

**News & Notes**

**Upcoming Events:** Teachers' meeting **this afternoon at the building (5:15pm)** for those who will participate in teaching next year. Women's monthly Bible study resumes next week, Monday, October 13th—at Paul Sullivan's house.

**Prayer Requests:** Please keep Linda James, Kassandra Groenhof, Leon Miller, Butch Morgan, Pat Dickey (member of the Southwest church of Christ; diagnosed with colon cancer), Naydene Fields, Brian James, Jerry Jordan, and Hal Lewis in your prayers. Will Doyle (Jordan Lawson's friend) would like to express his thankfulness for the prayers on his behalf. It was announced last week that Margaret Gilcrest (Ralph and Janet Gilcrest's mother) & Bill Johnson (husband of Charlotte Johnson) have passed away. Please be mindful of their families during this difficult time for them.

**Out of Town:** Audrey Davis, Kirk Marschall, Paula Sullivan, Larry Wisdom, and Rebecca Wisdom are all out of town.

**Group Meeting:** Group (2) meets tonight after worship. Please continue to be involved with the group meetings. Much good is being accomplished through those efforts of encouragement.

**Gospel Meeting (s):** The Trilacoochee church of Christ's meeting is this week; Oct. 5th - 9th, with Ed Brand of Russellville, AL preaching. The Southwest church of Christ in Lakeland is holding a meeting next week, Oct. 12th-15th, with Mark Copeland. Let us seek to attend where possible.

**New Baby:** Isla Blake Ross was born to Nick and Emilee this past Tuesday at 4:08pm! She weighed 7lbs, 13oz and was 21.25 inches at birth. Now is an exciting time for the Ross family, so let us rejoice with them!! (*Ps. 127:3-5; Rom. 12:15*).

**Assignments for Worship Service**

**Wednesday Night: 10/8/14**

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

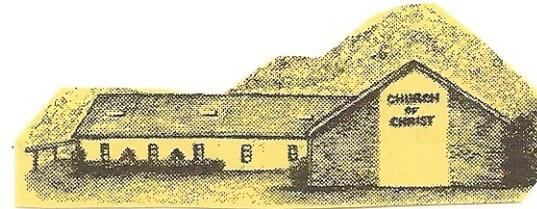
**Sunday Evening: 10/12/14**

Song Leader: Eddie Lawson  
 Opening Prayer: Colby Sadler  
 Lord's Table: Charles Rawdon  
 Announcements: Leon Miller  
 Closing Prayer: Jim Elliot  
 Parking Lot: Larry Hicks

**Sunday Morning: 10/12/14**

Lord's Table: Charles Rawdon (B)  
 Ben Cunningham (C)  
 Serving: Eddie Lawson  
 Trent Stevens  
 Song Leader: Larry Wisdom  
 Opening Prayer: Nick Groenhof

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**

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**ELDERS**

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**EVANGELIST:**

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

**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

***“Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord?”***

So far in our adult Bible class, we have noted that the northern kingdom of Israel never did have a righteous king throughout their existence. We have also noted that throughout Judah's existence, there were at least some good kings.

Concerning Jehoshaphat's reign (873-849 BC), none of the kings that Judah had up until that point were extremely wicked. Rehoboam and Abijah did not serve God as faithfully as they should have, but they still offered the sacrifices at the temple and, at least, did not oppose the faithfulness of those who wanted to worship correctly. As a result, God was with Judah and they had prospered accordingly. The Bible record tells us that Jehoshaphat was a good king, “Now the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the former ways of his father David; he did not seek the Baals, but sought the God of his father, and walked in His commandments and not according to the acts of Israel. Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah gave presents to Jehoshaphat, and he had riches and honor in abundance. And his heart took delight in the ways of the Lord; moreover he removed the high places and wooden images from Judah” (2 Chr. 17:3-6). Indeed, Jehoshaphat was a truly good and righteous man who sought to continue the reforms his father (Asa) had begun.

Israel, on the other hand, had gone in a spiritually downward spiral from the day it began with the introduction of golden calve worship, introduced by Jeroboam (922-901 BC). By the time Ahab of Israel came to power (869-850 BC), Israel not only was guilty of never rejecting the golden calves, but many righteous people living in the northern kingdom had migrated to Judah. Furthermore, Ahab not only *allowed* Baal worship in the land, but he also made it the official religion!! The Bible uses very strong language that condemns the actions of Ahab, "Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord, more than all who were before him. And it came to pass, as though it had been a trivial thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and worshiped him. Then he set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a wooden image. Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him" (1 Kings 16:30-33). Without a doubt, Ahab was very evil and wicked, and his ways only continued to lead the northern kingdom toward destruction.

What we find in the character of these two men is a very stark contrast, yet the two men formed an odd alliance of peace with one another (1Kings 22:44). When at first considering this proposition, we may think that Jehoshaphat could provide a godly influence on Ahab... Maybe Jehoshaphat could talk about things like proper worship, reverence for God's way of living, and all that Ahab could do to reform the northern kingdom? Not so, as the association between these two allies eventually would cause great damage to Judah over the long haul. In

fact, their treaty of peace was sealed with the marriage of Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram and Ahab's daughter Athaliah (2Chr. 21:6); and her family's influence would prove to be devastating! It is a wonder how one of the best kings ever to rule in Judah could befriend one of the worst kings of Israel. Whatever the motive, the result brought about a bad influence for the people of Judah. There is a lesson in that!

"Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits." (1Corinthians 15:33)

There is also recorded in the Scriptures a time in which Ahab asked Jehoshaphat to go with him to battle in fighting for Ramoth-Gilead from Syria (1Ki. 22:1-28 & 2Chr. 18:1-17), and Jehoshaphat agreed. Yet still, Jehoshaphat insisted that they inquire of God before setting out. Ahab had the false prophets of Baal brought in, and they predicted victory. However, Jehoshaphat insisted that a prophet of the LORD be inquired of, and Micaiah was eventually brought forth. Micaiah would tell both kings that defeat was imminent; nevertheless they went to battle together anyway. It is not surprising that Ahab continued in going to battle despite Miciah's message - because he trusted in Baal rather the Lord. On the other hand, it is surprising that that Jehoshaphat continued in his plans to aid Ahab - because Jehoshaphat was the very one who insisted on inquiring of the LORD in the first place!

"Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits." (1Corinthians 15:33)

As they went into battle against the Syrians, Ahab had planned to wear a disguise, but he told Jehoshaphat to go ahead and wear *his* royal robes. (Ahab thought that Jehoshaphat would be a de-

coy to draw attention away from himself, and that the Syrians would not be able to find him if he were dressed as a common soldier - some friend he was.) Ahab and Jehoshaphat did go into battle together, but the plan did not work, - Ahab would die that day (1Ki. 22:29-40; 2Chr. 18:28-34). It IS NOT too shocking that a man of Ahab's character would cowardly hide himself in the crowd while putting his friend in danger as a decoy to deflect any attention away from him, but IT IS surprising that Jehoshaphat would actually go along with the plan! Then again, he HAD ALREADY used poor judgment in agreeing to go to battle after God's prophet predicted their defeat!

"Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits." (1Corinthians 15:33)

There are some lessons for the modern Christian in these stories. Some Christians today continue making THE SAME poor judgments in their lives as a result of keeping evil company. Often the excuse is given to associate with others, "Well!? How am I supposed to provide a godly influence in other people's lives if I don't associate with them?!" We should be mature enough to realize that there is a huge difference between developing a rapport with someone, showing that you care about their soul, and leading them to the truth in love - versus - befriending someone who continues in blatant sin, resisting God, turning a blind eye to their immoral acts, and thereby approving of them (Rom. 1:32). What I have found in most instances is that those who continue keeping evil company - are the very ones who reject wholesome friendships with other Christians - who act like Christians! (They also are the very ones who wind up engaging in the same types of sins.) Might it be good for us to

consider how Jehu was later sent by God to rebuke Jehoshaphat for his partnership with Ahab? God was not pleased with their alliance, so He said, "**Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord? Therefore the wrath of the Lord is upon you**" (2 Chr. 19:2). I am not advocating that we shun ourselves from the world, but our *closest* allies should be those who will aid us in getting to heaven! Moreover, we should associate ourselves closest with brethren, WHO ACT LIKE brethren!

What God says is for our good, and if He said it, why then do we think we can improve on His ways? We need not to associate with those who continue sinning against Him... And that includes rebellious and contentious Christians! Please don't ever be deceived into thinking that you are "in" with those who continue in rebelling. Just remember how those types of people operate. Quite frankly, they are the type of cowards who "talk tough" when no authority figures are around, but as soon as the "battle" comes, they'll be the very ones hiding in the background - and they will be very much content in making you the decoy! By the time you figure things out, it may be too late — *and the wrath of the Lord may be upon you!*

"Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits." Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have the knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame" (1Cor. 15:33-34)

**"Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance" (Mt. 3:8)**

-Ian Rice