Aleacia Godwin's husband, scheduled for surgery on November 27)

Bette Podgurski (Bill & Peggy Crowe's daughter, scheduled for surgery on November 8)

## Please Remember

### November 6

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### November 12

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### November 13

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.



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Sunday Worship Services — 10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## You Want to Put **What** In the Church?

*Harrell Davidson*

Many years ago, the late brother G. K. Wallace and his good wife Lillian were guests in our home. We were honored with their presence in every way. They invited us to their home in Florida, but we seemed to never have the time to go. One such occasion he told us of going to preach in a Gospel meeting at which time a lady came up to him and said, “brother Wallace, we have a kitchen in our church.” He replied, “who baptized it?” Brother Wallace was making the point that there was nothing wrong with eating in the building where the saints gathered to worship.

Some today still need this kind of lesson. No, it is not about eating in the building, but what some have brought over into the Lord’s church or at least have tried. No faithful congregation would permit such things as we have today. There are many congregations who are having every kind of seminar that one

could imagine. We have noticed that some are having financial seminars. Among some of the speakers that we have noticed is Dave Ramsey. I do not know Mr. Ramsey. I have never met him. I have not been to one of these seminars, but I know this; there is no Scripture to justify such! Basketball courts, walking tracks, and physical fitness centers seem to be popular among many. The list is almost endless with more being thought of almost daily. All these trappings are “feel good” type of things—totally subjective. The idea being that if it feels good do it! Yes, these are feel good religionists and their number is increasing. Gymnastics for Christ, yea, yea!

Read with me Hebrews 8:2: “A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” Compare the old tabernacle under the Law of Moses to the new. Note, in doing so, that God

ordered what should be in the tabernacle of old. So, it is that He has also ordered for the new.

Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount (Heb. 8:5).

There was an attempt by the Judaizers to put circumcision in the church (cf. Acts 15). It was not needed nor authorized and thus refused by Inspiration. There was no authority for such. What God put in the church is totally sufficient.

He put Himself along with Christ and the Holy Spirit (Mat. 28:18-20). All of which play a prominent role in the church to this very day. It is God's Word that the Son spoke and has been handed down to us through the agency of the Holy Spirit. This is Inspiration.

Redeemed, forgiven souls were placed in the church. The saved were added (Acts 2:47). The church, you see, is the temple that the family of God is born into (John 3:5).

Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:5).

The church is a holy nation in which citizens are naturalized (2:9; Eph. 2:19). We are lost sheep, found and restored to the fold (John 10:16; 1 Pet. 2:25). We are slaves that are brought into the house as sons (Gal. 4:4-7).

The Lord put elders to rule and deacons to serve in the church not out of the church (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-11). God put a Book

to be used and it is thoroughly sufficient for all that we need in life and godliness (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3).

The Lord, not man, put His table in the church. It is a memorial to the cruel death that our Savior suffered in our stead and His pure blood that was shed for us to have the remission of sins as well as to purchase the church with His blood (1 Cor. 11:23-25; 10:16, 21; Acts 20:28). It is a communion that requires

## Good-Bye God

Some people go to church on Sunday  
But only once that day,  
And when they leave the service  
You can almost hear them say:  
“Good-bye God, I’m going home,  
For this day’s all that’s mine:  
I’ve given thee a portion  
One hour of it is thine.  
For I must have diversions,  
In pleasure’s haunts I’ll seek  
Some needed recreation—  
Help for the coming week.  
So, God, I’ll not be here tonight,  
I know you’ll understand,  
And I can’t come for Wednesday meet—  
My work has its demands  
I have my family to sustain  
And other reasons why  
I need to gain all earth can give  
Until the day I die.  
So good-bye, God, till Sunday morn  
I’ll worship thee again—  
Unless some come to visit me  
And I should be detained.”

*Author Unknown*

examination, separation, consecration, meditation, and confession (1 John 1:9). The table is one of anticipation. “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Cor. 11:26). For the alien sinner our Lord has put in the church a glorious invitation.

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come.  
And let him that heareth say, Come.  
And let him that is athirst come. And  
whosoever will, let him take the water  
of life freely (Rev. 22:17).

Now, what was it that you want to put in the church?

*Obion, TN*

## What Kind of Faith Do You Have?

*Bruce Stulting*

Faith is necessary to salvation. The writer of Hebrews warns:

But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him (Heb. 11:6).

Even though faith is such an important aspect of the Christian life, it is often misunderstood.

Some believe that (1) “Faith means believing when you know it cannot be true”; (2) “Faith is believing in something when common sense tells you not to”; and (3) “Faith begins where reason ends.” To some, rational thought and the Bible should never be in the same conversation. Such belief has led some to conclude that faith is a leap one must take when reason ends. To the world, faith does not rest on objective evidence.

The Scriptures teach that, “faith is the substance of things hoped for” (11:1a). According to Thayer, the word translated *substance* primarily means “substructure, foundation.” Thus, faith undergirds or supports the things for which we hope. One of the secondary meanings is, “steadfastness of mind.” There is

no room for doubt or uncertainty where Biblical faith is concerned. Faith, then, is the foundation upon which the rest of Christianity is built.

Faith allows us to act with confidence in the things that we cannot see. This is Paul’s meaning when he wrote, “(For we walk by faith, not by sight:)” (2 Cor. 5:7). Without seeing God, angels, or heaven, we can act with confidence, knowing that such exist. Faith gives us our hope of future salvation (Rom. 8:23-25). We have not seen heaven, but we long to dwell there. It is faith in the promise of God that heaven awaits us which gives us the endurance to remain faithful to God.

Paul encourages us to examine our faith (2 Cor. 13:5). So, what kind of faith do you have? Do you have confidence in God? Do you have confidence that God will one day judge this world? Do you have confidence that God means what he says? Do you have confidence that God will save only those who obey Him? Remember, “faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). Study so you may obtain saving faith.

*Huntsville, TX*

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John Godwin (Aleacia Godwin's husband, scheduled for surger on November 27)

Bette Podgurski (Bill & Peggy Crowe's daughter)

Carolyn Franklin (Joyce Johnson's cousin)

Ellie Crowe (Bill & Peggy Crowe's great-granddaughter)

## Please Remember

### Every Sunday

Ladies' Bible Class will meet after the afternoon service, in the zone room.

### November 12

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### November 13

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### November 19

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### November 29

Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 p.m., in the auditorium.



# BEACON

Vol. XLVI / No. 46

November 13, 2017

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Wednesday Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

## Thanksgiving

*Charles Pogue*

Our Nation has set aside the fourth Thursday of November as a national holiday of Thanksgiving. Although there are now many things that raise the concern of Christians for the welfare of our country, we still have much to be thankful for as Americans. We can be thankful that we have the individual freedoms that have been granted to us by the constitution our founders crafted. We can be thankful that for the most part, the sounds and sights of war have played out on distant shores rather than our own. We can be thankful that we have the right to choose how we will make our living, where we will live, and the right to our day in court if falsely accused of a wrong doing.

However, we have things more important to be thankful for if we are faithful Christians our fellow Americans do not have. We can be thankful that we follow the pattern for

salvation and worship that our Creator has revealed to us (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38 John 4:23-24; Eph. 5:19). Those have been made available to us by our Savior who loved us and gave Himself for us (Gal. 1:4; 2:20; Tit. 2:14). We can be thankful that God has given us all things that pertain to live and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3). We can be thankful that we are not persecuted for reaching out to our fellow countrymen with the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ (2 The. 3:1).

If we are faithful Christians, our thanksgiving reaches beyond this world and beyond this life. I cannot think of a more beautiful passage of Scripture expressing that hope than 1 Peter 1:3-7.

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the

dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

Those who have never obeyed the Gospel, and those who have but have not remained

faithful to it, still have the blessings of America and her freedoms to be thankful for. However, those of us who hold faithfully to the Gospel and all things attendant to it, have not only the blessings of this life to be thankful for, but also the hope that is laid up in heaven for us. As we enjoy a Thanksgiving Day with the turkey and all the trimmings with our families and or friends, let us above all things give thanks to God for the mystery that He has revealed in His only begotten Son, and that we have much more to be thankful for than just the blessings of this life. We have those of the next one.

Happy Thanksgiving!

*Beeville, TX*

## Our Sins and Their Consequences

*Al Brown*

Every sincere Christian has probably felt the same emotion the apostle Paul did when he wrote that he was “less than the least of all saints” (Eph. 3:8). No one, except God, knows the unholy thoughts, the less than pure motives, and the unrighteous deeds that have stained my life better than I do, and I suspect the same is true in your life as well. Who can remember the total number of such transgressions we committed in the passing of a single week in that period before we became Christians? We can only say there were many.

Some were worse than others. Those of us who were total reprobates may have averaged a sin a minute. Every other word was profanity or a curse. The filth poured out of our mouths in a never-ending putrid stream.

We swore and blasphemed all that was holy. We lied, stole, committed fornication, and drank until we were senseless. We swindled, deceived, and cheated those around us. We hated and slandered, and were hated and slandered in return, then we fought those we hated. All this seemed normal, for we were people of the world, and this is the way of the world. It is also the way of death, for our sins piled up to massive proportions.

Lest you compare yourself with reprobates and begin congratulating yourself, you should look candidly at your own life before you were baptized and see the mountain of sins for which you were liable. You may not have been as depraved as some—perhaps you exercised some semblance of restraint much of the time.

Still, if one word were chosen which would characterize your life, would it not have to be “selfishness”? Even those good things you said and did were not to glorify your heavenly Father, were they? They were really motivated by selfishness, and, of course, all your actions and words were not righteous. Indeed, can you even give a ballpark figure of the number of times you committed sinful acts, spoke sinful words, and had sinful thoughts? When you add together all the weeks and years you lived in rebellion to God, even a rough estimate of all those offenses is truly staggering!

It should also be remembered that this is true of every human of accountable age. The most polished gentleman, the daintiest woman, the rich, the powerful, the poor, the beautiful, the plain, the celebrity, the professor, the student, the tribesman, the scientist—and you and me; we all alike stand condemned and hopeless because of the sins each one of us has committed.

Facing the enormity of my sins, I forget, at least for a moment, what others have or have not done. Divine justice demands the forfeit of my life as payment for my sins (Rom. 6:23), and though I deserve it, this places me in a completely hopeless position from which I cannot extricate myself. I am not alone, however, for my condition is also the dilemma of every other soul on this planet.

It is only as we comprehend what spiritual death is (separation from God and His blessings), and what our utter hopelessness involves, that we can truly appreciate what Christ did on our behalf. It was not because we were such *beautiful* people, or so worthy, that the Son of God willingly emptied Himself of His glory

and came to this earth. He endured the insults and abuse, the blasphemy and rejection of those He came to save, because He loved His heavenly Father above all things, and He loved man with a perfect love. He was determined to do the will of His Father, because true love for God can only be expressed in this way (1 John 5:3; 2 John 6). He willed that which was good for man to such an extent He was willing to bear the humiliation, the physical pain, and spiritual agony of Gethsemane and the cross to do for man what man was unable to do for himself. He gave His life and shed His blood to pay what divine justice demanded from each one of us.

It is impossible to fully comprehend the depths of such a love, but we glory in it and are thankful for it far beyond our ability to express in words. However, God tells us that men always express true appreciation and love by being drawn to that One who gave so much for them (John 12:32) and submitting, through faith, to the conditions their Savior gave by which they can be saved from their sins (John 14:15).

*Deceased*

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# BEACON

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## Providing Things Honest

*David P. Brown*

Every child of God has the responsibility to set the best example of Christian living possible before the church and the world (Mat. 5:14-16; Eph. 5:15; 1 Tim. 4:12). Twice, Paul wrote that Christians are to “Provide things honest in the sight of all men” (Rom. 12:17; 2 Cor. 8:21). *Honest* translates the Greek word *kalos*, which according to Vine means: “good, admirable, becoming, has also the ethical meaning of what is fair, right, honourable, of such conduct as deserves esteem” (229). Please notice that the Christian is to provide honest things not only before the church, but also the world. Implied, therefore, is the fact that even those who are not Christians can recognize conduct that is honourable whether they practice it or not.

Paul told Titus that:

Unto the pure all things *are* pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving *is* nothing pure; but even their

mind and conscience is defiled (Tit. 1:15).

If, in living the Christian life, we had only to deal with the “pure” of this world we would have a much easier time regarding the conduct of our life. Titus 1:15, however, makes it clear that such is not the case. We also must be fully aware that there are those in the church who are unfaithful, and, therefore, we cannot foolishly assume that every member of the church sees everything from the perspective of a pure heart. Hence, no matter how godly one may live there are persons who are so wicked that they will see in the most honorable conduct that which is lewd and base. When, however, such is the case the one whose conduct is admirable is not at fault.

With the aforementioned points in mind we understand why Paul instructed the young evangelist Titus concerning proper conduct

before all. After enumerating what Titus should do, Paul told him that such conduct “cannot be condemned” and “that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you” (2:6-8).

Paul taught Timothy of the various classifications of widows, how to take care of them and how they were to conduct their lives. Concerning the younger widows Paul wrote:

I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully (1 Tim. 5:14).

We are not to assume that young widows are the only widows or persons in the church who may so live as to cause “the adversary to speak reproachfully” of them or the church. Abundant are the Scriptures cited and uncited that make it clear that all Christians must be deeply concerned about the impact of their lives on others. With whom we company, the nature of such company, and the circumstances or situations involved in the lives of those with whom we company, as well as our own state of affairs must be evaluated as we determine the nature of our association with each

other. No doubt this is what is involved in this following qualification that one must meet, along with the other qualifications, if he is to be an elder in the Lord’s church.

Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil (3:7).

There are some things that are innocent within themselves that are, however, unwise because of how they can be used by those with impure motives to do great harm to the cause of Christ by the misuse of them. To keep such from happening Paul said that we should “suffer (bear—ASV) all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ” (1 Cor. 9:12). Hence, in everything Christians are to protect their influence for good; because “a *good* name is rather to be chosen than great riches” (Pro. 22:1). Our Lord put it best when He said to the twelve: “I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves” (Mat. 10:16). Let us realize this great truth and conduct ourselves accordingly.

*Spring, TX*

## A Fountain Opened for Sin

*Paul Vaughn*

*Fountain* can have different meanings depending on how it is used in a sentence. It is primarily defined as “a spring or jet of water issuing from the earth.” The word can also be defined as “the origin or source of something.” The prophet Zechariah had the latter in mind when he gave one of the most wonderful prophecies of Jesus and His death. The

Messiah is presented as a fountain in whom the salvation of mankind is made possible. Zechariah said:

In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness (Zec. 13:1).

The marvelous fountain that the prophet

spoke is so powerful and abundant that it flows with soul saving liquid. When did God open this fountain for sin? The fount was opened at Calvary when Jesus was nailed to the cross. It is written, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). It was the grace of God that sent His "only begotten Son" to give His life and shed His blood for the salvation of man.

The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins, it required the blood of Christ. The writer of Hebrews wrote, "For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4). All the sacrifices in the Old Testament had been a shadow of the offering of the Lord's blood.

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect (10:1).

The fountain of salvation was opened over two thousand years ago so man can be saved from the consequence of sins. Zechariah spoke of it about five hundred years before the birth of the Lord. It was extremely important to him and it is the utmost importance to all because without that fountain there is no hope. Yet, most people today reject Jesus, turning their backs on the fountain flowing from Calvary.

*Centerville, TN*

## Find Buried Treasure (Read Your Bible)

1. One must study to have light (Psa. 119:130).
2. One must study to have understanding (119:130).
3. One must study to acquire knowledge (Pro. 2:6).
4. One must study to show himself approved unto God (2 Tim. 2:15).
5. One must study the Word before he can abide in the Word (John 8:31-32).
6. One must study the Word before the Word can dwell in him (Col. 3:16).
7. One must study before he can live by every Word (Mat. 4:4).
8. One must study the Word before he can receive the Word (Jam. 1:21).
9. One must study to know what sin is (Rom. 7:7).
10. One must study to be entire (Jam. 1:3-4).
11. One must study God to love God (John 14:15; 15:14).
12. One must study God to know God (1 John 2:3).

Since Bible study is so important, and since so much depends on it, how could a person be so negligent and indifferent toward it? How many minutes per week do you average studying your Bible?

*Author Unknown*





# BEACON

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## How to Be a Living Sacrifice

*Bruce Stulting*

Sacrifice has always been a way of life for God's people. Under the Old Testament, worshipers brought animals to be sacrificed to God. Offering these animals required a financial sacrifice. They had to buy these animals or take them from their own flocks.

Today, God's people are called upon to make sacrifices of a different sort. They sacrifice their pleasures. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. 5:24). Just as under the Old Testament, financial sacrifices are required of God's people today. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, *so let him give*; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7). In a sense, one must sacrifice his own family because one must love God more. "If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his

own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). Truly, one must be willing to sacrifice all for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom (Phi. 3:8).

The extent to which one must sacrifice is summed up by Paul:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Rom. 12:1-2).

This sacrifice is accomplished in part by not being conformed to this world. *Conformed* means "to form or mold an object after something." The term refers to the adoption or imitation of a pattern. The idea is that you take

a piece of clay and a mold, and you make the clay look exactly like the mold. Thus, God's people are not to be molded or patterned after the world. Unfortunately, many Christians talk, dress, and act so much like the world it is hard to tell the Christian from the heathen. However, God calls upon His people to be different. "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:17). When Jesus prayed for His disciples, He affirmed, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16).

For God's people to be different from the world, they must be transformed. This transformation is possible by the renewing of one's mind. The mind is transformed through Scripture. Such a person is one who "looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth

*therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (Jam. 1:25). Studying and obeying the Scriptures will cause one to become a different, better person. The transformation must take place in our mind because it controls our actions. "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Mat. 15:19).

We need to be careful what our minds think, because sin originates there; we need to transform our mind. Are you in the process of transforming your mind? Transforming the mind allows us to become a living sacrifice. As a living sacrifice you can "prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

*Huntsville, TX*

## Compromise and Hypocrisy

*Ken Chumbley*

A number of years ago, a Church of England (Episcopal) bishop relieved a priest from his post on the grounds that the priest did not believe in God. Evidently the priest, Anthony Freeman, had published a book in which he concluded that God did not exist, and, thus, "there is nothing out there; or if there is, we have no knowledge of it." It is not unusual to hear men say that they do not believe in the existence of God. What is strange about this is that this individual is one who made his living by purporting to be a "priest of God." Surely, such an individual is, to say the least, being hypocritical.

However, even more surprising was the outcry that followed against the bishop for his action in firing the priest. This outcry came from at least sixty-five other priests who signed a petition demanding the reinstatement of the fired priest. This petition stated that the grounds for demanding reinstatement are that priests should be allowed "freedom of expression" since the Church of England has never defined "God." Thus, priests should be allowed to express their views, regardless of how unorthodox they might be! Later, when defending his decision to fire the priest, the bishop indicated that the main reason he had

dismissed him was that the priest had been involved in the training of young men for the priesthood in the Church of England, and such an atheistic outlook would not be conducive to such training or be a good example to these young men.

This incident brings to mind the fact that there are those who are in pulpits of the Lord's church, who are being paid to be preachers of the Gospel of Christ, but who are actually preaching another *gospel*, which, in reality, is not another Gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). As such they are earning a living under false pretenses. Those who truly are bishops, elders in the Lord's church, need to take a stand, as did this Church of England bishop, and fire those who are not preaching the Truth and who uphold error.

The same would hold true as well for those who are engaged in the training of our young men in schools of preaching and our young people in Christian colleges who have espoused doctrines that are not taught in the Word of God. When those who operate these schools refuse to take such a stand so our young people are protected from such false teaching, faithful brethren need to take a stand and refuse to support schools that harbor such false teachers. For years there have been universities like Abilene Christian, Pepperdine, Lipscomb, and others supposedly operated by members of the church who continue to maintain false teachers among their faculty. However, other universities, like Freed-Hardeman, which were once considered sound, are also now harboring false teachers.

Similarly, with respect to Schools of Preaching, there have been those that for years have

had false teachers in their midst, such as Sunset. Now, however, we have schools that had for years been considered sound schools, including Memphis School of Preaching and Florida School of Preaching, and where brethren could be confident that those who went to study would be taught the Truth in all areas to prepare them for faithful service in the Lord's kingdom. The faculties of these schools are now willing to fellowship false teachers by appearing on lectureships with known, unrepentant false teachers that said faculties had in the past condemned for their false doctrine. Now things have changed and such fellowship is acceptable to some, even having false teachers on their own lectureships.

What does this teach students who attend such schools? It teaches them to ignore the teaching of God's Word, which has not changed. Such passages as Romans 16:17-18, 2 John 9-11, as well as others, still teach what they have always taught. Sadly, some brethren in *high places* think that they are above the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2). Thus, they are leading those students who have been sent to the schools to learn the Truth to ignore the plain teaching of God's Word. Such cannot be supported if we are to be pleasing to God.

*Deceased*

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Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Bill Busch	Joyce Johnson
Bill Crowe	

John Godwin (Aleacia Godwin's husband, scheduled for surgery on December 4)

Bette Podgurski (Bill & Peggy Crowe's daughter)

Carol Franklin (Joyce Johnson's cousin)

Ellie Crowe (Bill & Peggy Crowe's great-granddaughter)

Curry Silcox (Paul & Phyllis Brantley's granddaughter)

Isaiah King (Paul & Phyllis Brantley's friends grandson)

Brenda Loy (Nancy Loy's sister-in-law)

## Please Remember

### **December 4**

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### **December 10**

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

## New Phone Number

Karen Hatcher's new phone number is 206-5910. Please make changes to your directory.



# BEACON

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December 4, 2017

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## Christ and Him Crucified

*Jess Whitlock*

The preaching of the cross of Christ has always been imperative. Paul penned that “the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:18), and again we hear him say, “For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (2:2). The Gospel of Christ is God’s only power to save the lost (Rom. 1:16). It is God’s desire that all men, Jew and Gentile, be saved and “that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity” (Eph. 2:16). God the Father and God the Son considered the church to be so important that Jesus Christ “humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross” (Phi. 2:8). The old-time Jerusalem message will always put the cross of Christ at the front and center of

preaching.

This fact can be clearly seen in the very first Gospel sermon preached on the day that the church of Christ was established as recorded in Acts 2. Notice:

- What the Jews did **to** the Savior: “you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death” (2:23).
- What the Father did **for** the Savior: “whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it” (2:24). “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (2:36).
- What you and I must do to obtain salvation **of** the Savior: “ ‘Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of

you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit' ” (2:37-38).

Christ boldly claimed, “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself” (John 12:32). Earlier, Christ had prophesied:

When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and *that* I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things (8:28).

Let us, like Paul, be ever determined to teach and preach the powerful and precious message of Christ and Him crucified.

*Denison, TX*

## The True Facts about Christmas

Have you ever questioned anyone why December 25 is observed as the birth date of Jesus Christ? Have you ever searched the Scriptures to see if there is any authority for this idea? Why not? Man seems to be very inquisitive in many things but in the spiritual realm he is very assumptive; this is true with man in the observance of Christ's birth day as December 25.

Although it may be argued, and we concur, that one should be thankful that those who do not think about the Lord at any other time of the year do at least pause and reflect about the Savior around December 25; yet, we wonder about the benefits of this moment's consideration. Paul warned, “Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you” (Gal. 4:10-11). He was concerned about the Galatian brethren going back into and being conformed to the world about which he had exhorted the church in Rome when he said:

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not

conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God (Rom. 12:1-2)

This writer is *afraid* of those in the church who through a lack of knowledge observe December 25 as the birth of Jesus: this is in no way disrespectful to anyone but simply an exhortation to brethren and friends alike to “search the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11).

### What Are the Real Facts?

That it could **not** have been December 25 or in the winter: (a) Luke says there “were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night” (Luke 2:8). (b) Judean winters are too cold and rugged for the shepherds and their flocks to stay in the fields. (c) In the summer months they left them out to graze but brought them in during the winter.

The date was selected at random by Liberius, a Catholic Bishop, in AD 354. (a) This was a date of a heathen feast, the feast of the Sun or winter solstice, celebrating the victory of light over darkness. (b) This heathen feast was

celebrated the last half of December.

The Bible does not state how many wise men brought gifts to pay homage to the new born king; even though people have assumed there were three (there is no Scriptural evidence to suggest that these men were three in number). When they came with their gifts Jesus was no longer a babe in a manger but a child in a house.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh (Mat. 2:11).

*Christmas*, is of Catholic derivation: A “mass of Christ.” A mass is a repetition of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross of Calvary for the sins of the world. This is in sharp contrast to Hebrews 7:23-27, 9:24-28, and 10:8-14 which plainly state, “Christ was **once** offered to bear the sins of many.” The truth, however, is that many of the words we use on a daily basis have their origin in false religions, even pagan religions. Many of the days of the week were so derived. “Wednesday” came from “Woden’s Day,” and “Thursday” came from “Thor’s Day.”

There is no Scriptural record, nor reliable historical record, of where anyone, until centuries after Christ had died, worshiped His birth date. Therefore, there is no Scriptural authority or command for us to observe His birth date, but every day we should be thankful He came and dies that we might live.

While members of the church of Christ do not observe December 25 as the birthday

of Jesus Christ, there is nothing wrong in exchanging gifts with our friends and loved ones, as long as we realize there is no religious significance attached. We put up a tree and exchange gifts as a custom of the United States the same as we observe Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, or any other national holiday.

*Author Unknown*

## Example

If is all vain to preach of the truth  
To the eager ears of a trusting youth  
If, when the lad is standing by,  
He sees you cheat and hears you lie.  
Fine words may grace the advice you give,  
But the youth will learn from the way you  
live

Honor’s a word that a thief may use.  
High-sounding language the base may  
choose.

Speech is empty and preaching vain.  
Though the truth shines clear and the lesson is plain;  
If you play false, he will turn away.  
For your life must be square with the things  
you say.

The longer you live you will find this true;  
As you would teach you must also do,  
Rounded sentences, smooth and fair,  
Were better not said if your deeds aren’t  
square.

If you’d teach him to live his very best,  
You must live your life to the self-same test.

*Author Unknown*

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Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Bill Busch	Joyce Johnson
Bill Crowe	
John Godwin (Aleacia Godwin's husband)	
Ellie Crowe (Bill & Peggy Crowe's great-granddaughter)	
Isaiah King (Paul & Phyllis Brantley's friends grandson)	
Brenda Loy (Nancy Loy's sister-in-law)	

## Please Remember

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### December 17

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### December 18

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

## New Phone Number

Debra Mowery's new cell phone number is 512-6192. Please make changes to your directory.



# BEACON

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## Wonders of Jesus' Birth

*Dub McClish*

The Biblical record of the birth of Jesus Christ notably omits the date of its occurrence and any record of a special observance of His birth. It is, some twenty centuries distant from its occurrence, still a subject of great wonder for several reasons:

### The Simple and Delicate Record

Inspired historians consistently so treat events of surpassing significance (e.g., Creation, the flood). In forty verses (Mat. 1:18-2:12; Luke 2:1-20), we read the facts of Jesus' parentage and the place and purpose of His birth. The means of His conception is simply reported, providing the true purpose and perspective for the event.

### The Humble Circumstances

Men expect kings to be born in pomp and splendor and in great cities. Baby Jesus began His earthly life in miserable circumstances. Bethlehem was a humble village

over-shadowed by majestic nearby Jerusalem. There was no palace, no hospital, no doctor, not even a room in a house. His birthplace was a cowshed, His bassinet a feed trough. Nonetheless, He would become "King of kings," "Lord of lords."

### The Heavenly Announcement and Praise

An angel announced the impending birth to Mary and Joseph. An angel alerted the shepherds to this miraculous event, and a grand company of angels issued a chorus of praise in honor of the occasion. No other birth has ever excited such attention and interest from Heaven.

### The Attraction of Foreign Sages

Weddings, funerals, and births of known princes have long attracted notables from afar, but Jesus was unknown, even in His own nation. The magi traveled several hundred miles to honor Jesus' birth.

## The Political Jealousy and Murder It Stirred

King Herod's insane jealousy could not abide any thought of a political rival. In his paranoia, he slaughtered several defenseless infants and broke the hearts of perhaps dozens of parents. (Before we judge Herod too harshly, may we reflect on the 57+ million innocent babes that American mothers, judges, and doctors have shamelessly sacrificed on abortion's blood altar since 1973.)

### It Occurred Without a Human Begetting

Mary's conception of Jesus was by means of the Holy Spirit, apart from a human husband, as both Matthew and Luke matter-of-factly state. Isaiah foresaw this singular event seven centuries in advance (Isa. 7:14). Only by

the Divine begetting could the Word become flesh and dwell among us (John 1:14). **He deserves the praise, honor, and obedience of all humanity.**

*Denton, TX*

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## Everybody Influences Somebody

*F. F. Conley*

Everyone influences someone either for good or bad. It is impossible for one not to influence someone. There is not a faithful member of the Lord's church any place but who can influence someone for good.

There are many members of the church who have friends and relatives that can have a great impact for good. Each member of the Lord's church has a circle of friends or acquaintances they can influence that no one else can touch, and that imposes a responsibility.

How long has it been since we attempted to talk to anyone about his or her spiritual condition? We see people frequently who are members of the body of Christ who are unfaithful to the Lord, but not often do we ask, "How is it with your soul?" We talk about the government, the weather, the economic situation,

but seldom do we really get down to attempting to cause them to think concerning their standing before the Lord.

The Lord urges, "Go out into the highways and byways and bring them in." How much "bringing in" do we do? It is not necessary to walk down the street with your Bible under your arm accosting everyone you see and attempting to get into a discussion on religion. As we quietly go about our daily business there are opportunities to talk to someone about his spiritual situation.

If you know of those you can interest in the study of God's Word, and feel that you are not capable of doing the teaching there are others who can and will.

*Deceased*

# One Preacher's Effort Against Baptism

*Nathan Brewer*

When we published an article recently about the New Testament church compared to churches today, a preacher in Elk City wrote to us arguing that baptism is not necessary for salvation. One of the passages he cited was 1 Peter 3:21.

In the passage's immediate context, Peter is talking about the disobedient people who were preached to while Noah was preparing the ark, then he writes that in the flood, eight souls were saved by water (3:20).

The flood waters raised the ark, which contained Noah and his family, while the disobedient were destroyed below. Peter goes on to say in verse 21:

The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Our friend here in town argues from this verse that baptism "is merely a symbol" of our salvation.

But Peter does not say that. He says baptism is a figure—literally an "anti-type"—of Noah's salvation from the destruction that all other living creatures suffered. Peter's point is that just as Noah and his family were separated from the disobedient by means of the flood, so Christians are separated from the disobedient by means of water baptism.

Just as Noah's family was "saved by water," even so "baptism doth also now save us." Based on our friend's interpretation of this

passage, he would have Peter teach that baptism "doth *not* save us," which is the opposite of what Peter actually writes.

Peter goes on to explain that baptism is not meant to wash away literal dirt from our bodies, but is "the answer of a good conscience." Those who have been convicted of sin, and who genuinely want to make things right with God, respond by washing away their sins in baptism (Acts 2:33-41; 22:16).

Peter also ties baptism to Christ's resurrection in 1 Peter 3:21. "The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us...by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." This is the same point that Paul makes in Romans 6:3-4. A penitent sinner is buried with Christ in the waters of baptism, and he emerges from the water just as Christ rose from the tomb, with new life.

It is sadly ironic that a passage which is used to try to explain away baptism actually teaches its necessity. Baptism is not a figure of our own salvation—it is a figure, or likeness, of Noah's salvation from the world of sin.

And that is what baptism does. It takes us out of Satan's kingdom and puts us into Christ's kingdom. It is the dividing line between the old life and the new—between being lost and being saved.

Peter told believers in the first recorded Gospel sermon to repent and be baptized so they could be saved (Acts 2:37-38). For those willing to submit to Jesus Christ today, baptism doth also now save us.

*Elk City, OK*

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Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Bill Busch	Joyce Johnson
Bill Crowe	Nelda King
John Godwin (Aleacia Godwin's husband)	
Isaiah King (Paul & Phyllis Brantley's friends grandson)	
Brenda Loy (Nancy Loy's sister-in-law)	

## Please Remember

### Every Sunday

Ladies' Bible Class will meet after the afternoon service, in the zone room.

### December 10

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### December 17

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### December 18

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.



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# BEACON

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## Respect for the Bible

*Jerry C. Brewer*

Psalm 119 is a tribute to the Word of God. Of the 176 verses in this great Psalm, only six do not refer to the Word of God by the terms Law, Testimonies, Ways, Precepts, Statutes, Commandments, Word, Judgments, or Ordinances. In verses 6 and 117, David wrote:

Then shall I not be ashamed, When I have respect unto all thy commandments.... Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: And I will have respect unto thy statutes continually.

Today, we live in an age of rebellion and the spirit of the 1960s has reached most corners of our world. Children rebel against parents who allow them to rebel. Men rebel against civil government, and the world at large is in rebellion against God. Respect for sacred things is a forgotten principle. Paul wrote that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (Rom. 1:18). Those two

words—ungodliness and unrighteousness—describe man's attitude and conduct toward both God and his fellow man. *Ungodliness* is a failure to respect and reverence the things of God and *unrighteousness* describes man's treatment of his fellow man. One who is ungodly will certainly be unrighteous. There can be no respect in any area of life unless we are willing to respect God, and we will not respect Him until we are willing to respect His Word.

The words of our text indicate the deep and profound respect that David had for God's Word, and that is what must be instilled in the hearts of men and women, boys and girls today if they are to lead upright lives and please God, and a proper respect for God's Word begins with a proper attitude. Notice David's attitude toward God's Word in the following verses from Psalm 119: "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, And not

to covetousness” (119:36). “Behold I have longed after thy precepts: Quicken me in thy righteousness” (119:40). “And I will delight myself in thy commandments, Which I have loved” (119:47).

To understand and respect God, the Bible must be approached as His Word, not as the product of men. That is precisely what the Bible claims for itself:

All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

Peter said the Scriptures are not the product of men.

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. 1:20-21).

These claims are made not only for the Bible as a whole, but the inspiration by which those men wrote extends to the very words they penned. God did not give them a thought and allow them to express that thought in their own words. Paul wrote that the thoughts of God were expressed in words chosen by the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 2:9, Paul quoted Isaiah’s prophecy in Isaiah 64:4 which referred to the divine plan of salvation that was revealed through the apostles. Isaiah wrote, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for

them that love him” (1 Cor. 2:9). Paul then said:

But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual (2:10-13).

Note the last part of that passage. Inspired

## Lost Temper

When I have lost my temper,  
I have lost my reason too;  
I am never proud of anything  
Which I angrily do.  
When I have talked in anger,  
And my cheeks are flaming red,  
I’ve always uttered something  
Which I wish I hadn’t said.  
In anger I have never done  
A kindly deed or wise.  
But many things for which I feel  
I should apologize.  
In looking back across my life  
And all I’ve lost or made,  
I cannot recall a single time  
When fury ever paid.

*Author Unknown*

men spoke in words given to them by the Holy Spirit. Their inspiration extended to the very words they spoke.

To truly respect and understand the Bible, one must approach it with the attitude that it indeed came from God and that it is a divinely inspired Book. If the Bible is inspired (and

it is) then it is true. The Bible does **not merely contain** the Word of God. The Bible **is** the Word of God and its inspiration extends to the very words in which it was written (2:7-13). If any part of the Bible is not inspired, then we cannot believe any of it.

*Elk City, OK*

## Are There Miracles Still Being Performed Today?

### *Dub Mowery*

We recognize the miracles recorded in the Bible as being genuine supernatural happenings. These include the virgin birth of Jesus the Christ, raising the dead, instantaneous healing of the sick, speaking in foreign languages fluently in which they had not studied before speaking it, and many other miracles recorded in the Bible that are too numerous to list here. A miracle is an effect in the physical world brought about by a supernatural act by the will of God. It is when the natural physical laws are superseded by a supernatural act. Not all wonders and unknown events can correctly be called a miracle. Many times when a person is critically ill, they suddenly begin to improve and soon recover to a fairly normal state of health. There are those who are prone to say, "That's a miracle!" But, the truth of the matter is, that no natural law was superseded. Instead, several things in the natural realm may have combined in causing the person's health to improve. These could include medication and medical care, their natural immune system, their psychic (which included a strong will to live), and the providence of God in answer to prayers for the individual's physical wellbeing.

The marvel of a human baby coming into existence is often referred to as a miracle. The virgin birth of Jesus was indeed a miracle because no human male was involved in the begetting. "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost" (Mat. 1:18). All births since Biblical times are brought about by the natural laws of procreation.

The primary purposes of miracles have been fulfilled. These purposes were two-fold, they are: (1) to provide the complete revelation of God (John 14:26; 16:13) and (2) to provide the inspired men credentials (their proof) as being messengers of God (Heb. 2:1-4). The healing of the sick, raising the dead, etc., were by-products of the miracles rather than the primary purpose of them. Since we have the full revelation of the Heavenly Father, the era of miracles has already past (1 Cor. 13:8-10; Eph. 4:11-15; Jude 3). The inspired writers of the New Testament forewarned that there will be false apostles and prophets (1 John 4:1; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 2:2).

*Deceased*

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Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Bill Busch	Joyce Johnson
Bill Crowe	Debra Mowery
John Godwin (Aleacia Godwin's husband)	

## Please Remember

### January 8

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### January 14

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### January 15

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.



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# BEACON

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## The Uncommon Memorial Meal

*Roelf L. Ruffner*

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come” (1 Cor. 11:26).

For almost 2,000 years Christians have come together to remember their Lord’s command and to partake of a memorial meal or the Lord’s Supper.

And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight (Acts 20:7).

Over the centuries the apostate Roman church made this meal into a superstitious ritual. The bread became “the host” or “the real presence”—the literal body of Christ. The meal itself became separated from other acts of worship—a sacrament.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Christians sought to restore the simplicity, yet the necessity, of

observing the Lord’s Supper—command of Christ.

And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This *is* my body which is given for you: **this do in remembrance of me** (Luke 22:19).

Christians would ride on horseback, in wagons, carriages, and on foot for miles around to gather together to remember their Lord and Master’s death. Sisters would have baked the unleavened bread from flour, oil, and water. “The fruit of the vine” (22:18) had been made from grapes, carefully preserving the unfermented grape juice or “the blood of grapes” (Gen. 49:11). A simple cloth would sometimes cover the table and the emblems to keep the flies away. A brother would often make a short “table talk” to remind the partakers of what they were doing. One brother might “preside over the table” while the other

brothers passed out the emblems. There was no pomp and circumstance, no “mystery,” just simple New Testament Christianity.

Today, the weekly Sunday observance of this Christian act of worship distinguishes the Lord’s church from most other religious bodies. It is one of the identifying marks of the un-denominational church or “one body” (Eph. 4:4) you read about in the New Testament.

Dear reader, does the church you attend observe this memorial meal each and every Sunday or only monthly, quarterly, yearly, or on some “holy day?” Does it have a non-Sunday observance? Does it make the Lord’s Supper a part of some common meal? If the answer is “yes” to any of these practices, by what authority do they do this? Is it by man-made authority (tradition, manual, church edict,

discipline, etc.) or the authority of the Lord—the New Testament?

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him (Col. 3:17).

But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men (Mat. 15:9).

If the answer is “yes” please, please flee that church like Joseph fled from Potipher’s wife! Seek and find the body of Christ—the church one reads about in the New Testament.

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in **the breaking of bread** and the prayers (Acts 2:42—ASV).

*Columbia, TN*

## At the Judgment

God will not ask how many material possessions you had, but, rather, if they dictated your life.

God will not ask the square footage of your house, but how many people you welcomed into your home.

God will not ask about your social status, but what kind of “class” you demonstrated.

God will not ask what your highest salary was, but if you compromised your character to obtain that salary.

God will not ask how much overtime you worked, but if you worked overtime for your family and loved ones.

God will not ask how many promotions you received, but how you promoted others.

God will not ask what your job title was, but if you performed your job to the bet of

your ability.

God will not ask how many friends you had, but how many people to whom you were a true friend.

God will not ask what you did to protect your rights, but what you did to protect the rights of others.

God will not ask in what neighborhood you lived, but how you treated your neighbors.

God will not ask about the color of your skin, but about the content of your character.

God will not ask how many times your deeds matched your words, but how many times they did not.

God will not ask what you did to help yourself, but what you did to help others.

*Author Unknown*

# A Vanishing Attitude Toward Truth

*Charles Pogue*

We live amidst a world wherein truth is determined by the individual. The true religion is whichever one a person chooses for himself. Among those who claim Christianity as their religion, the assumption is that whatever one believes is doctrinally correct, is. There are even many in this category who agree with the world that whatever religion one chooses is okay, and that if in the end he was wrong about that, he can confess it in the Day of Judgment and still be saved. What a terrible condition the religious world is in!

In the Lord's church, the same attitude that leads the world into wrong thinking is also a significant problem among us. What is that attitude? It is the brashness to assert, if not verbally assert, to at least live like truth is not absolute. The contention is that individualism is the ultimate, and that no one has the right or obligation to point out that sin is sin. The attitude is, what one believes to be right or wrong is his own business, and no one else should ever say, "that is wrong!"

This attitude is a rejection of both God and God's Word. Be not mistaken, one cannot accept God while rejecting the Bible as His inspired Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17). In that exact same vein of thought, the Son of God stated that one is sanctified by the truth and God's Word is the truth (John 17:17). That is the truth to which He was referring in John 8:32 when He said, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." No one in the history of man has ever been made free

by following his own ideas (Pro. 14:12; 16:25; Jer. 10:23).

As we look about us, we see people, even members of the church the Lord built, directing their own steps and never studying the Scripture to see where those steps are leading them. Not only so, but there is reasonable evidence to draw the conclusion that among the Lord's own people there are many who want to decide for themselves what to believe both in doctrine and in morality. How they want to live is more important to them than pleasing the Lord and being saved in the end. What the world offers is more appealing than what God offers, and Hell is worth living this life the way they want to. What is more important to them is what they want rather than what God wants. Truth is neither applicable nor objective in their foolish minds.

These attitudes show that there is among many a disappearing belief that truth is objective, knowable, and doable. Further, it is certainly not appealing to them. That belief and that attitude are totally disproved by the Lord Jesus when He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Mat. 24:35). Combine that with His declaration that if we love Him we will keep His commandments (John 14:15), and no reasonable person would ever conclude that truth is subjective and determined by each individual according to his own wishes and desires.

*Beeville, TX*

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## Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Marge Williams	Henry Hignite
Anthony Polnitz	Tim Busch
Debbie Dawson	Nancy Travis
Cary Parks	Rheba Stancliff
Bill Busch	Joyce Johnson
Bill Crowe	Debra Mowery
John Godwin (Aleacia Godwin's husband)	
Frieda Mowery (Debra & Denise Mowery's mother, West Florida Hospital)	

## Please Remember

### January 8

Visitation Group 1 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### January 14

Deacons' meeting will be held prior to the afternoon service, in room 1.

### January 15

Visitation Group 2 will meet at 6:00 p.m., in the zone room.

### January 21

Elders/Deacons' meeting will be held after the afternoon service, in room 1.

### January 31

Fifth Wednesday Singing at 7:00 p.m., in the auditorium.



*Defender and Beacon*

Available Via E-Mail

Send your e-mail address to:  
[bellviewcoc@gmail.com](mailto:bellviewcoc@gmail.com)