

News & Notes

**Afternoon Singing:** Today at the building — in the auditorium (5pm).  
**Ladies’ Class:** Class will be held tomorrow, Jan. 12th, at Karen Berry’s home (7pm).  
**Young Adults’ Study:** Next study will be at Colby and Kaitlyn Sadler’s house next week on Friday, Jan. 23rd (7:30pm)  
**Men’s Class:** Next class will be conducted at the building on Jan. 25th (4:30pm).  
**Prayer Requests:** *Our brethren:* It is good to see Martha Smith back with us for worship, since she has been out for some time after her injury. Let us continue praying for her, as well as for Betty Eubanks (dealing with pain), Linda James (Migraines & neck pain), Terrelle Lawson (Sickness), Leon Miller (Knee), Butch Morgan (Ongoing health issues), and Kayla Cunningham (Pregnant... and expecting a boy!!).  
*Our friends and family too:* Larry Wisdom’s mother (Canera Wisdom; diagnosed with cancer in the advanced stages), Paulette Sills (friend of Butch Morgan who’s mother passed away), Janelle Hastings, Naydene Fields, Brian James, Hal Lewis, Gary Jones, DeeAnn Sprott, and Waylon Townsend.  
**Out of Town:** The Goenhof family, Colby & Kaitlyn Sadler, and Kirk Marschall are all out of town.  
**Group Meeting:** Group (1) meets tonight after worship.

Assignments for Worship Service

**Wednesday Night: 1/14/15**

Song Leader: Clay Sadler  
 Opening Prayer: Eric Stevens  
 Invitation: Keith Marschall  
 Announcements: Mike Sadler  
 Closing Prayer: David Williams  
 Parking Lot: Ed Lawson

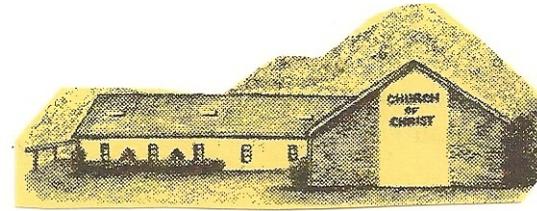
**Sunday Evening: 1/18/15**

Song Leader: Keith Marschall  
 Opening Prayer: Ronnie Henderson  
 Lord’s Table: Colby Sadler  
 Announcements: Larry Hicks  
 Closing Prayer: Mike Sadler  
 Parking Lot: Leon Miller

**Sunday Morning: 1/18/15**

Lord’s Table: Colby Sadler (B)  
 Eddie Lawson (C)  
 Serving: Ed Lawson  
 Clay Sadler  
 Song Leader: Bob Marschall  
 Opening Prayer: Leon Miller

Announcements: Larry Hicks  
 Closing Prayer: Ben Cunningham  
 Parking Lot: (9:00) Norm Blackburn  
 (9:50) Paul Lloyd



Lakeland Hills  
 Leader

**LAKELAND HILLS CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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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

*“Responding to Our Enemies”*

*“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake” (Matt. 5:11).*

How do we handle a person who reviles us, persecutes us, and says things about us which are not true? The natural response is to retaliate and get even. But how are we to respond to our enemies and be pleasing unto God? Let us go to His Word for the answers.

1. **REJOICE** if we are being mistreated because we are faithfully serving the Lord. If we are suffering because of our evil deeds, then we should be ashamed. However, the Apostle Peter tells us— “Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter” **(1 Pet. 3:15-16)**. Notice the next verse following our text: “Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you” **(Matt. 5: 12)**. Although some may seek to make our lives miserable here on earth, our reward in heaven will be great if we remain faithful while we are hurting for His sake.

**2. LOVE THEM, DO GOOD TO THEM, AND PRAY FOR THEM.** This is what Jesus was teaching in **Matthew 5:44**: “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.” Normally, we will have to do a lot of praying for *ourselves*, asking for strength, before we will be able to do this for our enemies. But we will reap many benefits if we can sincerely do what Jesus commands in this passage. Again, let us observe the inspired words of the Apostle Peter, as it relates to this kind of situation. “...not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing” (**1 Pet. 3:9**). Remember—this is the example Jesus left for us and we are to follow in His steps. “For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: ‘Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth,’ who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously” (**1 Pet. 2:21-23**).

**3. TURN IT OVER TO GOD.** When men crucified our Lord, He prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (**Lk. 23:34**). In one short prayer, we find Jesus loving His ene-

mies, blessing His enemies, and praying for His enemies. The Apostle Paul tells us to *turn it over to God* when he said: “Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head: Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (**Rom. 12:19-21**). This is basically what Christ was teaching in His “Sermon on the Mount” in **Matthew 5:38-48**.

In a sense, we are being good to ourselves when we are good to our enemies. May the Lord help and be with us when we are meeting the challenge of correctly *responding to our enemies*.

-By R.J. Evans

### “A Great Benefits Package”

We won’t find a better benefits package anywhere. Choose to walk in the path of righteousness, and these are just some of the benefits we will receive.

**It is a pleasant path to travel.** “Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace” (Proverbs 3:17). The marriage relationship, home life in general, relationships with others—these become much more pleasant when we follow His wisdom.

**It’s the best thing we can do for our children.** “The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him” (Proverbs 20:7). Lois and Eunice were a great blessing to Timothy, because they chose this path (2 Timothy 1:5). The same could be said for Zacharias and Elizabeth, John the Baptist’s parents, who walked “in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless” (Luke 1:6). We do our children a great disservice if we choose any other path. **We won’t find better traveling companions anywhere.** Traveling companions can make or break a trip, and when we travel the path of righteousness, we’ll be traveling with the finest people in the world. Think of it as a family trip, because we’ll be going with a bunch of mothers and fathers and sisters and brothers (Mark 10:28-30).

**We can walk this path with complete integrity.** “He who walks with integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will become known” (Proverbs 10:9). To get to where we want to go on this path, we don’t ever have to lie, or cheat, or take advantage of anyone.

**Walking along this path enables us to sleep soundly at night.** “When you lie down, you will not be afraid; yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet” (Proverbs 3:24). We can sure sleep soundly, when we know that all is well with our soul, when we know that if we don’t make it through the night, we’ll be in a better place.

**Walking God’s path ensures us of God’s help.** “He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints” (Proverbs 2:7-8). “The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (James 5:16). We’re on our own if we choose to walk in another path.

**It is a brightly lit path that grows brighter and brighter.** “But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day” (Proverbs 4:18). It may not seem that way in the beginning, because we don’t yet see all the benefits. This path may even seem a bit restrictive; we may feel like it’s “cramping our style.” But the longer we stay on it, the brighter it gets. Just ask any older Christian, who has been on this path for many years.

**It is the only path that leads to eternal life, to eternal joy and gladness.** “In the way of righteousness is life, and in its pathway there is no death” (Proverbs 12:28). The Book of Isaiah describes this path as the “Highway of Holiness” (Isaiah 35:8), and says that those who walk on it will “come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away” (Isaiah 35:10).

-By Bryan Gibson