

NEWS AND NOTES

- ◇ Please remember in prayer– Ken and Arlene Turner, Patti James, Debbie Montgomery, June Ross (Nick & Robin’s Grandmother, Hugh Sills, and Ted Penland.
- ◇ Linda James will be having surgery on April 11th.
- ◇ Check the bulletin board for upcoming Gospel Meetings.
- ◇ Please remember also our shut-ins:
- ◇ Group 3 meets tonight.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Last Friday of each month - beginning in April
- 2nd Sunday each month - Afternoon Singing
- 2nd Monday night of each month - Ladies’ Bible Class.
- 4th Sunday of each month -Men’s Class **(Today)**

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Assignments

Wednesday Night: 3/27/13

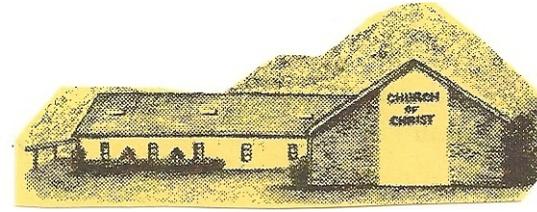
Song Leader: Jeremy Wharton
 Opening Prayer: Bucky Day
 Invitation: Jordan Lawson
 Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: Daniel Staggers
 Parking Lot: Kirk Marschall

Sunday Morning: 3/31/13

Lord’s Table: Bucky Day (B)
 Clay Sadler (C)
 Serving: Ed Lawson
 Kirk Marschall
 Song Leader: Bob Marschall
 Opening Prayer: Jerry Williams
 Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: Moses Stevens
 Parking Lot: (9:00) Jim Abram
 (9:50) Mike Sadler

Sunday Evening: 3/31/13

Song Leader: Keith Marschall
 Opening Prayer: Nick Groenhof
 Lord’s Table: Bucky Day
 Announcements: Leon Miller
 Closing Prayer: James VanDoorn
 Parking Lot: Ken Turner



Lakeland Hills LEADER

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST
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<p><u>ELDERS</u> Larry Hicks (863) 899-7405 Leon Miller (863) 640-6378</p>	<p><u>SERVICES</u> 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><u>DEACONS:</u> Robert Marschall Michael Sadler Eric Stevens Moses Stevens David Williams</p>
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EVANGELIST:
 Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

“What about the Pope?”

The Catholic world has recently been shell-shocked by the news of Benedict XVI stepping down as pope. With all the recent media uproar over his resignation, it may lead us to wonder about the very office of pope, and what the Bible says about such a position. The Catholic Church sees the pope as the Vicar of Christ (or earthly representative of Christ), meaning that he stands in the place of Christ and possesses all authority over the church. Some religious groups claim that Peter held an exalted position as the first pope, and that said position has been passed down from Peter ever since. What does the Bible say about all this?

Before we look at specific questions, we must understand that our answers to religious questions must be found in God’s word, and not in the opinions of men. Christians have a grave responsibility to study God’s word for themselves, and not to just believe whatever others tell them.

Consider **2 Corinthians 13:5**:
“Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.” Notice those important words: *examine* and *test*. No one can do this for us, because as Paul tells Timothy, we must *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* (**2 Timothy 2:15**). Let us ask some Bible questions and look to our Bible for answers.

Did Jesus appoint any man to be head of His church? Jesus gave His life for His church. He did so to *“sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish”* (**Ephesians 5:26-27**). So the Lord’s church is just that: *HIS* church, and no one else’s. He does not share headship over it with any man.

God gave Jesus to be *“head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all*

in all” (**Ephesians 1:22-23**). If Jesus is head over “all things,” then what is left for a pope to rule over?

Jesus has been given all authority in Heaven and on the earth (**Matthew 28:18-20**). The Lord is called the “one Lawgiver” in **James 4:12**. To claim that the pope (or any other man or manmade organization, for that matter) may issue religious laws is to deny the unique power and position that the Son of God has over His church.

The husband is the head of the wife, just as Jesus is head of the church (**Ephesians 5:23**). Just as a wife submitting to two husbands would be adultery, so would the church submitting to two heads (Jesus and a pope) be *spiritual* adultery! Jesus is the head of the church; no other is worthy of that great distinction!

Did Jesus say that Peter would be the foundation of His church?

Many who teach that the apostle Peter was the first pope appeal to Jesus’ words in Matthew 16:18 when they make that claim. That verse reads: *“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My*

church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” Many supporters of the papacy say that here Jesus is naming Peter as the church’s foundation. However, we need to study the context of this statement to get the full picture. This passage (vs. 13, 15, 16) is not discussing who *Peter* is...it is discussing who *Jesus* is! Jesus is the one being glorified here, not Peter.

Jesus here contrasts Peter’s name (PETROS, or “a piece of rock”) with the rock He would build His church upon (PETRA, or “a mass of rock”). The foundation of the church was not Peter; rather, it was the powerful truth that Peter had just confessed: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (verse 16)! Peter himself, in later writings, would confirm this, calling the Lord a “living stone” and the “chief cornerstone” (**1 Peter 2:5-8**).

We must understand that the Lord’s church has only one foundation, and only one head: *“For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ”* (**1 Corinthians 3:11**). Any church that follows a head other than Christ is NOT the Lord’s church, no matter what they may say about themselves. Any church that wears a name other than His, or practices doctrine dif-

ferent from what Jesus and His apostles taught, is NOT His church!

The name Christian means “Christ-like,” disciples of the Lord Jesus. We cannot honestly call ourselves that if we follow men’s teachings instead of the Lord’s: *““Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”* (**Matthew 7:21-23**).

What about you? Have you been added to the Lord’s church (**Acts 2:38-47**)? Or are you following the traditions of manmade religion?

(Lance Blackburn)