

News & Notes

Upcoming: Every 2nd Sunday of the month we have an afternoon song practice (Next one Sept. 14th), once a month is held a young adult study, and our men’s Bible class is scheduled for the 4th Sunday of each month (Next class will be Sept. 28th). The women’s monthly Bible study will resume on October 13th.

5th Sunday Night Sing: Tonight we will worship God with more of an emphasis on singing songs of praise to Him.

Keep in Prayer: Linda James had a successful surgery last week and is recovering at the Florida Hospital in Carrollwood (She is allowed visitors). Mildred Church was admitted to LRMC after a fall at home on Thursday, and is now recovering. Continue to keep in mind also those we have made special note of lately, as well as our expecting mothers who will be delivering soon, Lord willing (Emilee Ross and Kassandra Groenhof).

Out of Town: The Groenhof family, Jim & Mary Elliot, Jerry Williams, Kirk Marschall, Audrey Davis, and Paula Sullivan are all out of town.

Group Meeting: Group (3) meets tonight after worship.

Special Note: Sister Edith Miller (Leon Miller’s mother) passed from this life in her sleep at the Good Shepherd Hospice Facility last Sunday evening at about 8:30pm. Please be mindful of her family at this time, but also rejoice that she is now able to receive her eternal reward!

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 9/3/14

Song Leader: Keith Marschall
 Opening Prayer: Eddie Lawson
 Invitation: Nick Groenhof
 Announcements: Bob Marschall
 Closing Prayer: Jim Elliot
 Parking Lot: Larry Hicks

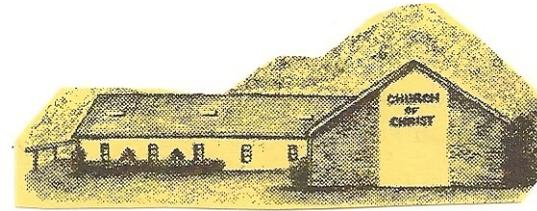
Sunday Evening: 9/7/14

Song Leader: Nick Groenhof
 Opening Prayer: Bob Marschall
 Lord’s Table: Nick Ross
 Announcements: Larry Hicks
 Closing Prayer: Paul Lloyd
 Parking Lot: David Williams

Sunday Morning: 9/7/14

Lord’s Table: (B) Nick Ross
 (C) Rodger Robinson
 Serving: Ben Cunningham
 Ed Lawson
 Song Leader: Charles Rawdon
 Opening Prayer: Sherman Johnson

Announcements: Larry Hicks
 Closing Prayer: Keith Marschall
 Parking Lot: (9:00) Leon Miller
 (9:50) Norm Blackburn



**Lakeland Hills
 Leader**

LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

2510 Lakeland Hills Boulevard Lakeland Florida 33805 (863) 688-4336

www.lakelandhillschurchofchrist.com

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

“In good Company; Daniel’s Example”

In Ezekiel chapter fourteen, we read of God’s reasons for destroying Judah (Idolatry; Unfaithfulness). With regard to a nation’s persistent unfaithfulness even after His warnings and chastisement, the word of the Lord came again to Ezekiel saying, *“Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves by their righteousness,” says the Lord God.* (Ezekiel 14:14). In verse 18, Ezekiel writes, *“even though these three men were in it, as I live,” says the Lord God, “they would deliver neither sons nor daughters, but only they themselves would be delivered.”* (Ezekiel 14:18). In the Bible, we do read of how a godly influence within a given society can provide the people certain protection. I find it interesting though, that in this chapter alone there is reference to these men (Noah, Daniel, and Job) four times. **Four times** in this chapter (**Verses 14, 16, 18, and 20**) we read of how even the influence of these righteous men would not be enough to withhold God’s hand from exercising judgment upon a persistently unfaithful nation (Verse 22) I also find it interesting that Ezekiel chose to name these specific three men.

During the time in which Ezekiel had written this, the people of God would have plenty of their own history to draw upon with this lesson. Noah was a man who *“found grace in the eyes of the Lord”* (Genesis 6:8) even though he lived during a time where, *“the wickedness of man was great in the earth”*, and every intent of the thoughts of men’s hearts, *“was only evil continually”* (Genesis 6:5). Job was an ancient hero of faith in whom the Jews looked up to as well. In defending Job’s faith, God told Satan, *“Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and up-*

right man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" (Job 1:8). The accounts of Noah and of Job had been around a long while by the time Ezekiel prophesied, so the people of Judah could certainly draw upon their example of faithfulness. But Daniel? He was contemporary with Ezekiel! So... it is interesting that, along with these two pillars of faith (Noah and Job), Ezekiel would make mention of Daniel as an example of faith. (Btw, Daniel's wisdom is also commended in Ezekiel 28:3) It is fascinating to think of Ezekiel mentioning Daniel in the same breath of Noah and Job, yet while the two were prophesying during the same period of Bible history. So then, how was it that Daniel gained such a good reputation - in such a short period of time? That is what I want for us to learn and be encouraged in with this short lesson!!

Daniel, chapter one: After being taken captive by the Babylonians, Daniel and his three companions (Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah) were brought into the king's court for three years of training, *"so that at the end of that time they might serve before the king"* (Daniel 1:5). *"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself."* (Daniel 1:8) Pretty well, most scholars believe Daniel to be around sixteen or seventeen years old during this time that he was taken away and put into the king's court for training. During a time of life in which many young people are so impressionable, and pressured by external circumstances – Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself! That was such a

wonderful example for God's people to learn about during the time of Babylonian captivity; it is also a wonderful example for God's people today. For young people, purpose in your heart (make up your mind) that you are not going to defile yourself with anything, but that you will serve God—no matter what the circumstance.

In Daniel chapter two, we learn of how king Nebuchadnezzar had dreams so troubling that his sleep left him (Daniel 2:1). It soon became apparent that no one on earth (by his own power) could interpret the king's dreams, and *"For this reason the king was angry and very furious, and gave a command to destroy all the wise men of Babylon. So the decree went out, and they began killing the wise men; and they sought Daniel and his companions, to kill them."* (Daniel 2:12-13) After asking the king to give him time, that he might tell the dream's interpretation, Daniel went to his friends and they sought mercies from the God of heaven concerning the matter. When the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision, Daniel blessed the God of heaven (**See Daniel 2:20-23**). Also, when Daniel went before Nebuchadnezzar to explain and give interpretation of the king's dream; Daniel was sure to give God the glory. *"Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these:"* (Daniel 2:27-28)... And thus, Daniel continued to explain and interpret for the king. Moving through the chapter, we learn that Nebuchadnezzar was very impressed with the Lord after having his first direct contact with Daniel.

We too (like Daniel) are all in various, respective positions to provide influence upon others. Moreover, as God's children, we may be at times tempted feel puffed up over any wisdom that we may possess. James 1:5 says that if we ask God for wisdom, He will grant *"to all liberally and without reproach"*. However, we must remember that whatever wisdom we *do* possess; it comes from God... It is only on loan to us! *One of the main reasons we remember Daniel as one of the great characters of the Bible is because he lived by this kind of faith all throughout his lifetime.

Daniel, chapter six: For as long as I can remember, Daniel chapter six has provided for me a great deal of encouragement (Daniel in the lion's den). In the chapter, we learn of Daniel's jealous adversaries seeking to entrap and destroy him. Because of his sterling character though, they couldn't find any charge, fault, or error in him. *"Then these men said, "We shall not find any charge against this Daniel unless we find it against him concerning the law of his God."* (Daniel 6:5) They knew by observing Daniel that he was faithful to His God, so they had to devise a plan in which they would deceive the king (Darius), *"... to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions."* (Daniel 6:7). It is worthy to note, *"... when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days."* (Daniel 6:10).

This was his custom since early days! For those of who are aged, maybe you can appreciate the fact that *Daniel got on his knees three times a*

day to pray. Due to the information provided in Scripture as well as secular history, we can figure that Daniel was somewhere in his eighties during the time of this event. That is important for us to learn, as there are some brethren who have done very good things in their youth... only to drift away in the years in which they should be passing the torch. There are, sadly, some brethren who have once done great things for the brotherhood-- only to drift into apathy, a lukewarm attitude, and bitterness. Let us realize that Daniel was a faithful example to God's people well into his "golden years".

Consider again just a few reasons why Ezekiel would have chosen to mention the faith of Daniel along with Noah and Job. Even at a young age, Daniel purposed to serve God wholeheartedly, no matter the cost (**Lesson:** Young people can make a positive difference and serve as a good example, too). Daniel also continued to give all honor and praise to God while providing a good influence for king Nebuchadnezzar (**Lesson:** All throughout our lifetime, let us stay humble and give God the glory for *whatever* wisdom we have obtained). Also, Daniel serves as a great example in remaining faithful as an aged man (**Lesson:** Don't grow weary in serving as a faithful example. Others are observing and taking note; So you can and should still be making a difference!) These are just a few examples and lessons to learn from.... I encourage you to make the study your own!

-Ian Rice