

## News & Notes

**Afternoon Singing:** We will have an afternoon singing at the building this afternoon at 5pm.

**Men's Class:** Next men's class will be conducted at the building, Dec. 28th (4:30pm).

**Ladies' Class:** Next class will be on Monday, January 12th, at Karen Berry's home (7pm).

**Young Adults' Study:** Next study will be at Colby and Kaitlyn Sadler's house on Friday, January 23rd (7:30pm)

**Prayer Requests:** *Our brethren:* Kayla Cunningham (Please continue to pray things go well during her pregnancy), Bonnie Meagher (Bonnie is doing better, but has been battling illness for a month now), and Martha Smith (Had her last physical therapy session last week & her mobility is getting better). Rebecca Wisdom and Sunny Day have been sick over the last week. Also remember the Groenhof & Ross families (They both have newborns at home).

*Our friends and family too:* Please put Larry Wisdom's mother on your list. Her name is Canera Wisdom (She has been diagnosed with cancer in the advanced stages). Remember also Ted Penland (Butch Morgan's son-in-law), Heather Tyer (Family friend of Butch Morgan), Janelle Hastings (Hospice is in home), Naydene Fields, Brian James, Hal Lewis, Gary Jones, and Jeff Sprott.

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

**Out of Town:** Kirk Marschall is traveling for work and Ruth Miller is visiting with family.

## Assignments for Worship Service

### **Wednesday Night: 12/17/14**

Song Leader: Ben Cunningham  
 Opening Prayer: Jerry Williams  
 Invitation: Larry Wisdom  
 Announcements: Leon Miller  
 Closing Prayer: Jim Elliot  
 Parking Lot: Clay Sadler

### **Sunday Evening: 12/21/14**

Song Leader: Keith Marschall  
 Opening Prayer: Colby Sadler  
 Lord's Table: Charles Rawdon  
 Announcements: Leon Miller  
 Closing Prayer: Sherman Johnson  
 Parking Lot: Larry Hicks

### **Sunday Morning: 12/21/14**

Lord's Table: Charles Rawdon (B)  
                   Ben Cunningham (C)  
 Serving: Keith Marschall  
               Jordan Lawson  
 Song Leader: Larry Wisdom  
 Opening Prayer: Jim Elliot

Announcements: Leon Miller  
 Closing Prayer: Paul Lloyd  
 Parking Lot: (9:00) David Williams  
                   (9:50) Mike Sadler



# Lakeland Hills Leader

## LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST

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

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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

## *“What can wash away my sins?”*

There are many who contend that water baptism (by immersion) is not an essential command for sinners to obey in order to receive God's favor. For one to do that, he must refute these explicit statements made by inspired men – including Jesus Christ Himself.

- “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” (Mark 16:16)
- “Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5)
- “Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2:38)
- “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” (Acts 22:16)
- “Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup> Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so

we also should walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:3-4)

- “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” (Galatians 3:27)
- ... “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5)
- “There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 3:21)

There are other passages that we could cite, but I hope we can acknowledge that baptism has been commanded by Jesus Christ, and the *purpose* for baptism was made clear by those who taught His word in the 1<sup>st</sup> century (Acts 2:38).

Some wrongfully cry that members of the churches of Christ teach water baptism is what's literally going to wash away one's sins. I cannot speak for what others are teaching, but I for one do not believe that Acts 22:16 speaks to water as the literal agent for what washes away one's sins. *What* is the actual *agent* that can “wash away” our sins? Read for yourself the following passages.

- “For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” (Matthew 26:28)
- ... “knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, *like* silver or gold, from your aimless conduct *received* by tradition from your fathers, <sup>19</sup> but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.” (1 Peter 1:18-19)
- ... “and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood” (Revelation 1:5)
- “And I said to him, “Sir, you know.” So he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Revelation 7:14)

We sing together often, “*What can wash away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus; What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Oh! precious is the flow That makes me white as snow; No other fount I know, Nothing but the blood of Jesus.*” (Robert Lowry) The *agent* that makes atonement for sins - is the blood of Jesus Christ. So then, Jesus' blood is *what* “washed us from our sins” (Rev. 1:5).

Some may now sincerely ask, “Well, what then exactly *does* Acts 22:16 teach?” Acts 22:16 does not point to *what* washes away one's sins, so much as it speaks to *when* one's sins are washed away. Figuratively speaking, one gains access to Jesus' blood *when* he/she is baptized into Jesus' death. “*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?*” (Romans 6:3) Water baptism is “for the remission of sins”, and is the point for *when* we gain access to the blood of Christ, forgiveness, salvation.

My hope is to shed some light on what some are debating concerning the necessity of baptism, concerning how and when an individual can receive a pardon from their sins. (*What* is the agent that saves, also *when* one is saved) None of this is too difficult to understand if we will humbly accept what the Scriptures plainly teach. If the wording of this article has been difficult to understand, please contact me so that we can study the matter out together in person.

Understand that sin is explained and identified in the Bible (1 John 3:4; 5:17; James 4:17; Romans 14:5, 23). Sin is what separates you from God (Isaiah 59:1-2), and your sins will doom you to eternal separation in hell if you are not forgiven (Matthew 25:41). You cannot save your-

self from sin by your own efforts (Matthew 19:23-26; Titus 3:4-7), yet God's grace makes salvation from sin possible for you – through Jesus Christ (Isaiah 53:5; Hebrews 2:9; Ephesians 1:7). *What* can wash away your sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. *When* were your sins washed away? Have they been washed away? (Acts 22:16; Revelation 1:5)

- Ian Rice

All Bible quotations provided from the New King James Version.

*“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Ephesians 4:4-6)*

*“As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:9)*

*“Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure...” (2 Peter 1:10a)*