

News & Notes

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

Young Adult Study: Our 1st study will be at the Cunningham's residence on April 18th.

Keep in Prayer: Our members: Linda James & Butch Morgan. Many of our family and friends are also in special need of prayer: Karen Stanley (Bonnie's daughter), Brian James (Patti's son), Jerry Jordan (Ken's brother), Nadine Fields (Moses' sister), Jimmy Johnson, and Paulette Sills.

Out of Town: Karen Berry, Nick and Emilee Ross.

Group Meeting: Group (3) meets tonight after worship. We encourage all in this group to please meet and participate in this very important work.

Please remember: Our shut-ins and check on those not accounted for being absent in the announcements.

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 3/19/14

Song Leader: Keith Marschall
Opening Prayer: Ronnie Henderson
Invitation: Bob Marschall
Announcements: Mike Sadler
Closing Prayer: Jordan Lawson
Parking Lot: Leon Miller

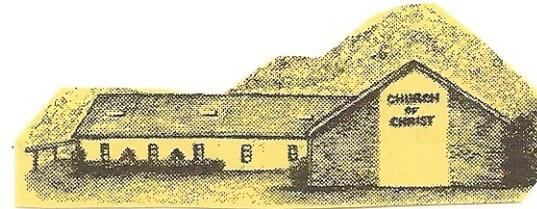
Sunday Evening: 3/23/14

Song Leader: Nick Ross
Opening Prayer: Sherman Johnson
Lord's Table: Ben Cunningham
Announcements: Charles Rawdon
Closing Prayer: James VanDoorn
Parking Lot: Bucky Day

Sunday Morning: 3/23/14

Lord's Table: Ben Cunningham (B)
 Jerry Williams (C)
Serving: Daniel Staggers
 Jim Abram
Song Leader: Larry Wisdom
Opening Prayer: Butch Morgan

Announcements: Charles Rawdon
Closing Prayer: Jeremy Whitehead
Parking Lot: (9:00) Jim Abram
 (9:50) Mike Sadler



Lakeland Hills Leader

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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ELDERS

Larry Hicks (863) 899-7405
Leon Miller (863) 640-6378

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

EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

“Caring for the ‘Unstable’ in the Flock”

A crucial work of a shepherd is to protect the flock. Knowing both the strengths and weaknesses of each member is important in order to know how to help each one. Because of his experience, a capable shepherd can see danger coming before the actual time of crisis. The ability to be alert, to warn, and to have a plan of action when danger comes will often make the difference between spiritual life and death to vulnerable sheep. (Heb 13:17)

A new Christian, by his very nature, has not yet learned the doctrine of Christ to the point where he is grounded in it and – as a result – he can be, “carried about with every wind of doctrine.” This back and forth instability makes one especially vulnerable to those who have an agenda of whom the Holy Spirit describes as influencing others in “cunning craftiness” and “deceitful plotting.” (Eph 3:14-15)

Identifying the Unstable

One may be unstable for many reasons. In addition to a lack of knowledge and experience, one may be very prone to being overwhelmed by his emotions. Consider some of the fruits of instability.

1. He is undependable. Just like a ship without an anchor, those who lack consistent direction will often let others down. Children who lack maturity often “forget” the assigned task to do something fun. Unstable people can be full of excitement and sincerity but have a difficult time seeing things through to the end. The parable of the sower illustrates the fruits of the one who, “has no root in himself, and so endure only for a time.” (Mark 4:16-17)

2. He has trouble maintaining long term relationships. It is difficult maintaining relationships when you are undependable. Also the unstable can become accustomed to quickly moving on when another person has disappointed him or no longer meets his “needs.” Some unstable people live in what I call “the land of throw-away people.” You can go from being a dear friend to a disposable “opponent” overnight. Jesus acknowledges this as a characteristic of undependable, fickle men. (Jn 2:23-25)

3. He can quickly change his sense of “reality.” When instability is a product of uncontrolled emotion, one can imagine almost anything about what is “real.” King Saul allowed jealousy and bitterness to dominate him to the point that he made his most loyal subjects, David and Jonathan, enemies in his own mind. (1 Sam 22:8; 20:32-33)

4. He can become ego centered. Some unstable people have made themselves the center of their own universe. As a result they are always looking at people and events only as they relate to them. (2 Cor 10:12) This self-centeredness can quickly lead to pride where putting others down to feel better about themselves can become a common way of thinking. (Lk 18:8, 11)

5. He has difficulty developing a doctrinal core. This can especially be a problem for one given over to their emotions. The one who learns to conceal and bury his anger may over time battle chronic depression. When one is already burdened by his own past and weakened by his present emotions, he will often withdraw from things that are difficult. Doctrinal beliefs are profitable only when one has a faith to stand in it. (Heb 10:34-37) When one is seeking to escape conflict at all costs then taking the easy way out is preferred. Rather than contending for the faith, the unstable may

become angry with the contender as a “troublemaker.” He would rather be left alone undisturbed. (Jude 3)

Helping the Unstable

1. You must be patient and gentle. Because he is unstable, he may both attack you and praise you depending on the occasion. As much as he will allow you to associate with him and teach him, let the wisdom of Christ guide you in your efforts. (Gal 6:1; 2 Tim 2:24-26)

2. Help him develop a doctrinal core and have the courage to stand on it. He needs to build a Biblical faith where the unchangeable God is at the center of his life. Help him build a faith where doubts and questions are openly brought before God, knowing that God has answers! (Psa 77:5-15) Let that faith be one that learns of God’s nature and promises through His written word and that is expressed in public worship with the people of God. (2 Pt 1:3-4) He also needs to learn how to identify his own bouts with false realities by plainly knowing God and His ways. (Psa 73:11-17)

3. Help him to establish relationships with solid people. It is often true that the ones who need help the most from good people are the very ones who draw back from them or make it very difficult for others to have a relationship with

him. An unstable man can seek to dominate others by demanding that others line up with his own changing realities. He needs the firmness that comes from one who is grounded in the love of God and His ways.

4. Help him avoid “toxic” relationships. The scriptures give numerous warnings of how other unstable men can take advantage of “the simple” by “smooth words and flattering speech. (Rom 16:18) An unstable man is vulnerable to special attention and flattery from one seeking to gain a following. Some seek to spread “the gospel of bitterness” by stirring the anger of others toward an individual or toward brethren in general. The apostle Paul faced a schism that was formed by those seeking to “exclude” others from Paul by stirring passions so that others may be “zealous” for these new “enlightened” leaders. (Gal 4:16-17) Those who are captured by such deceivers are often destroyed spiritually.

May the Lord help each of us to identify and help those to move from an unstable condition to one where they are firmly planted in the love of God! (Eph 3:14-21)

By Larry Rouse