

NEWS AND NOTES

- ◇ Please remember in prayer– Rudy Mosley, Mike Sadler, Rachel Miller, Patti James’ son (Brian), Addy Anthony, Kathy Gray, Debbie Montgomery , Alma Townsley (Angela Wisdom’s aunt) , Jane Ross (Nick & Robin’s Grandmother), Nadine Fields (Moses’ sister), Hugh and Paulette Sills, Ted Penland, Joshua Dykes (Butch Morgan’s cousin), Bob Calkins (A friend of the Millers), Dorothy Wilson (a friend of Marian Church in MI), Hal Lewis, Jane Halbert, Ned Hicks, and Melanie Moore.
- ◇ Group 1 meets tonight.
- ◇ Please remember also our shut-ins.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Last Friday of each month - Teen Bible Study
- 2nd Sunday each month - Afternoon Song Practice
- 2nd Monday night each month - Ladies’ Bible Class. *(Beginning Next Month!!)*
- 4th Sunday of each month -Men’s Bible Class

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Assignments

Wednesday Night: 9/18/13

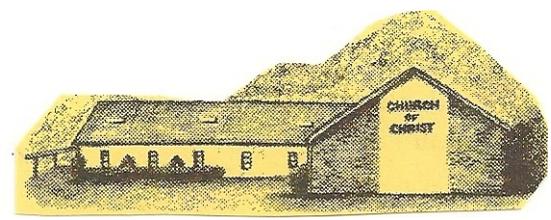
Song Leader: Eddie Lawon
 Opening Prayer: David Williams
 Invitation: Butch Morgan
 Announcements: Mike Sadler
 Closing Prayer: Rodger Robinson
 Parking Lot: Colby Sadler

Sunday Morning: 9/22/13

Lord’s Table: Bucky Day (B)
 Nick Ross (C)
 Serving: Nick Groenhof
 Rodger Robinson
 Song Leader: Charles Rawdon
 Opening Prayer: Ronnie Henderson
 Announcements: Larry Hicks
 Closing Prayer: Sherman Johnson
 Parking Lot: (9:00) Norm Blackburn
 (9:50) Jim Abram

Sunday Evening: 9/22/13

Song Leader: Nick Groenhof
 Opening Prayer: Ben Cunningham
 Lord’s Table: Bucky Day
 Announcements: Larry Hicks
 Closing Prayer: Jerry Williams
 Parking Lot: David Williams



Lakeland Hills LEADER

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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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“Social Relationships in a Local Congregation”

The Lord’s design for His people is that they be “knit together in love” (Col 2:2). “If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it” (1 Cor 12:26). We cannot serve God and be separate from people, but rather we are called to serve others. The power of love was such a firm purpose of our Lord that He described this characteristic, above all others, as the identifying mark of His people. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-35).

Only the gospel has the power to bring Jew and Gentile, slave and freeman, the rich and the poor into the same local congregation and make that group a close-knit, loving family (Gal 3:28). When men are humbled and see the gospel as their only identity, then educational differences, racial differences and any other man-made distinctions will be laid aside as rubbish—they view their brethren not just as equals, but as better than themselves. It is in this spirit that service to others becomes a privilege! “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others” (Phil 2:3-4).

The Ideal versus the Real

Have you been a member of a church that abounded in love for each other? There have been times in my life where the congregation that I attended was approaching this spirit of service and love. I have also learned that it is a great challenge to find and maintain that spirit. There are so many pitfalls and temptations that can easily turn a church from a place of edification to a place of discouragement. Consider some common problems that we face in working with our brethren.

On the Outside Looking In

It is crucial that every member understands that he truly belongs and is cared for. When a Christian believes that he is an outsider among the brethren he assembles with, he becomes vulnerable to many temptations. It is easy in that situation to give into jealousy, bitterness or to be overwhelmed by guilt (2 Cor 2:7-11). Good people can become careless and fail to see the needs around them, especially when they are satisfied with the associations they have.

Certain Visitors Not Welcome!

A few years ago I was working with a couple that showed great interest in the gospel. They started attending services where I preached and also began a home Bible study with me. It was not very long until they privately began referring to the church as “the clique.” This concerned me,

since I had a good relationship with them. At the end of one service I decided to step back and observe the interaction of others with this couple. At the dismissal of services, I watched as this couple waited for some time near the back of the auditorium at the place where everyone would exit. My heart ached as I observed how on that day very few spoke to them, while most Christians were rushing to visit with the ones they always talked to after services. My brethren, while not realizing or meaning to, communicated very clearly that this couple was not welcome.

The Haves and the Have-Nots

The divide between those who are “rich in this world’s goods” and those who are not can provide a great challenge to a local group. It is far easier to associate only with those who have your tastes and can do the things that you do. It also is very easy to look down upon those who have less and even harden your heart toward them. “But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?” (1 John 3:17).

I have seen churches where groups of couples go on trips to ski resorts, cruises and other expensive trips. It is not wrong to do this, nor should one stop this because others cannot afford it. However, it is important to make every effort to do things that will also allow you to associate with those

Putting a Wet Blanket over the Assembly

When problems arise in a local church in the relationships between Christians, it is crucial that the leadership address these issues with haste. When these problems are ignored, they will only grow until the assemblies of the church become stressful and strained, and in some cases contrary to the encouragement it ought to be.

The early church successfully faced challenges like this. The neglect of the Greek widows in the church at Jerusalem was quickly recognized and corrected (Acts 6:1-7). The apostles were quick to point out occasions of neglect and preference by strongly rebuking and correcting these attitudes (Phil 4:2-3; 1 Cor 11:20-22).

Let love reign in the place you assemble! Why not make plans now to include a brother that is not in your normal group of associates? You will find that the more you give to and involve others, the greater the blessing you will receive.

- By Larry Rouse

Christians who have less than you! If you exclusively associate with the rich, then you do not have the heart of our Lord (Mt 11:5).

Attitudes from Parents to Children

Unfortunately children too can display a cruel tendency to exclude and even punish those who are different. Christian parents must remain alert for these attitudes, challenge them and correct them. What a great lesson for parents to teach their children—giving to “unlovable” people the love that they need. It is in the home that we teach our children to include others that are “difficult” in our activities because that is exactly what our Lord wants us to do! “For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?” (Mt 5:46).

Sadly, I have also seen where a mother became bitter towards another couple or even towards a child, and in both spoken and in unspoken actions encouraged their children to snub and exclude other children. It is a far greater hurt for a parent to consistently see their child excluded from group plans than if that same action was taken towards them as adults. It becomes very difficult for a parent to instill faith in their child when the actions of others are so contrary to the gospel of Christ. When this scenario occurs and is not corrected, that congregation will likely lose an entire generation of young people.