

### NEWS AND NOTES

- ◇ Please remember in prayer– Suzette Stevens, Arlene Turner, Patti James’ son (Brian), Debbie Montgomery (At Blackburn’s house), Alma Townsley (Angela Wisdom’s aunt) , June Ross (Nick & Robin’s Grandmother, Hugh Sills, and Ted Penland.
- ◇ Linda James will be having surgery this Thursday.
- ◇ Check the bulletin board for upcoming Gospel Meetings.
- ◇ Please remember also our shut-ins:
- ◇ Group 2 meets tonight.

**\*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. *(Tomorrow night!)*
- 4th Sunday of each month -Men’s Bible Class

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### Assignments

Wednesday Night: 4/10/13

Song Leader: Kirk Marshall  
 Opening Prayer: David Williams  
 Invitation: Mike Sadler  
 Announcements: Bob Marshall  
 Closing Prayer: Daniel Staggers  
 Parking Lot: Leon Miller

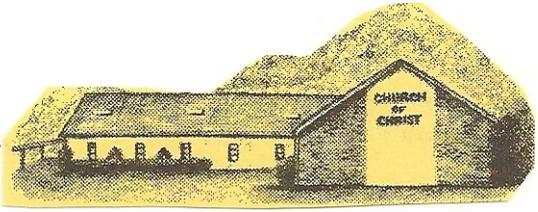
Sunday Morning: 4/14/13

Lord’s Table: Larry Wisdom (B)  
 Clay Sadler (C)  
 Serving: Jordan Lawson  
 Jim Abram  
 Song Leader: Bob Marshall  
 Opening Prayer: Leon Miller  
 Announcements: Larry Hicks  
 Closing Prayer: Colby Sadler  
 Parking Lot: (9:00) Norm Blackburn  
 (9:50) Mike Sadler

Sunday Evening: 4/14/13

Song Leader: Nick Ross  
 Opening Prayer: David Williams  
 Lord’s Table: Larry Wisdom  
 Announcements: Larry Hicks  
 Closing Prayer: Eddie Lawson  
 Parking Lot: Leon Miller

*\* Women’s Bible class will be tomorrow night at Paula Sullivan’s house. Lesson topic will be “Rebekah - Who Lost What She Loved Most” - Pages 36-44.*



## Lakeland Hills LEADER

**LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
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<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 Marshall          Michael Sadler          Eric Stevens          Moses Stevens          David Williams</p>
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**EVANGELIST:**  
 Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

### *“Four Steps to a Happy Marriage”*

(Unless noted, all quotations are from Proverbs).

*“He who finds a [spouse] finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord” (18:22).* Though many married couples would enthusiastically agree that marriage is a blessing from God, others find themselves more in agreement with the words of 21:19, *“Better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and angry [spouse]<sup>1</sup>.”* Why do some consider their marriage a blessing, while others suffer through conflict, pain, and, in many cases, divorce. Many reasons could be given, but one of the biggest differences is that some, with the proper fear of the Lord (1:7; 9:10), find in God’s word the knowledge and wisdom necessary to not only please God, but build a happy marriage. Consider four things we can do to help make this union a good thing and a favor from the Lord.

### Be Content

*“Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure with trouble. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a fatted calf with hatred”* (15:16, 17). *“Better is a dry morsel with quietness, than a house full of feasting with strife”* (17:1). While Solomon is emphasizing that a happy home is built upon love, peace, and the fear of the Lord, he also points to that which often destroys the peace and love in the home, viz. covetousness. When a couple cannot be content, strife is often the result as more hours must be worked, the mountain of debt grows higher, resentments are stirred by complaints of not having or making enough, etc. Couples who measure success by what they accumulate often neglect the training and discipline of children—after all, there are only so many hours in a day—and undisciplined children do not make for a happy, peaceful home.

Does contentment equate to a lack of ambition and drive? Is it wrong to seek to better one’s lot in life? Not at all, but we must realize that “the house does not make the home.” We can determine to have a happy, loving, God-fearing home regardless of how much or how little we may have. If we seek to make this kind of home our priority, time and opportunity may see more and better possessions come our way, but because our happiness was not dependent on them, we will not have sacrificed our marriage to obtain them.

### Use Kindness of Speech

*“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver”* (25:11). In all circumstances we should choose our words carefully, but, unfortunately, we too often are the most careless and thoughtless in the way we speak to the ones closest to us. We must learn to speak with kindness, and especially on those occasions when trouble may be brewing: *“A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger”* (15:1). In every marriage there will be times when one or the other will say something that is not “fitly spoken.” Though it shouldn’t happen, it does, but the key is what happens next. If the one on the receiving end of an improperly spoken word responds with harshness, more anger will be stirred and a full-blown conflict may emerge. But if, on the other hand, the response is a soft answer, it will usually help calm the situation. While a soft answer does not always defuse the situation immediately, it does serve to keep the problem from escalating and allows the angry one’s wrath to slowly dissipate. *“A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back”* (29:11).

In the best of marriages there will be differences, but when such times arise we must remember these words of wisdom: *“The beginning of strife is like releasing water; therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts”* (17:14). In order to stop the contention there may times you must agree to disagree; times you must postpone a decision

until later when a calmer atmosphere prevails; and there may be times you simply give in (assuming questions of sin and righteousness are not involved). Pride makes it difficult to give in, but giving in is better than releasing that which can never be bottled up again.

### Be Strong

*“If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small”* (24:10). If in searching for the secrets of marital success we were to study couples who have been married for more than fifty years, we would probably find that, in general, they have experienced as many of life’s difficulties as though who have divorced. They have had differences of opinion; suffered financial difficulties; cared for one another through physical ailments; had disappointments and heartaches; in other words, they faced their share of adversity, but with a commitment to a promise made before God **they simply refused to faint** in the day of adversity. *“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it”* (1 Corinthians 10:13).

### Be Intimate

Contrary to the thinking of many today, marital happiness is about so much than the sexual relationship between a husband and a wife, but Solomon does speak of its importance in

building happiness and preventing temptation. *“Rejoice with the wife of your youth. Always be enraptured with her love”* (see 5:15-20). While modern marriage manuals and popular magazines often focus on the physical mechanics of this relationship, the Biblical model shows us that the pleasures of this intimacy are best enjoyed by those who first fear God, love one another, speak with kindness, work for peace, etc. This physical relationship is encouraged by God and should be enjoyed by both husband and wife, but the best marriages are those where this intimacy grows out of the bonds of genuine love and concern for one another.

John R. Gibson

*All quotations from the New King James Version, copyright 1994 by Thomas Nelson Publishers*

<sup>1</sup>In 18:22 the text has wife and in 21:19 woman, but I have substituted the word spouse because much of Proverbs is written in the style of a father talking to his son, thus the emphasis on his “son” finding a good “wife.” However, because the principles apply equally to both husbands and wives I substituted the word spouse for the purposes of this article.