

### NEWS AND NOTES

- ◇ Please remember in prayer— Ahrea Miller, Dottie Reynolds, Heather Capuana, Cindy Hicks, Arlene Turner, Madge Hicks, Patti James' son (Brian), Debbie Montgomery , Alma Townsley (Angela Wisdom's aunt) , Jane Ross (Nick & Robin's Grandmother), Nadine Fields (Moses' sister), Hugh Sills, and Ted Penland, Joshua Dykes (Butch Morgan's cousin), and Bob Calkins (A friend of the Millers).
- ◇ Bob & Steph Marchall, Jim Abram, Karen Berry, Paula Sullivan, Nick & Emilee Ross, and Audrey Davis are out of town.
- ◇ Please remember also our shut-ins:
- ◇ Group 1 meets tonight.

**\*UPCOMING EVENTS \***

- Last Friday of each month - Teen Bible Study (**June 28th—This Week**)
- 2nd Sunday each month - Afternoon Song Practice
- 2nd Monday night each month - Ladies' Bible Class. (*On hold throughout summer*)
- 4th Sunday of each month -Men's Bible Class (**June 23rd— Today @ 4:30pm**)

\* \* \* \* \*

### Assignments

Wednesday Night: 6/26/13

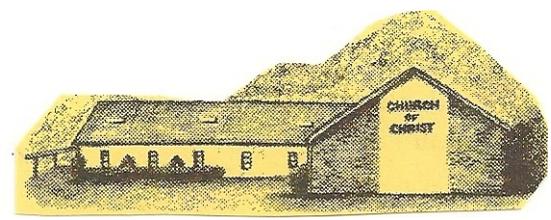
Song Leader: Clay Sadler  
 Opening Prayer: Jordan Lawson  
 Invitation: Bucky Day  
 Announcements: Bob Marschall  
 Closing Prayer: Jerry Williams  
 Parking Lot: Paul Lloyd

Sunday Morning: 6/30/13

Lord's Table: Mike Sadler (B)  
 Colby Sadler (C)  
 Serving: Kirk Marschall  
 Keith Marschall  
 Song Leader: Bob Marschall  
 Opening Prayer: Jim Elliot  
 Announcements: Leon Miller  
 Closing Prayer: Sherman Johnson  
 Parking Lot: (9:00) Jim Abram  
 (9:50) Norm Blackburn

Sunday Evening: 6/30/13

Song Leader: Ronnie Henderson  
 Opening Prayer: Rodger Robinson  
 Lord's Table: Mike Sadler  
 Announcements: Leon Miller  
 Closing Prayer: Eddie Lawson  
 Parking Lot: Colby Sadler



# Lakeland Hills LEADER

**LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
 2510 Lakeland Hills Boulevard Lakeland Florida 33805 (863) 688-4336  
[www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com](http://www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com)

<p><b><u>ELDERS</u></b>          Larry Hicks (863) 899-7405          Leon Miller (863) 640-6378</p>	<p><b><u>SERVICES</u></b>          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.</p>	<p><b><u>DEACONS:</u></b>          Robert Marschall          Michael Sadler          Eric Stevens          Moses Stevens          David Williams</p>
---	--	--

**EVANGELIST:**  
 Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

### *“The Dark Path of Bitterness”*

How is it possible for Satan to defeat and capture a child of God who has previously escaped his grasp? In conversion Satan is exposed for the deceiver that he is. Jesus described him as having “no truth in him” and as being a “liar and the father of it (**John 8:44**).” While it is inconceivable for a Christian to ever imagine himself as willingly placing his life under the control of the “evil one,” Satan in fact has a strong track record of accomplishing this very thing. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour (**1 Peter 5:8**).”

Satan's goal is to cut off the word of God from your heart and then drive you by your emotions. The Bible frames this struggle in this way: “Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. (**Romans 8:12-13**)” Over the years I have witnessed many of my brethren destroyed in this manner, and the vast majority were overcome with bitterness and anger.

There is a place for anger! When Jesus asked a straightforward question and received no reply, He looked into their hearts and responded in this way: “And when He had looked around

at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts... **(Mark 3:5)**.” My Lord was angry, and my Lord never sinned. There is a place for anger when it is under control and directed by the principles of God’s word. “Be angry, and do not sin: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil. **(Ephesians 4:26-27)**.” We need to be angry when we see sin! But always remember this warning “do not let the sun go down on your wrath,” because a failure to do so will give the devil a place in your heart and be assured, he will take advantage of it.

Why do so many of my brethren not take uncontrolled anger seriously? I know of too many men that laugh about their temper and others who laugh with them saying “that’s just the way he is.” What does the Bible say? “Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him **(1 John 3:15)**.” Does this verse get your attention? My eternal life is no laughing matter and anything that could come between me and my God has my attention.

Consider the works of the flesh: “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, **hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions**, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God **(Galatians 5:19-21)**.” Did you notice

the “anger family” in this verse? While we hear many good sermons on immorality and false doctrine, do we hear that same emphasis on uncontrolled anger? Remember “those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

The Bible plainly tells us of the difficulty of controlling our anger. “He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city **(Proverbs 16:32)**.” Moses was commended by God above all others for his ability to control his spirit **(meekness – Numbers 12:2 ASV)**, but in a moment of anger he spoke rashly and thus sinned. “They angered Him also at the waters of strife, So that it went ill with Moses on account of them; <sup>33</sup> Because they rebelled against His Spirit, So that he spoke rashly with his lips. **(Psalm 106:32-33)**.” While Moses went to the ultimate Promised Land of God, heaven, he was not able to enter the physical Promised Land because of this one moment of anger.

When we begin to dwell on our hurts and nourish our anger, we are placing ourselves firmly in the hands of Satan. Have you ever tried to reason with an angry person? When you give in to a life of anger you also give up your ability to reason. “A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, and contentions are like the bars of a castle **(Proverbs 18:19)**.” The corrupt politician and the false teacher specialize in slander designed to shut down the thinking process. There are many Christians that I have known who, because of their anger towards a man, have quit serving God. What sense does that make? It is like getting mad at the dog and kicking the cat! In

short your anger will make you a crazy person, unwilling to listen or reason, and ready to fight anyone or anything that gets in the way of your desire for revenge.

Local churches can be devastated by just one man who plants seeds of bitterness. We are warned in the scriptures to be “Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled **(Hebrews 12:15)**”. Bitter people often try to build their own personal kingdoms that one has described as “the fellowship of the miserable.” You will be received and flattered by this group as long as you hate whoever the leader hates. I personally have been attacked by such groups for doing nothing more than showing kindness to someone that was an object of another’s anger.

Bitter people will be lost if they do not repent. The greatest evangelists for Satan today are those Christians who plant the seeds of hatred in the church of our Lord.

In time bitter people will burn themselves out and their kingdoms will disband. Sometimes the bitter person will repent and return to the grace of God. Sadly, however, they often are unable to reverse the effects of the angry seeds they planted in the hearts of those that were closest to them. It is in the lives of their friends and especially in their children that the harshest fruits of planted bitterness will be seen.

There is a better way. “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind

to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. **(Ephesians 4:31-32)**” You will never regret releasing the desire for vengeance upon those who have hurt you. Our God has pleaded with us in this regard: “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord **(Romans 12:19)**.”

Do you really believe in God? Are you really a Christian, willing to follow in the footsteps of Jesus? Look carefully at the specific footsteps our God has placed before us: “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously **(1 Peter 2:21-23)**. The next time you are tempted to inflict punishment upon your enemy, I hope you will remember the pleading voice of God where he said “vengeance is mine.” If you really trust God then you will let it go. Please do allow Satan to do his work through you.

-Larry Rouse