

News & Notes

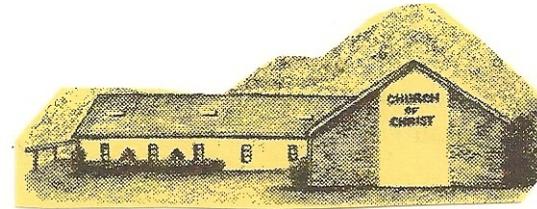
Upcoming events: Every 2nd Sunday of the month we have an afternoon song practice (Next Week). Ladies' Bible class is held on the 2nd Monday night of every month (Next week as well). The men's Bible class is scheduled for the 4th Sunday of each month (Will be on the 26th this month).

Pray for the Sick: Leon Miller (Recovering from knee surgery), Mike Sadler (Recovering from neck surgery), Brian James (Patti's son), Linda James, Jimmy Johnson (long-time member at the Trilacoochee church of Christ), Karen Stanley (Bonnie's daughter), Jerry Jordan (Ken's brother is battling cancer), Nadine Fields (Moses' sister), Forrest Cunningham (Butch Morgan's nephew who was involved in a serious car accident), and Bob Waldron (Gospel preacher at Trilacoochee has not been well lately). Let us be sure to keep these people in our thoughts.

Out of Town: Jerry Williams, the Wisdom family, and the Groenhof family are all traveling.

Group Meeting: Please make the effort to be involved with our group meetings. Your name and assigned group is posted on the bulletin board on the right as you exit into the foyer. Many continue to comment on how well they've been encouraged through the efforts put forth in those meetings. Group (2) meets tonight.

Please remember: Pictures will be taken today to update our board in the vestibule. Also, be sure to consider our shut-ins and check on those not accounted for being absent in the announcements.



Lakeland Hills Leader

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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ELDERS

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EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

SERVICES

Sunday
Bible Study 9:00 A.M.
Morning Services 9:50 A.M.
Evening Services 6:00 P.M.
Wednesday
Bible Study 7:30 P.M.

DEACONS:

Robert Marschall
Michael Sadler
Eric Stevens
Moses Stevens
David Williams

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 1/8/14

Song Leader: Eddie Lawson
Opening Prayer: David Williams
Invitation: Colby Sadler
Announcements: Larry Hicks
Closing Prayer: Rodger Robinson
Parking Lot: Paul Llyod

Sunday Evening: 1/12/14

Song Leader: Nick Ross
Opening Prayer: Bucky Day
Lord's Table: Charles Rawdon
Announcements: Larry Wisdom
Closing Prayer: Daniel Staggers
Parking Lot: Colby Sadler

Sunday Morning: 1/12/14

Lord's Table: Charles Rawdon (B)
Ben Cunningham (C)
Serving: Ed Lawson
Eddie Lawson
Song Leader: Larry Wisdom
Opening Prayer: Nick Groenhof

Announcements: Larry Hicks
Closing Prayer: James VanDoorn
Parking Lot: (9:00) Norm Blackburn
(9:50) Mike Sadler

“Examine, Explain, & Apply”

“**And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people**, for he was *standing* above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. Then all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with *their* faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, **helped the people to understand the Law**; and the people *stood* in their place. **So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped *them* to understand the reading.**” (Nehemiah 8:5-8, Emphasis mine.)

Within chapter 8 of Nehemiah, we see some elements recorded of the assembly of God's people that we can appreciate regarding how we ought to teach God's word. First of all, notice the bold type setting of verse 5... **“Ezra opened the**

book in sight of all the people". It is vital that God's people see the one presenting the message giving attention to examination of the text. Far too often, scripture is merely referred to or paraphrased in congregations of today. This has led to a generation of God's people being Biblically illiterate. Let us be sure that we all give proper attention to the reading and **examination** of God's word.

Along with the examination of the written text, consider also that those who brought forth the message **"caused the people to understand the law"**, & **"they read in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading"**. Essentially, what was performed by these teachers was an **explanation** of the reading. They expounded upon the scriptures. So then, when presenting God's word there was both an examination AND explanation of the text. But that's not all. Consider that while the people gave proper reverence for God, the examination, explanation, and subsequent comprehension of the scriptures is what would prick their hearts! (See Neh.

8:9-10) What then would be the result of the people's acceptance of the message?

After Nehemiah, Ezra, and the Levites comfort the people in verses 9-12, we read of how they would therefore express an eagerness to hear and be instructed...

"Now on the second day the heads of the fathers' *houses* of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand the words of the Law. **And they found written in the Law, which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month**, and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as *it is* written." **Then the people went out and brought them and made themselves booths**, each one on the roof of his house, or in their courtyards or the courts of the house of God, and in the open square of the Water Gate and in the open

square of the Gate of Ephraim. **So the whole assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and sat under the booths**; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so. And there was very great gladness. Also day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day *there was* a sacred assembly, according to the *prescribed* manner." (Nehemiah 8:13-18, Emphasis mine.)

The text above points to the fact that the hearers consequently realized that there was something left undone on their part. So what did the teachers of the law do after **examining** and **explaining** the text? There was given for the people — proper **application**! They were told that the law prescribed an observance of the feast, and therefore they were told how to keep it. As a result, the people responded fittingly.

God gives us a great example in how we ought to teach the His word in the public forum here. Referencing a

passage is not inherently a bad thing to do - but let us not do so to the extent in which we form habits of neglecting textual examination. Along with that, let us be mindful of helping to "give the sense" for everyone to "understand the reading". All of that said, understand that the Bible only helps so much as we are able and willing to apply the lessons appropriately. These concepts can be seen in the N.T. as well. (See 1Thess 5:27, 1Tim 4:6;12,13, 15, 16; 1Tim 6:11-16.)

Life-changing Bible study must include the right type of response on the part of the hearers, but teachers can do their part in providing **examination, explanation**, and proper **application** of God's word.

(All quotations provided from the New King James Version)

- Ian Rice